Believe me Dear Sir
with much respect
Your affectionate & obliged
Humble Servt
Richd Montgomery

Holland House
Dec.r 6th

(HIS-NEAR QUEBEC)

LIFE

OF

RICHARD MONTGOMERY;

BY

JOHN ARMSTRONG.

RICHARD MONTGOMERY.

The subject of this notice was born on the 2nd of December, 1736, at Convoy House, the name given to his father's seat near the town of Raphoe, in the north of Ireland. His parentage and connexions were highly respectable,* and such as secured to him an early and liberal education at the College of Dublin. At the age of eighteen, in conformity to his own taste and his father's wishes, a commission in the British army was obtained for him. Of his attention to the duties, or proficiency in the study, of this new

* Thomas Montgomery, of Convoy House, had three sons, Alexander, John, and Richard, and one daughter. Alexander commanded a grenadier company in Wolfe's army, and was present at the capture of Quebec. On the death of his father, he withdrew to his estate, and for many years in succession represented the county of Donnegal, in the Irish Parliament. John lived and died in Portugal; and the daughter married Lord Ranelagh, and was the mother of two sons, Charles and Thomas, who have since succeeded to the title.

vocation, we know nothing with certainty; but judging from the habits and character of his future life, remarkable alike for industry, sobriety, and a scrupulous discharge of engagements, public and private, it may be safely inferred, that his youth, like his manhood, escaped that idleness and vice, which so strongly marked and so greatly degraded the manners, as well professional as national, of that period.

It was the fortune of this young soldier to begin his career of field service in America, where, in another war, it was destined to end. In 1757, the regiment to which he belonged was despatched to Halifax; and, in 1758, made part of the army assembled at that place for the reduction of Louisburg, a French fortress, on which much time, money, and science had been expended, and to which, from a confidence in its strength, had been vauntingly given the name of the American Gibraltar.

It may readily be supposed, that a place thus characterized, and believed by both belligerents to be the key, which opened or shut the great commercial avenue between Europe and Canada,* could not long escape the notice of the elder Pitt; who, to efface the disgrace and retrieve the disas-

* The site of Louisburg is the promontory, at which the waters of the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic meet.

ters of three preceding campaigns,* had been recently called to the direction of the national arms. We accordingly find, that on the 28th of May a naval and military force, commanded by Major-General Amherst and Admiral Boscawen, began its voyage from Halifax to Cape Breton; and on the 2nd of June arrived in Cabarras bay. It was not, however, until the 8th, that the wind and surf had so far abated, as to render a descent on the island practicable. On this day, the reconnoitrings of the coast and the covering positions given to the ships, with other preliminary arrangements, being completed, the troops were embarked on board of boats in three divisions, two of which, commanded by Generals Wetmore and Lawrence,† the better to keep the enemy in a state

* We allude to the loss of Calcutta in Asia, and of Minorca in Europe; and on this continent, to the defeat of Braddock, the capture of Fort Oswego and garrison (sixteen hundred men); and of Fort William Henry and garrison (twenty-five hundred men); to which may be added the abortive campaign of 1757, made with twelve thousand troops and sixteen ships of the line, under the direction of Lord Loudoun and Admiral Hopson.

† While commanding in the trenches before Louisburg, a bomb thrown from the fort knocked off the hat and grazed the skull of this officer, but without seriously injuring him; a circumstance, which gave occasion for a sarcastic remark made by our General, Charles Lee, then a captain in the British army.—"I'll resign

of separation, menaced points not intended for attack; while the third, composed of the *élite* of the army and led by General Wolfe, pressed strenuously forward to a head-land near Fresh-water Cove, and, in despite of a heavy and well directed fire from the French, and a surf uncommonly high and exceedingly perilous, gained the bank, routed the enemy, and seized a position, which covered at once the farther debarkation of the troops and the necessary communications with the fleet.* It was in this movement, equally difficult and dangerous, that Montgomery furnished the first decisive evidence of those high military qualities, which so distinctly marked every step of his subsequent conduct; and which drew

---

to-morrow," exclaimed Lee. "Why so?" asked the person to whom he spoke. "Because," said the wit, "none but a fool will remain in a service, in which the generals' heads are bomb-proof."

* Sir Jeffery Amherst, in his journal of the siege, describes this first step as follows;—"The enemy acted wisely; did not throw away a shot till the boats were near the shore, and then directed the whole fire of their cannon and musketry upon them. But, notwithstanding the fire of the enemy, and the violence of the surf, Brigadier Wolfe pursued his point and landed at the left of the Cove, took post, attacked the enemy, and forced them to retreat. Many of our boats overset, several broke to pieces, and all the men jumped into the water to get on shore."

from his commanding officer, himself a model of heroism, such commendation as procured for him an immediate promotion to a lieutenancy.

It would be wide of our purpose to go into a detail of the investment and siege which followed, or of Montgomery's connexion with either. On these points it may be sufficient to remark, that the former terminated on the 27th of July in the surrender of the fortress, the destruction of several French ships of the line, and the capture of a garrison of five thousand men; and that the latter was such, as confirmed the favorable impressions already made of our aspirant's aptitude for military service.

While the British were thus triumphant at Louisburg, they at another and important point were fated to sustain a heavy loss, as well in reputation as in numerical force. It will be seen, that in this remark we allude to Abercromby's defeat before Ticonderoga; on the first notice of which, Amherst hastened to conduct six regiments of his army to the aid of the discomfited General; and among these was the seventeenth, to which Montgomery belonged, an arrangement, which, besides its useful effect at the time, fortunately made him acquainted with a *champ de bataille*, on which, in 1775, he was destined to lead an army against the troops of his former sovereign. At this point (Lake Champlain) he remained

until 1760; when, by the concentration of three armies on Montreal (Amherst's from Oswego, Murray's from Quebec, and Haviland's from Crown Point), Vaudreuil, the French Governor-General, was compelled to surrender his garrison, his post, and his province.*

The large military force now in British America having no longer any professional occupation there, detachments were made from it against the French and Spanish West India Islands. Of these expeditions the principal objects were the reduction of St. Pierre and Fort Royal, in the Island of Martinico, and of Havana in that of Cuba. The two campaigns employed in the prosecution of this policy were rendered peculiarly laborious and perilous, by the climate and season,† by the many extraordinary means of defence furnished by nature, and by others not less formidable supplied by art. In each of these,

---

* Mante's *History of the War of 1754 in America*, p. 134.

† In a siege of two months and eight days, the loss sustained by the British army in Cuba amounted to twenty-eight thousand men; besides which, more than one half of the troops sent back to New York (Burton's brigade), either died on the passage, or after their arrival. Of the garrison left at Havana under General Keppel, but seven hundred men were found fit for duty at the peace. — Mante's *History*.

Montgomery had a full share, as well of the toil and danger, as of the commendation * bestowed upon efforts, which ultimately triumphed over every kind and degree of resistance. Martinico surrendered to Moncton and Rodney on the 13th of February, 1762; and a portion of Cuba, including Havana and the Moro Castle, to Albemarle and Pococke, on the 12th of August following; two events greatly tending to hasten the treaty of Versailles, which put an end to the war on the 10th of February, 1763.

Soon after the official annunciation of peace, Montgomery, who with the seventeenth regiment had returned to New York, sought and obtained permission to revisit Europe; where he remained until the close of the year 1772. Of his occupations during these nine years the details we possess are very imperfect; a circumstance the more to be regretted, as it may be presumed, that what remained of his life took much of its color and character from occurrences, happening during this period. Such were the origin and progress of the controversy between Great Britain and her American Colonies; the intimacy formed between himself and those members of the English Parliament (Fox, Burke, and Barré), who most favored

* His conduct on this expedition procured for him the command of a company.

the pretensions of the latter; his abandonment of the King's service in 1772; and lastly, his determination to seek in America a future and permanent home.

On these points nothing written by himself has been found among the few papers, which have come down to us; nor have we any better authority than tradition for stating, that finding himself twice circumvented in the purchase of a majority, and being satisfied that there was a government agency in both cases, he promptly determined to quit, at once, the service and the country, and retire to America. He accordingly, in 1772, sold the commission he held, and in January of the year following arrived in New York. Having soon after purchased a farm in its neighborhood, and either revived an old or formed a new acquaintance with the Clermont branch of the Livingston family, he in the July following married the eldest daughter of Robert R. Livingston, then one of the Judges of the Superior Court of the province. Removing soon after to Dutchess County, he became a resident of Rhinebeck, where he began and prosecuted his new career of agricul ture, with that combination of diligence and discretion, which directed all his movements.

It will not be thought extraordinary, that in the exigencies of the time and the country, a man like Montgomery, though comparatively a stranger

should not be long permitted to remain in the obscurity of his own domicile. We accordingly find that, in April 1775, he was elected a member of the delegation from the county of Dutchess to the first Provincial Convention held in New York. Of his labors in that body, we have his own estimate, which may be usefully offered as an example of unaffected modesty, and an admonition to the unfledged statesmen of the present day. In a letter to his father-in-law, he says; "For all the good I can do here, I might as well and much better have been left at home, to direct the labors of my people. On the simple question between us and England, I am I hope sufficiently instructed, and will not go wrong; but how many may be the views growing out of that and subordinate to it, of which, in the present state of my knowledge, I may not be able to judge correctly? Inquiry and reflection may, in the long run, supply this defect; but the long run requires time, and time stops for no man. It is but justice to the Convention to say, that it has in it both talents and knowledge sufficient for its purposes; and, on the whole, no unwillingness to do business, which, notwithstanding, is a good deal obstructed by long, useless speeches, an opinion, which after all may be mere prejudice, arising from my own taciturn habits."

At the period to which we have brought our story, the injustice of England had taken a character of decided hostility, and made necessary, on the part of the united Colonies, an immediate resort to arms. In this state of things, the national Congress employed itself in June, 1775, in organizing an army; and, among other acts having this object, appointed a commander-in-chief, four major-generals, and eight brigadiers. Of the latter description Montgomery was one. This unequivocal mark of distinction, conferred by the highest acknowledged authority of the country, without solicitation or privity on his part, was received by him with a homage mingled with regret, apparently foreboding the catastrophe, which was soon to follow. In a letter to a friend he says; "The Congress having done me the honor of electing me a brigadier-general in their service, is an event which must put an end for a while, *perhaps for ever*, to the quiet scheme of life I had prescribed for myself; for, though entirely unexpected and undesired by me, *the will of an oppressed people, compelled to choose between liberty and slavery, must be obeyed.*" Under these noble and self-sacrificing views and feelings, Montgomery accepted the commission tendered to him; and from that hour to the moment of his death, the whole force of his mind and body was devoted to the honor and interest of his adopted country.

The contiguity of Canada to the northern section of the union, the military character of its French population, as displayed in the war of 1754, the strong posts held by the British garrisons in its neighborhood, their control over Indian feelings and movements, and the means taken to give to some of these circumstances a new and increased activity in the approaching struggle,* could not escape the notice of the sages, who composed the Congress of that day. To neutralize powers, so extended and menacing, became a matter of early and serious consideration with that body; the result of which was the adoption of a plan for invading Canada by two routes, the one by the Sorel, the other by the Kennebec; and that for these ends, an army of three thousand men should be raised and organized to act on the former against Forts St. John, Chamblee, and Montreal; while a second corps of one thousand men should be detached from Cambridge by the latter, to enter Canada at or near Quebec contemporaneously with the other, and effect a junction, if practicable, with Major-General Schuyler, who should command in chief.

To the first of these armaments Montgomery was assigned, as the elder of the two brigadiers;†

* The Quebec Act.

† General Wooster was the other.

and in this capacity he repaired on the 15th of July to Albany, whence, on the 17th of August, he was fortunately transferred to Ticonderoga, the point selected for the principal rendezvous and outfit of the projected invasions.* On arriving at this post, his first object was to acquire a correct knowledge of the enemy's force, position, and projects; and on this last head, being informed that General Carleton, now at Montreal, was preparing and had nearly ready a considerable naval force intended to act on Lake Champlain, he saw at once the effect of the plan, if permitted to go into execution, and the necessity for immediately taking post at the Isle-aux-Noix; as the measure, by which it could be most promptly and surely defeated. In a letter to General Schuyler announcing this intention, he says, "Moving without your orders, I do not like; but, on the other hand, the prevention of the enemy is of the utmost consequence; for if he gets his vessels into the Lake, it is over with us for the present summer. Let me entreat you to follow in a whale-boat, leaving some one to bring on the troops and artillery. It will give the men great confidence in your spirit and

* Congress was anticipated in its policy with regard to Ticonderoga, by Allen and Arnold, who, on the suggestion of a few thinking men in Connecticut, surprised the garrison and took possession of the post and its munitions on the 10th of May, 1775.

activity; and how necessary to a general this confidence is, I need not tell you. I most earnestly wish, that this [suggestion] may meet your appro bation; and be assured that [in making it] I have your honor and reputation much at heart. All my ambition is to do my duty in a subordinate capacity, without the least ungenerous intention of lessening that merit, which is justly your due."

After giving this exemplary proof of personal friendship for his chief, and of professional duty to the public, he hastened to place himself at the head of a small corps, not exceeding one thousand combatants, sustained by two pieces of light artillery, with which, on the 26th of August, he began his movement down the Lake. Being, however, much retarded by continued and violent head winds, it was not till the 5th of September, that he was able to reach the position he had selected for himself. Major-General Schuyler having arrived on this day, it was thought that a nearer approach to the enemy might be useful; not only from the means it would afford of better reconnoitring his position, but from the favorable impression it might make on the Canadian population. The movement was accordingly ordered, and a landing effected without obstruction, about a mile and a half from St. John's. After a short march in a direction of the fort, and while engaged in fording a creek somewhat difficult of

passage, the left of the line was vigorously attacked and much disordered by an Indian ambuscade; but being speedily supported by Montgomery, with the centre and right, the combat was soon terminated, and with considerable disadvantage to the assailants.

During the night, General Schuyler was visited by a person giving the following information; "that the twenty-sixth was the only regular British corps in Canada; that with the exception of fifty men, retained by General Carleton at Montreal, the whole of this was in garrison at St. John's and Chamblee; that these two forts were strongly fortified and abundantly supplied; that one hundred Indians were at the former, and a large body collected [at some other point] under Colonel Johnson; that the vessel intended for the Lake would be ready to sail in three or four days, and would carry sixteen guns; that no Canadian would join the American army, the wish and policy of the people being neutrality, provided their persons and property were respected and the articles furnished by, or taken from them, paid for in gold or silver; that, under present circumstances, an attack upon St. John's would be imprudent; and, lastly, that a return to the Isle-aux-Noix would be proper; as from this point, an intercourse with the inhabitants of Laprairie, might be usefully

opened."* A council of war, to whom this information was submitted, participating with the commanding general in the preceding opinion, the troops were on the 7th reconducted to their former position on the island. In reporting these transactions to Congress, General Schuyler says; "I cannot estimate the obligations I lie under to General Montgomery, for the many important services he has done, and daily does, and in which he has had little assistance from me; as I have not enjoyed a moment's health since I left Fort George; and am now so low, as not to be able to hold the pen. Should we not be able to do any thing decisively in Canada, I shall judge it best to move from this place, which is a very wet and unhealthy part of the country, unless I receive your orders to the contrary." With this manifest foreboding of eventual disappointment, the commanding general left the camp and returned to Ticonderoga; where, and at Albany, he was actively and usefully employed, during the remainder of the campaign, in forwarding supplies to the army.

---

* Whether this information was given by friend or enemy, it was essentially incorrect; the seventh as well as the twenty-sixth regiment was then serving in Canada. No great Indian force had anywhere been assembled, and many Canadians were disposed to join, and did actually join, the American army.

Montgomery, being now left to the choice and direction of his own measures, and being strongly impressed with the necessity of doing quickly, what it would be possible to do at all, availed himself of the arrival of a reinforcement of men and a small train of artillery to resume his position before St. John's, where he began his intended experiments of investment and siege.

With a view to the first of these objects, he on the 18th led a corps of five hundred men to the north side of the fort; where, falling in with a detachment from the garrison, which had just repulsed an American party under Major Brown, a rencounter took place, of which he gives the following brief description. "After an ill-directed fire for some minutes, the enemy retired with precipitation; luckily for them they did so; for had we sooner known their situation, which a thick wood prevented, not a man of them would have escaped." With the conduct of his own troops on this occasion, he was little satisfied. "For as soon," he adds, "as we saw the enemy, the old story of treachery spread among the men; and the cry was, we are trepanned and drawn under the guns of the fort. The woodsmen were less expert in forming than I had expected, and too many of them hung back. Had we kept more silence, we should have taken a field-piece or two."

Being now left to pursue his object without further obstruction, he proceeded to the junction of the two roads, the one leading to Montreal, the other to Chamblee; where he established an intrenched camp of three hundred men. Having thus done what was practicable to interrupt the communication between St. John's and its sustaining posts, he hastened back to his camp to try the effects of his artillery on the strength of the walls, and the temper of the garrison. In this labor, from causes, neither soon nor easily removed, his progress was not flattering; the cannon given him were found to be too light; the mortars defective; the artillerists unpractised; the ammunition scanty, and the person assigned to him as an engineer, utterly ignorant of the first principles of the art he professed.* To this list of untoward circumstances may be added the character of the ground he occupied; which, being wet and even swampy, was productive of many and serious diseases; which, besides hourly diminishing his strength, greatly retarded his operations.

To lessen the number and pressure of these embarrassments, Montgomery decided on changing his position and removing to the northwestern side of the fort; which, as he was informed, would furnish ground of greater elevation and dryer sur-

* Captain Mott.

face, with a sufficient supply of wholesome water. With this intention, a road was opened and fascines were collected on the site chosen for the new batteries; when, more to his mortification than surprise, he discovered, that to persist in the measure would give occasion to evils of greater malignity, than either or all of those, which it was proposed to remedy by it; in a word, that a general mutiny of the army would be the consequence. Abhorrent as any kind or degree of condescension to an insubordinate soldiery must have been to a man of Montgomery's habits and principles, still he could not conceal from himself, that the evil, which now beset him, grew in a great measure out of the spirit of the times, and was perhaps inseparable from revolutionary movements; that, at any rate, he possessed no power of punishing or even controlling it, and that any course, which should precipitate the army into an act of open mutiny, would be a signal for its dissolution, and an end of all public views and hopes founded on the expedition. In this view of the subject, personal feelings and professional scruples were made to yield; and instead of a peremptory order to execute the project, he prudently submitted it to the decision of a council of war, who, as was expected, refused to give it their approbation.*

* At a later period, the General's plan was adopted and a new position taken on the northwest side of the fort.

While this inauspicious occurrence took place in the camp, another of the General's plans, from misconduct in the leader, terminated unfavorably. To quiet the restless activity of Ethan Allen, who, without commission or command, had attached himself to the army as a volunteer, Montgomery sent him to Laprairie, with an escort of thirty men, and orders "to mingle freely with the inhabitants and so to treat them, as would best conciliate their friendship and induce them to join the American standard." In the outset of this business, Allen was not unsuccessful, and soon acquired an addition to his corps of fifty Canadians; when, either deceived in regard to the enemy's strength, or indifferent to its magnitude, and without direction or privity on the part of the General, he determined to risk an attack on Montreal. He accordingly crossed the river in the night of the 24th of September, and was met in the morning by a British party, who, after a short and slight conflict, captured him and thirty-eight of his followers.

Another affair, more prudently managed and having a favorable influence on the operations of the campaign, occurred soon after. Mr. James Livingston, a native of New York, who had some time before established himself in Canada, had fortunately gained a good deal of popularity with its inhabitants; which, at the instance of Montgomery, he employed in raising among them an

armed corps, under the promise of eventual protection, made and promulgated by the order of Congress. With three hundred of these recruits, and a small detachment from the army, Majors Brown and Livingston obtained possession of Fort Chamblee, capturing the whole of the garrison, and a large quantity of military stores, among which were one hundred and twenty-six barrels of gunpowder. This acquisition having greatly invigorated the siege, and rendered probable a speedy reduction of St. John's, General Carleton found himself compelled to quit his insular position at Montreal, and risk a field movement in defence of his fortress. The force at his disposal for this purpose was not formidable from numbers or from character, and was rendered less so by the division of its parts. Its amount in combatants of all arms did not much exceed twelve hundred men; the bulk of whom was made up of Canadian militia serving with reluctance, and Scotch emigrants recently engaged, and little if at all acquainted with military duty. Of these, nearly one thousand had been retained at Montreal by Carleton, and the remainder stationed with M^c^Clean at the mouth of the Sorel. Under these circumstances and with Carleton's present views, a concentration of the two corps became indispensable; and accordingly, on the 31st of October, that officer began his movement across the St. Lawrence

to Longueil, whence he purposed marching to M^cClean's camp, and thence to the attack of the besieging army.

The probability of a movement of this kind and with these objects did not escape the foresight of Montgomery; who, soon after the capture of Chamblee, withdrew Warner and two regiments from the investing position they had hitherto occupied to the Longueil road, with orders "to patrol that route carefully and frequently, as far as the St. Lawrence; to report daily to the commanding general such information as he might be able to obtain; and lastly, to attack any party of the enemy indicating an intention of moving in the direction of the American camp, or in that of the Scotch emigrants." In execution of these orders, Warner arrived at Longueil early in the morning of the 31st, and making no display of his force until the leading boats of the British column had nearly reached the southern bank of the river, he then opened upon them a fire of musketry and artillery, which in a few minutes completely disabled them and put to rout what remained of the armament. About the same time, and with orders of a similar character, Easton, Brown, and Livingston approached M^cClean, who, losing all hope of support from Carleton, hastily withdrew to his boats and descended the St. Lawrence.

This new and favorable state of things was promptly communicated to Montgomery, who hastened to turn it to its proper account, the surrender of the fort, the occupation of Montreal, and the capture of Carleton. The first of these objects was accomplished by a written statement of the preceding events, made to the commandant; the consequent hopelessness of succor to the garrison; and the useless effusion of blood, which would necessarily follow any attempt to prolong the defence. The second object was less easily attained, not from any obstruction given by the enemy, but from the disinclination of his own troops to remain longer in the field; nor could this be overcome, but by a promise on the part of the general, that, "Montreal in his possession, no further service would be exacted from them." Under this arrangement, he was enabled to display a force in front of the town, which, on the 12th of November, secured to him a full and peaceable possession of it, and of the armed vessels left by the enemy.* With regard to his third and great object, he was wholly unsuccessful. Some days before the last-mentioned event, the British general not reposing firmly in Canadian fidelity, and

* Eleven sail of vessels with General Prescott, and one hundred and twenty regular troops of the seventh and twenty-sixth regiments.

fearing much from the enterprise and vigor of his antagonist, quitted Montreal and took refuge on board of the fleet, with which he hoped to be able to make good his retreat; but finding on experiment, that this project was impracticable, and perceiving the imminent danger to which the capital of the province was exposed, as well by his absence from it, as by the presence of a new and unexpected enemy at its gates, he promptly and prudently put himself on board of a small boat with muffled oars, and, trusting to his personal fortunes and a dark night, was able to pass the American batteries and armed vessels, without notice or annoyance of any kind.*

Though now master of a great part of Canada, Montgomery's labors, far from becoming lighter or fewer, were much augmented in both number and character. A pursuit of Carleton, a junction with Arnold, and an experiment on the strength of Quebec, were objects sufficiently indicated by his own judgment, the policy of Congress, and the hopes of the nation. But to prosecute these promptly and successfully required means, in which he was obviously and greatly deficient. His situation in this respect, given in a letter to a member of the Committee of Congress sent to

* The position at the mouth of the Sorel was held by Colonel Easton of the Massachusetts militia.

confer with him on the subject of his campaign, will not be deemed uninteresting.

"For the good fortune," he says, "which has hitherto attended us, I am, I hope, sufficiently thankful; but this very fortune, good as it has been, will become a serious and insurmountable evil, should it lead Congress either to overrate our means, or to underrate the difficulties we have yet to contend with. I need not tell you, that, till Quebec is taken, Canada is unconquered; and that, to accomplish this, we must resort to siege, investment, or storm. The first of these is out of the question, from the difficulty of making trenches in a Canadian winter, and the greater difficulty of living in them, if we could make them; secondly, from the nature of the soil, which, as I am at present instructed, renders mining impracticable, and, were this otherwise, from the want of an engineer having sufficient skill to direct the process; and thirdly, from the fewness and lightness of our artillery, which is quite unfit to break walls like those of Quebec. Investment has fewer objections, and might be sufficient, were we able to shut out entirely from the garrison and town the necessary supplies of food and fuel, during the winter; but to do this well (the enemy's works being very extensive and offering many avenues to the neighboring settlements) will require a large army, and from present appearances mine will not, when brought together, much

if at all exceed eight hundred combatants. Of Canadians I might be able to get a considerable number, provided I had hard money, with which to clothe, feed, and pay their wages; but this is wanting. Unless, therefore, I am soon and amply reinforced, investment, like siege, must be given up.

"To the storming plan, there are fewer objections; and to this we must come at last. If my force be small, Carleton's is not great. The extensiveness of his works, which, in case of investment, would favor him, will in the other case favor us. Masters of our secret, we may select a *particular time* and *place* for attack, and to repel this the garrison must be prepared at *all times* and *places;* a circumstance, which will impose upon it incessant watching and labor by day and by night; which, in its undisciplined state, must breed discontents that may compel Carleton to capitulate, or perhaps to make an attempt to drive us off. In this last idea, there is a glimmering of hope. Wolfe's success was a lucky hit, or rather a series of such hits. All sober and scientific calculation was against him, until Montcalm, permitting his courage to get the better of his discretion, gave up the advantages of his fortress and came out to try his strength on the plain.* Carleton, who was Wolfe's quartermaster-general, under-

* See the Note at the end of this Memoir.

stands this well; and, it is to be feared, will not follow the Frenchman's example. In all these views, you will discover much uncertainty; but of one thing you may be sure, that, unless we do something before the middle of April, the game will be up; because by that time the river may open and let in supplies and reinforcements to the garrison in spite of any thing we can do to prevent it; and again, because my troops are not engaged beyond that term, and will not be prevailed upon to stay a day longer. In reviewing what I have said, you will find that my list of wants is a long one; *men, money, artillery,* and *clothing accommodated to the climate.* Of *ammunition* Carleton took care to leave little behind him at this place. What I wish and expect is, that all this be made known to Congress, with a full assurance, that, if I fail to execute their wishes or commands, it shall not be from any negligence of duty or infirmity of purpose on my part. *Vale, cave ne mandata frangas.*" *

Assured, on the 17th of November, of Arnold's arrival at Point Levi, and on the 19th, of his having crossed the St. Lawrence in safety, Montgomery hastened to effect a junction with him; and having, on the 4th of December, accomplished

---

* Letter to R. R. Livingston, Member of Congress.

this object, he immediately proceeded to take a position before Quebec.

Great care was now employed in acquiring a knowledge of the extent and structure of the enemy's works; the force and composition of his garrison;* the disposition of the inhabitants of the town and neighboring country, and the means possessed by the latter to supply the wants of the former. The result of the information received on these points was such, as confirmed the General in the opinion expressed in the preceding letter; that siege and investment were forbidden by the paucity of his numbers, not much exceeding eight hundred combatants; by a want of artillery of sufficient calibre, and by the inclemency of the season; and again, that, of the different modes of attack, that of escalade was, under all circumstances, the most advisable.

But that no means of attaining the proposed object might be neglected, this opinion, though decidedly formed, was not permitted to supersede the use of other and preliminary expedients. A summons of surrender in the customary form, a cannonade of the fort from a battery of five

* Seamen and marines, four hundred and fifty; privates of the seventh regiment, fifty; McClean's corps, one hundred and fifty; Canadian militia, two hundred and fifty.

guns and one howitzer; a display of the American force in full view of the British garrison, made in the hope that its feebleness would induce, or its defiance provoke, the enemy to forego the advantage of his fortress and risk a contest in the field, were successively tried, but without producing any useful effect. A partial investment, confined to points which most favored an intercourse between the town and the country, was also resorted to; and would have been longer continued, had it not been found that its effect on the Canadian population was unfriendly, from the interruption it gave to their ordinary commerce without furnishing an equivalent market as a substitute; and again, from a belief generally entertained, that a proceeding of this kind indicated a want of strength in the American army. A discovery of these facts could not fail to make an impression as well on the troops as on the general, and besides inducing an abandonment of the investing plan, hastened in both a desire to try the effect of a *coup de main*. Two attacks of this character were accordingly projected; the one on the lower town, from the suburbs of St. Roque; the other on the upper, at the Cape Diamond Bastion, "to be executed in the night and when the weather should be favorable." But before the last of these conditions was fulfilled, a circumstance took place, that menaced the project with both defeat and disgrace.

Three companies of Arnold's detachment (whose term of service was on the point of expiring) having, from some cause not well explained,* taken umbrage at the conduct of their commanding officer, seized the present occasion to make known their intention of quitting the army, unless, in the approaching movement they were permitted to attach themselves to some other corps. Under circumstances differing from those which belonged to the case, a transfer, such as they desired, would not have been refused; but as, on investigating the facts, Montgomery found the complainants wholly in the wrong, he promptly determined, as well in punishment of them as in justice to Arnold, to reject their proposal. Still, believing that under all circumstances it would be prudent, before officially announcing this decision, to try the effects of a free and friendly expostulation with the malcontents, he fortunately recurred to that process, and was promptly enabled to bring them back to a sense of good order and obedience, without the actual employment or menace of any coercive means.†

---

* Montgomery, in his last letter to Schuyler, speaks of this occurrence, thinks his friend Major Brown at the bottom of it, and promises in his next a full explanation of it.

† Mr. Marshall ascribes the return to duty, on the part of the malcontents, to the influence of arguments ad-

Though now satisfied that the flame of the late controversy was extinguished, yet suspecting that the embers might still be alive, and knowing that means would not be wanting to re-excite them, Montgomery hastened to avail himself of this new and last favor of fortune. A council of war was accordingly convened, and to this the General submitted two questions; — "Shall we attempt the reduction of Quebec by a night attack? And if so, shall the lower town be the point attacked?" * Both questions having been affirmatively decided, the troops were ordered to parade in three divisions at two o'clock in the morning of the 31st of December; the New York regiments and part of Easton's Massachusetts militia, at Holland House; the Cambridge detachments and Lamb's company of artillerists, with one field-piece, at Captain Morgan's quarters; and the two small corps of Livingston and Brown, at their respective grounds of parade. To the first and second of these divisions were assigned the two assaults, to be made on opposite sides of the lower town;

---

dressed to their *love of plunder*, by Captain Morgan. We have adopted in substance the statement given by Colonel J. Livingston, which is, we think, more credible, and certainly more creditable.

* The first or main question was carried by a single vote.

and to the third, a series of demonstrations or feigned attacks on different parts of the upper. Under these orders the movement began between three and four o'clock in the morning, from the Heights of Abraham. Montgomery advancing at the head of the first division by the river road, round the foot of Cape Diamond to Aunce au Mere; and Arnold, at the head of the second, through the suburbs of St. Roque, to the Saut de Matelots. Both columns found the roads much obstructed by snow, but to this obstacle on the route taken by Montgomery were added huge masses of ice, thrown up from the river and so narrowing the passage round the foot of the promontory, as greatly to retard the progress and disturb the order of the march. These difficulties being at last surmounted, the first barrier was approached, vigorously attacked, and rapidly carried. A moment, and but a moment, was now employed to re-excite the ardor of the troops, which the fatigue of the march and the severity of the weather had somewhat abated. "Men of New York," exclaimed Montgomery, "you will not fear to follow where your general leads,—march on;" * then placing himself again in the

* When Bonaparte assumed the offensive in the battle of Marengo, he hurried through the ranks exclaiming, "Comrades, you know it is my practice to sleep on the field of battle."

front, he pressed eagerly forward to the second barrier, and when but a few paces from the mouths of the British cannon, received three wounds which instantly terminated his life and his labors. Thus fell, in the first month of his fortieth year, Major-General Richard Montgomery.

The fortune of the day being now decided, the corpse of the fallen general was eagerly sought for and soon found. The stern character of Carleton's habitual temper softened at the sight; recollections of other times crowded fast upon him; the personal and professional merits of the dead could neither be forgotten nor dissembled, and the British general granted the request of Lieutenant-Governor Cramahé to have the body decently interred within the walls of the city.*

In this brief story of a short and useful life, we find all the elements which enter into the composition of a great man and distinguished soldier; "a happy physical organization, com-

*It does not fall within our proper limits, to exhibit in detail the future fortunes of the assailing army. It may therefore be sufficient to say, that, in losing their commander, all hope of eventual success was lost. The column of the right, under the direction of its new leader, made a hasty and disorderly retreat to the Heights of Abraham; while that of the left, first under Arnold and again under Morgan, gave evidence only of a high and persevering, but fruitless gallantry.

bining strength and activity, and enabling its possessor to encounter laborious days and sleepless nights, hunger and thirst, all changes of weather, and every variation of climate." To these corporeal advantages was added a mind, cool, discriminating, energetic, and fearless; thoroughly acquainted with mankind, not uninstructed in the literature and sciences of the day, and habitually directed by a high and unchangeable moral sense. That a man so constituted, should have won "the golden opinions" of friends and foes, is not extraordinary. The most eloquent men of the British Senate became his panegyrists; and the American Congress hastened to testify for him, "their grateful remembrance, profound respect, and high veneration." A monument to his memory was accordingly erected, on which might justly be inscribed the impressive lines of the poet;

"Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career;
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes;
And fitly may the stranger, lingering here,
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;
For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,
The few in number, who had not o'erstept
The charter to chastise, which she bestows
On such as wield her weapons; he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.'

NOTE.

(See page 207.)

As nothing will better illustrate Montgomery's freedom from prejudice, and correctness of military judgment, than this opinion, respecting Wolfe's success at Quebec, we may be permitted to give a brief view of the grounds on which it rested.

It will be remembered, that, in the campaign of 1759, General Wolfe was placed at the head of an army of eight thousand combatants, sustained by a fleet of twenty-two ships of the line, as many frigates, and several smaller vessels, with orders to reduce Quebec, a fortress, strongly fortified by nature and art, defended by ten thousand effective men and commanded by an officer, distinguished alike by capacity and experience. The promontory on which this fortress stood, presented to the south a naked rock, rising from the St. Lawrence several hundred feet in height; to the north and east, a declivity less elevated and abrupt than the former, but such as everywhere forbade an ascent, but by a narrow and winding foot-path, secured at different points by strong palisades; and on the west or land side, a line of bastions, brist-

ling with cannon and extending from one height to another; thus forming the base of the angle and completing the outline of the work; while within its area rose the citadel of St. Louis, overlooking and commanding the whole. It is not therefore to be wondered at, if, after reconnoitring the place and its defences, the General should have discovered "obstacles greater than had been foreseen," or that he should have come to the conclusion, "that to reduce the place by a direct attack, was impracticable," and that the only expedient left, for giving him even a chance of accomplishing the plans of the government and the hopes of the nation, was a constant and unrelaxing endeavor to decoy into detachments, or to provoke to a general battle, his old and wary antagonist, who seemed to understand too well the value of his fastnesses, to be easily seduced from them.

With these vague and hopeless prospects, the north bank of the St. Lawrence *above* the town was carefully reconnoitred, but without discovering a place, at which the detachment, that should be first landed, would not be liable to be cut to pieces before another could be brought to support it Still, as something must be hazarded, the General fixed on St. Michael's, three miles from Quebec, for making the experiment; when he discovered, that the enemy had penetrated his design and was preparing to defeat it.

Giving up therefore this side of the town as unfavorable to his project, he now returned to an examination of that lying between the rivers St. Charles and Montmorency; and, though every accessible part of the shore was found to be "intrenched and redoubted," and protected besides by "a great breadth of shoal water and a muddy bottom, scooped into holes and intersected by gullies," he, notwithstanding, decided on making his descent there, because "it possessed advantages, not to be found at any other place," namely, room for the developement of his whole force, and, if necessary, "a safe retreat at low-water." The attempt was accordingly made, but ended in new disappointment and increased vexation, for the enemy refusing to quit his intrenchments, neither advanced in mass, nor in detachment, to attack him, while his own troops showed "a great want of both order and discipline."

This failure no doubt increased, if it did not create, an indisposition, which caused a temporary suspension of the general's activity; during which he submitted to the consideration of the brigadiers serving under him, the general question of future operations and the direction to be given to these; subjoining at the same time statements and opinions, which sufficiently indicated the leaning of his own judgment, in favor of a renewed attack on the French positions at Beauport, either

"by turning their left flank and assailing their rear, or by a direct approach in front, on the side of the St. Lawrence." The answer to this communication, was precisely what it ought to have been; respectful to the general, but adverse to both the courses suggested by him. It may be paraphrased as follows; "On either project, the risk is certain, and the advantage to be gained unimportant. If we adopt the first, a march of nine miles, through woods intersected by creeks, swamps, and defiles, becomes unavoidable, every step of which must be known to the enemy and liable to obstruction from his numerous bodies of Indians and light troops. A new repulse, at this time, would be very unfavorable, and a defeat, probably fatal to the army; while its most complete success would have the effect only of compelling the enemy to change his front, and take the new and more formidable position behind the St. Charles. The second proposition is liable to similar objections; since our whole movement must be made in the view, and exposed to the fire of the batteries and intrenchments of the enemy; a circumstance, which our recent experience shows cannot be encountered, without considerable loss, and with the hazard, in case of disaster, of having our retreat entirely cut off, as it is only in a particular state of the tide, that a retreat will be at all practicable.

"On the other hand, taking for granted that British courage will triumph over many difficulties and that the enemy will be driven from Beauport and its dependencies, what advantage will the acquisition of these places give to us, or what injury will the loss of them produce to the enemy? The effect to either party will be unimportant, since the place itself has no possible influence on the fate of the capital, neither covering nor exposing its supplies, neither strengthening nor weakening its defences; in a word, 't is but an outpost, which Mr. Montcalm may abandon without loss, and which he artfully presents to us, in the hope that we will knock our heads against it. The movement, which in our opinion should be substituted for these, is, that the army assemble and embark at Point Levi, and ascend the St. Lawrence above the town, and there seek for a place at which they may debark and gain the bank. If they fail in accomplishing this, they run no risk of any serious loss, since the attempt will not be made but under the guns of the shipping. If, on the other hand, we succeed in gaining the bank and in taking a position which shall place us between the enemy and the interior of the province, we may hope to draw him from his walls and to the risk of a battle; — but, whether this last purpose be effected or not, we shall be precisely in the situation the best adapted to a

coöperation with General Amherst's army, which, agreeably to the general plan of campaign, must now be on its march to join us."

This reasoning silenced, if it did not satisfy, the objections of Wolfe. He adopted the plan with the frankness and good faith with which it was offered, and, being now reinstated in health, lost no time in giving it execution. The troops, to the amount of four thousand effectives, were embarked as proposed on board of a division of the fleet, which ascended the St. Lawrence, while another division of it, the better to mask the real attack, continued to menace a descent at Beauport. This was the moment that fortune began to show her partiality for the British arms. Believing the movement to be only a feint, Montcalm steadily adhered to his field position on the eastern side of the town, and contented himself with detaching Bougainville at the head of twenty-five hundred men to the western side, with orders to keep pace with the ascending division of the British fleet, watch its operations, and repel all attempts at landing.

This officer had accordingly lined the bank with sentinels, established small posts on the few paths which admitted an ascent of the bank, and taken post himself about six leagues west of Quebec and directly opposite to the ships of war. Till now, the vigilance of this corps had been irre-

proachable, and had even merited and received the praises of an enemy; but on the night of the 12th of September it slept, and so profoundly, that the British fleet and army were enabled to execute their whole purpose, without notice or discovery. The latter, being embarked on board of the boats, fell down the stream to the point agreed upon for the descent, followed and protected by the former, and at one o'clock in the morning, effected their landing, mounted the precipice, drove in the sentries and seized a battery, before even the common signals of alarm were given. When the day dawned, the British line found itself on the Heights of Abraham, and, in a few minutes, perceived the French army approaching by the bridge of St. Charles.

What a moment of anxiety for Wolfe! Was it Montcalm's intention to shut himself up in Quebec, and leave to the British army the doubtful and dangerous experiments of investment or siege? Or was he in motion to stake on the chances of a battle the fate of himself, of his army, of the capital, and of the province? Is it probable, that he, who has hitherto acted so warily, will be less circumspect in proportion as his fortunes become more critical? Is it reasonable to hope, that a general, who has till now so distinctly seen the advantages of his position, will at once cease to avail himself of what art and nature

have united to do for him? Should he lose the power of making new combinations, will he lose his memory also, and, forgetting alike the maxims of war and the dictates of duty, hazard a post with the defence of which he is specially charged, or give battle on the invitation of an enemy, who has no hope but in the chance of his doing so?

A few minutes solved these momentous questions. As soon as the heads of the French columns, preceded by their skirmishers, were seen to issue from the gates of the town and advance towards their enemy, there could be no longer a doubt of the intentions of the French commander. At this moment, the British army had not yet taken an order of battle; but the simple formation of a single line a little bent on its left, and reinforced on its right, by one regiment in open order, was soon executed. Neither army could claim much support from artillery; the British not having been able to bring up more than one piece, while the French, who could have strengthened their line with a battery of fifty pieces, either neglected or despised the advantage, and brought with them only two nine-pounders. The battle which followed was decided by musketry, and was unmarked by any extraordinary or well applied evolution of any kind. The fall of Montcalm hastened, if it did not occasion, the flight of the French, who left fifteen hundred men on the

field of battle. In this moment of route on the one side, and of triumph on the other, the head of Bougainville's corps marching from La Foix, showed itself on the rear of the British line. But, the fortunes of the day being apparently decided, he retired, perhaps prudently, to concert measures with the commander of the fort, to keep up his communications with it, to check the enemy's attempts at investment, or, if the measure became necessary, to join in the direct defence of the place. On the part of the British nothing could be considered as done, while Quebec remained to be taken; and for its security, there was still left a sufficient garrison and abundant supplies, with an exterior force already formidable and hourly increasing. Time, on the other hand, which was thus strengthening them, was sensibly weakening their enemy.

The British effective force, originally eight thousand combatants, was now, including the corps at Point Levi and the Isle of Orleans, reduced to four thousand men; the weather had already become wet and cold; the sick list was rapidly increasing; and but thirty days remained for field operations, while those of the water might probably be limited to even a shorter period. Much must be done before a siege could be commenced, and an investment, from the nature of the ground, and the deficient number of the troops, was quite

impracticable. Under this aspect of things, the chances were yet against the invaders; and it required only a vigorous resistance on the part of the garrison, to have saved both the fortress and the province. But "fear betrays like treason." M. de Ramsay saw in some demonstrations, made by the British fleet and army as trials of his temper, a serious intention to attack him by land and water; when, to escape this, he opened a negotiation for the surrender of the fort at the very moment when a reinforcement of eight hundred men, with an additional supply of provisions, was ready to enter it. Townshend, who, after the fall of Wolfe, commanded the British army, was both a politician and a soldier, and readily subscribed to any terms, the basis of which was the surrender of the capital.

Such is the chapter of accidents by which Quebec was taken in 1759. Had not Wolfe become seriously ill, there would have been no opinion required from Monckton, Townshend, and Murray, and the army would have continued to waste its strength in new attacks on the French positions at Beauport, in conformity to Wolfe's opinion.

Had not Wolfe, in despite of this opinion, followed the advice of his brigadiers and carried his operations from the eastern to the western side of the town, the same consequences would have followed.

Had the French guards done their duty on the night of the 12th of September, the British would have failed in making good their landing and ascent to the Heights of Abraham.

Had Montcalm refused the battle offered to him on the 13th, or had he reinforced his centre and flanks by competent divisions of artillery, or had he delayed coming to blows for a single hour, or had Bougainville arrived in the rear of the British line, before the battle was lost, in either of these cases, the fortune of the day would have been different from what it was.

And lastly, had M. de Ramsay, instead of surrendering, defended his post, the expedition must have failed; since, circumstanced as the British were, they had no sufficient means for reducing the place by *storm*, *siege*, or *investment*.

As to any further Information I refer your Excellency to Joseph Fay Esqr the Bearer, whose representation may be relied on, and whose Zeal for his Country hath been very Conspicuous on all Occasions, Especially in the Important Battle of Bennington.

I am Sir with the Greatest Respect and Esteem, your Excellency's Most Obt. and Humle.

Bennington 6th March. 1779 Servt. Ethan Allen

His Excellency General Washington

LIFE

OF

ETHAN ALLEN;

BY

JARED SPARKS.

ETHAN ALLEN.

THE first settlement of Vermont, and the early struggles of the inhabitants not only in subduing a wilderness, but establishing an independent government, afford some of the most remarkable incidents in American history. When we now survey that flourishing State, presenting in all its parts populous towns and villages, and witness the high degree of culture to which it has attained, and which, under the most favored social organization, is usually the slow achievement of time, we can hardly realize that seventy years ago the whole region from the Connecticut River to Lake Champlain was a waste of forests, an asylum for wild beasts, and a barrier against the inroads of the savages upon the border settlers of the New England colonies. This change has been brought to pass in the first place by a bold and hardy enterprise, and an indomitable spirit of freedom, which have rarely been equalled; and afterwards by the steady perseverance of an enlightened and industrious population, deriving its

stock from the surrounding States, and increasing rapidly from its own resources. To the historian this is a fertile and attractive theme. By the biographer it can only be touched, as bearing on the deeds and character of the persons, who have been the principal actors in the train of events.

Among those, who were most conspicuous in laying the foundation upon which the independent State of Vermont has been reared, and indeed the leader and champion of that resolute band of husbandmen, who first planted themselves in the wilderness of the Green Mountains, was ETHAN ALLEN. He was a native of Connecticut, where his father and mother were likewise born, the former in Coventry, and the latter in Woodbury. Joseph Allen, the father, after his marriage with Mary Baker, resided in Litchfield, where it is believed that Ethan and one or two other children were born. The parents afterwards removed to Cornwall, where other children were born, making in all six sons and two daughters, Ethan, Heman, Heber, Levi, Zimri, Ira, Lydia, and Lucy. All the brothers grew up to manhood, and four or five of them emigrated to the territory west of the Green Mountains among the first settlers, and were prominent members of the social and political compacts into which the inhabitants gradually formed themselves. Bold, active, and enterprising, they es-

poused with zeal, and defended with energy, the cause of the settlers against what were deemed the encroaching schemes of their neighbors, and with a keen interest sustained their share in all the border contests. Four of them were engaged in the military operations of the Revolution, and by a hazardous and successful adventure at the breaking out of the war, in the capture of Ticonderoga, the name of Ethan Allen gained a renown, which spread widely at the time, and has been perpetuated in history.

But, before we proceed in our narrative, it is necessary to state a few particulars explanatory of what will follow. Among the causes of the controversies, which existed between the colonies in early times, and continued down to the Revolution, was the uncertainty of boundary lines as described in the old charters. Considering the ignorance of all parties, at the time the charters were granted, as to the extent and interior situation of the country, it was not surprising that limits should be vaguely defined, and that the boundaries of one colony should encroach upon those of another. A difficulty of this kind arose between the colony of New York and those of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. By the grant of King Charles the Second to his brother, the Duke of York, the tract of country called New York was bounded on the east by

Connecticut River, thus conflicting with the express letter of the Massachusetts and Connecticut charters, which extended those colonies westward to the South Sea, or Pacific Ocean. After a long controversy, kept up at times with a good deal of heat on both sides, the line of division between these colonies was fixed by mutual agreement at twenty miles east of Hudson's River, running nearly in a north and south direction. This line was adopted as a compromise between Connecticut and New York, upon the consideration that the Connecticut settlers had established themselves so far to the westward under patents from that colony, as to be within about twenty miles of the Hudson. The Massachusetts boundary was decided much later to be a continuation of the Connecticut line to the north, making the western limit of Massachusetts also twenty miles from the same river. This claim was supported mainly on the ground of the precedent in the case of Connecticut, and was long resisted by New York, as interfering with previous grants from that colony extending thirty miles eastward from the Hudson.*

---

* See *A State of the Right of the Colony of New York, with Respect to its Eastern Boundary on Connecticut River, &c.* pp. 5, 7.

Meantime New Hampshire had never been brought into the controversy, because the lands to the westward of that province beyond Connecticut River had been neither settled nor surveyed. There was indeed a small settlement at Fort Dummer on the western margin of the River, which was under the protection of Massachusetts, and supposed to be within that colony, till the dividing line between New Hampshire and Massachusetts was accurately run, when Fort Dummer was ascertained to be north of that line, and was afterwards considered as being within the jurisdiction of the sister colony. Such was the state of things when Benning Wentworth became governor of New Hampshire, with authority from the King to issue patents for unimproved lands within the limits of his province. Application was made for grants to the west of Connecticut River, and even beyond the Green Mountains, and in 1749 he gave a patent for a township six miles square, near the northwest angle of Massachusetts, to be so laid out, that its western limit should be twenty miles from the Hudson, and coincide with the boundary line of Connecticut and Massachusetts continued northward. This township was called Bennington.

Although the governor and council of New York remonstrated against this grant, and claimed for that colony the whole territory north of Mas-

sachusetts as far eastward as Connecticut River, yet Governor Wentworth was not deterred by this remonstrance from issuing other patents, urging in his justification, that New Hampshire had a right to the same extension westward as Massachusetts and Connecticut. Fourteen townships had been granted in 1754, when the French war broke out, and, by the peril it threatened on the frontiers, discouraged settlers from seeking a residence there, or vesting their property in lands, the title to which might be put in jeopardy, or their value destroyed, by the issue of the contest. Nor was it till the glorious victory of Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham had wrested Canada for ever from the French power, secured these border territories against all further invasion from an ancient foe, and opened the prospects of a speedy and lasting peace, that the spirit of enterprise, perhaps of adventure, combining with the hope of gain, revived a desire of possessing and settling these wild lands. Applications for new patents thronged daily upon Governor Wentworth, and within four years' time the whole number of townships granted by him, to the westward of Connecticut River, was one hundred and thirty-eight. The territory including these townships was known by the name of the *New Hampshire Grants*, which it retained till the opening of the Revolution, when its present name of *Vermont* began to be adopted.

At what time Ethan Allen and his brethren emigrated to the *Grants* is uncertain. It was not, however, till after the reduction of Canada, and probably not till the peace between England and France had been concluded. Meantime among the inhabitants of the New England colonies, a ready market had been found for the lands, and settlers were flocking over the mountains from various quarters. Many persons had passed through those lands on their way to the army in Canada, and become acquainted with their value. The easy terms upon which the townships had been patented by Governor Wentworth enabled the original purchasers to dispose of shares, and single farms, at very low prices, thus holding out strong allurements to settlers. Apprehensions as to the validity of the title must also have induced the first proprietors to prefer a quick sale, with small profits, to the uncertain prospect of larger gains at a future day. By this union of policy and interest the lands were rapidly sold, in tracts of various dimensions, to practical farmers, who resolved to establish themselves as permanent residents on the soil. Of this number were the Allens, who selected their lands in the township of Bennington, to which they removed in company with several other persons from Connecticut.

While these things were going on, the governor of New York did not remain an idle spectator

He wrote letters to the governor of New Hampshire protesting against his grants, and published proclamations declaring the Connecticut River to be the boundary between the two colonies. But neither proclamations nor remonstrances produced conviction in the mind of Governor Wentworth. He continued to issue his warrants; a population of hardy yeomanry was daily increasing in the New Hampshire Grants; a formidable power was taking root there, nurtured by the local feelings, united objects, and physical strength of the settlers; and the government of New York thought it time to seek redress in a higher quarter, and appeal to the Crown as the ultimate arbiter in all controversies of this nature. Accordingly the matter was brought before the King in Council, and his Majesty decided by a royal decree, in the year 1764, that the Connecticut River was the dividing line between New York and New Hampshire. In this decision all parties seemed to acquiesce. Governor Wentworth granted no more patents on the west side of the river, and the settlers showed no symptoms of uneasiness, as the only difference made in their condition by the royal decree was, that they were now declared to be under the jurisdiction of New York, whereas they had hitherto regarded themselves as under that of New Hampshire; but this change they did not contemplate as a grievance, presuming their property and civil

rights would be as well protected by the laws of the one colony as by those of the other.

But herein they soon discovered themselves to be in an error, and to differ widely in sentiment from their more astute neighbors. Men learned in the law and of high station in New York had made it appear, that jurisdiction meant the same thing as right of property; and since his Majesty had decided Connecticut River to be the eastern limit of that province, the governor and council decreed, that all the lands west of the said river appertained to New York, however long they might have been in the possession of actual occupants. This was a strange doctrine to men, who had paid their money for the lands, and by their own toil added ten-fold or a hundred-fold to their value; who had felled the forests by the strength of their sinews, and submitted for years to all the privations and discomforts of the woodsman's life. In a tone of just indignation they said to these new masters, we will obey your laws, but you shall not plunder us of the substance we have gained by the sweat of our brows. The New York government, however, in conformity with their interpretation of the royal decree, proceeded to grant patents covering the lands on which farms had been brought to an advanced state of culture, houses built, and orchards planted, by the original purchasers and settlers. It is true that to all such persons was

granted the privilege of taking out new patents, and securing a New York title, by paying the fees and other charges, which were greatly enhanced upon those paid at first to Governor Wentworth; that is, in other words, they were allowed the right of purchasing their own property. This was a proposition perfectly comprehensible to the most illiterate husbandman. With a very few exceptions they refused to comply with it, alleging that they had bought their lands by a fair purchase, and had a just claim to a title, under whatever jurisdiction the King might think proper to place them; that it was not their business to interfere with the controversies of the colonies about their respective boundaries, but it was their business, their duty, and their determination to retain and defend their lawful property. The case was aggravated by an order of the governor and council of New York, calling on all the claimants under the New Hampshire grants to appear before them, the said governor and council, with the deeds, conveyances, and other evidences of their claims within three months, and declaring that the claims of all persons not presented within that time should be rejected. This had no effect upon the settlers, and of course their titles were looked upon as forfeited, and the lands they occupied as being the property of the colony of New York.

It would seem, that certain speculators entered deeply into the affair, influenced more by the literal construction or ambiguous meaning of charters and royal decrees, than by the power of the settlers to support their claims, or the absolute justice of their cause. Hence repeated applications for large grants were made to the governor, which he was nowise inclined to refuse, since every new patent was attended with a liberal fee to himself. Foreseeing the mischiefs, that would result to them from this growing combination of powerful and interested individuals in New York, the settlers despatched one of their number to England as an agent in their behalf, instructed to lay their case before the King, and petition for relief. This mission was successful, so far as to obtain an order from the King in Council, July, 1767, commanding the governor of New York to abstain from issuing any more patents in the disputed territory, "upon pain of his Majesty's highest displeasure," till the intentions of the King on the subject should further be made known.

This decision, having only a prospective effect, did not annul the grants already bestowed, and the New York patentees resolved to gain possession of the lands by civil process. Writs of ejectment were taken out, and served on several of the actual occupants. In a few instances the officers were resisted by the people, and prevented from

serving the writs; but, for the most part, the New Hampshire grantees inclined to meet their opponents on this ground, and refer the matter to a judicial tribunal. Ethan Allen, having already become a leader among them, by his zeal in opposing the New York party and by the boldness of his character, was appointed an agent to manage the concerns of the defendants before the court at Albany, to which the writs of ejectment had been returned. His first step was to proceed to New Hampshire, and obtain copies of Governor Wentworth's commission and instructions, by which he was authorized to grant the lands. He next went to Connecticut, and engaged the services of Mr. Ingersoll, an eminent counsellor of that day. When the time of trial arrived, these gentlemen appeared in Albany, and produced to the court the above papers, and also the original patents or grants to those persons on whom the writs of ejectment had been served. These papers were at once set aside, as having no weight in the case, since they presupposed that the boundary of New Hampshire reached to the west of Connecticut River, a point not to be admitted by any New York court or jury. The verdict was of course given for the plaintiffs. Indeed the whole process was an idle piece of formality. It being the theoretical and practical doctrine of the New York government, that all Governor Wentworth's grants were

illegal, and many of the judges and lawyers being personally interested in the subsequent New York patents, a decision adverse to their declared opinion of the law, and to their private interests, was not to be expected. This was soon perceived by the people of the New Hampshire Grants, and no one of them again appeared in court, though sundry other cases of ejectment were brought up, and decided against the occupants. As all their grants stood on precisely the same footing, a precedent in one case would necessarily be followed in the others.

It is recorded, that after Allen retired from the court at Albany, two or three gentlemen interested in the New York grants called upon him, one of whom was the King's attorney-general for the colony, and advised him to go home and persuade his friends of the Green Mountains to make the best terms they could with their new landlords, intimating that their cause was now desperate, and reminding him of the proverb, that "*might often prevails against right.*" Neither admiring the delicacy of this sentiment, nor intimidated by the threat it held out, Allen replied, "*The gods of the valleys are not the gods of the hills.*" This laconic figure of speech he left to be interpreted by his visitors, adding only, when an explanation was asked by the King's attorney, that if he would

accompany him to Bennington the sense should be made clear.

The purpose of his mission being thus brought to a close, Mr. Allen returned and reported the particulars to his constituents. The news spread from habitation to habitation, and created a sudden and loud murmur of discontent among the people. Seeing, as they thought, the door of justice shut against them, and having tried in vain all the peaceable means of securing their rights, they resolved to appeal to the last arbiter of disputes. The inhabitants of Bennington immediately assembled, and came to a formal determination to defend their property by force, and to unite in resisting all encroachments upon the lands occupied by persons holding titles under the warrants granted by the governor of New Hampshire. This was a bold step; but it was promptly taken, and with a seeming determination to adhere to it at any hazard, and without regard to consequences. Nor was this decision changed or weakened by a proposition on the part of the New York patentees, made about this time, which allowed to each occupant a fee simple of his farm, at the same price for which the unoccupied lands in his neighborhood were sold. The first purchasers still insisted, that this was requiring them to pay twice for their lands, and that in any view the proposal was not just, inasmuch as the value of

the unoccupied lands depended mainly on the settlements, which had been made in their vicinity by the toil and at the expense of the original occupants. In short, the time for talking about charters, and boundaries, and courts of judicature was past, and the mountaineers were now fully bent on conducting the controversy by a more summary process. The wisdom or equity of this decision I shall forbear to discuss, and proceed to narrate some of its consequences.

Actions of ejectment continued to be brought before the Albany courts; but the settlers, despairing of success after the precedents of the first cases, did not appear in defence, nor give themselves any more trouble in the matter. Next came sheriffs and civil magistrates to execute the writs of possession, and by due course of law to remove the occupants from the lands. At this crisis the affair assumed a tangible shape. The mountaineers felt themselves at home on the soil, which they had subdued by their own labor, and in the territory over which they had begun to exercise supreme dominion, by meeting in conventions and committees and taking counsel of each other on public concerns. To drive one of them from his house, or deprive him of his hard-earned substance, was to threaten the whole community with an issue fatal alike to their dearest interests, and to the rights, which every man deems as

sacred as life itself. It was no wonder, therefore that they should unite in a common cause, which it required their combined efforts to maintain.

As it was expected the sheriffs would soon make their appearance, precautions were taken to watch their motions, and give due notice of their approach. In the first instance, when the sheriff arrived at the house, on the owner of which he was to serve a writ of possession, he found it surrounded by a body of men, who resisted his attempts, and defeated his purpose. Complaints were sent to Lord Dunmore, then governor of New York, accompanied with the names of the leaders of this "riotous and tumultuous" assemblage; and the governor forthwith published a proclamation on the 1st day of November, 1770, denouncing this presumptuous act, and commanding the sheriff of Albany county to apprehend the offenders, whose names had been mentioned, and commit them to safe custody, that they might be brought to condign punishment; authorizing him to call to his assistance the *posse comitatûs*, or the whole power of the county. But proclamations were of as little avail as writs of possession; and the sheriff was never lucky enough to seize any of the rioters, who doubtless had the forethought to keep out of his reach.

The next exploit was at the house of James Brackenridge, whose farm was within the township

of Bennington, and on whom the sheriff came to serve a writ. The house was filled with armed men, who treated this civil officer with much disrespect, and set his authority at naught. A few days afterwards he returned with a *posse*, such as he could collect for the purpose; but in this instance he was again repelled by a still more numerous party armed with muskets, which they presented at the breasts of the sheriff and his associates, and exhibited other attitudes of menace and contempt, against which these pacific messengers, armed only with the mandates and terrors of the law, did not think it prudent to contend. The rioters, as they were called, and perhaps by no very forced construction of language, came off a second time triumphant; and thus the boldness of their resolutions received a new incitement. These examples, however, did not deter the civil officers from endeavoring to discharge their duty. They appeared in other places, and in one or two instances with success; but they could not evade the vigilance of the people, who kept a watchful eye upon their movements, and who, when they caught the intruders, resorted to a mode of punishment less perilous than that with powder and ball, but attended with scarcely less indignity to the unfortunate sufferers. This summary process was denominated *chastisement with the twigs of the wilderness*, a phraseology too significant to need explanation.

As open war now existed, and hostilities had commenced, the *Green Mountain Boys*, as the belligerents were denominated, thought it advisable to organize their forces and prepare for the contest in a manner worthy of the cause at stake. In all the feats of enterprise and danger, as well as in matters of state policy, Ethan Allen had hitherto been the chief adviser and actor. It was natural, that, in arranging their military establishment, the people should look up to him as the person best qualified to be placed at its head. He was appointed colonel-commandant, with several captains under him, of whom the most noted were Seth Warner and Remember Baker. Committees of safety were likewise chosen, and intrusted with powers for regulating local affairs. Conventions of delegates, representing the people, assembled from time to time, and passed resolves and adopted measures, which tended to harmonize their sentiments and concentrate their efforts.

Thus prepared and supported, Colonel Allen, with a promptness and activity suited to his character, drew out his volunteers in larger or smaller numbers, as the exigency of the case required, and either in person, or by the agency of his captains, presented a formidable force to the sheriffs and constables wherever they appeared within the limits of the New Hampshire Grants. The convention had decreed, that no officer from New

York should attempt to take any person out of their territory on the penalty of a severe punishment; and it was also forbidden, that any survey or should presume to run lines through the lands, or inspect them with that intention. This edict enlarged the powers of the military commanders; for it was their duty to search out such intruders, and chastise them according to the nature of their offence. A few straggling settlers, claiming titles under the New York grants, had ventured over the line of demarkation. These were forcibly dispossessed by detachments of Colonel Allen's men, frequently led on by him in person. The sheriffs and their *posse comitatûs* continued to be pursued with unremitting eagerness, whenever they dared to set their feet on the forbidden ground. With these various affairs on his hands, it will readily be imagined that the commander of the Green Mountain Boys was not idle; nor was it surprising, that he should attract the particular notice of the New York government. So many complaints were made of the riotous and disorderly proceedings of his volunteers and associates, such was the indignation of the New York party on account of the harsh measures adopted by them towards the persons, whom they seized as trespassers upon their property, and so entirely did they set at defiance the laws of New York, to which their opponents accounted

them amenable, that the governor was tempted to try the virtue of another proclamation, in which he branded the deed of dispossessing a New York settler with the opprobrious name of felony, and offered a reward of twenty pounds to any person, who would apprehend and secure Allen, or either of eight other persons connected with him, and mentioned by name.

Whether this proclamation was thought too mild in its terms, or whether new outrages had added to the enormity of the offence, it is not easy to decide; but another was promulgated, enlarging the bounty for Allen to one hundred and fifty pounds, and for Seth Warner and five others to fifty pounds each. Not to be outdone by the authority of New York in exercising the prerogatives of sovereignty, Colonel Allen and his friends sent out a counter proclamation, offering a reward of five pounds to any person, who would take and deliver the attorney-general of that colony to any officer in the military association of the Green Mountain Boys; the said attorney having rendered himself particularly obnoxious to the settlers, by the zeal and pertinacity with which he had entered into the contest against them.* Notwithstanding the frequency of proclamations, it is believed that no person was apprehended in

* Ira Allen's *History of Vermont*, p. 29.

consequence of them, which is a proof that the people of the parts of New York adjoining the New Hampshire Grants were more favorable to the settlers, than were the prominent men of the colony; otherwise the allurement of the reward would have induced combinations for seizing individual offenders, particularly as the people were required by law to assist the sheriff in the execution of his office. Allen never denied, that the conduct of himself and his mountaineers, interpreted by the laws of New York, or the laws of any well ordered society, was properly called riotous; but he contended, that they were driven to this extremity by the oppression of their stronger neighbors, that no other means were left by which they could defend their property, and that under such circumstances they were perfectly justified in resorting to these means. They encroached not upon the possessions of other people, they remained on their own soil, and, if riots existed, they were caused by those, who came among them for purposes of molestation and injury. Viewing things in this light, he thought it hard, and with reason, that he should first be called a rioter, then a criminal rioter, and last of all be denounced to the world as a felon, with a price set upon his liberty, and threats of condign punishment if he should be taken.

But he was equally regardless of threats, and faithful in executing the charge reposed in him by his associates. Affairs had now been brought to such a stage, that it was the fixed determination of the settlers at all hazards to maintain their ground by expelling every person, who should presume to approach their territory under the auspices of the New York claimants. An incident occurred, which indicated the temper and spirit of the people. News came to Bennington, that Governor Tryon was ascending the North River with a body of British troops, who were on their way to subdue the refractory Green Mountain Boys, and to quell the disputes by an overwhelming force. This report at first produced alarm. The Committee of Safety and the military officers held a consultation. Their perilous situation was viewed in all its aspects, and it was finally resolved, that, considering the measures they had already pursued, and that their vital interests required a perseverance in the same, "it was their duty to oppose Governor Tryon and his troops to the utmost of their power." They immediately proceeded to devise a plan of operations, by which a few sharp-shooters were to be stationed in a narrow pass on the road leading to Bennington, who were to lie concealed and shoot down the officers as they approached with the troops. These same marksmen were then to hasten forward through

the woods, and join another party of their comrades at a similar position, where they were to exercise their unerring skill with their rifles, and then retreat to the main body, who would be prepared to receive the invading troops, much disordered and dispirited as it was supposed they would be by the loss of officers. Colonel Allen despatched a trusty person to Albany, with instructions to wait the arrival of Governor Tryon's army, to take particular note of the officers, that he might know them again, and to ascertain all that he could as to the numbers of the enemy, the time of marching, and other useful intelligence. The messenger returned with the information, that the troops were wind-bound down the river, that they were destined for the posts on the Lakes, and had no designs upon Bennington. Although the people were thus relieved from the necessity of putting their valor to the test, yet their prompt and bold preparation for the onset was a pledge, that in no event could it have terminated to their dishonor.

Affairs were proceeding in this train of civil commotion and active hostilities, when Governor Tryon, in a spirit of candor and forbearance hardly to have been expected at that crisis, wrote a letter to the inhabitants of Bennington and the adjacent country, dated on the 19th of May, 1772, censuring the illegality and violence of their conduct, but at the same time expressing a desire to

do them justice, and inviting them to send a deputation of such persons as they might choose, who should lay before him a full state of their grievances, and the causes of their complaints. To any deputies thus sent he promised security and protection, excepting Ethan Allen, Seth Warner, and three others, who had been named in his proclamation as offenders against the laws, and for apprehending whom a reward had been offered. On receiving this letter the people of Bennington and the neighboring towns assembled by their committees, took the subject into consideration, and without delay acceded to the proposal. They appointed two delegates, Stephen Fay and Jonas Fay, to repair to New York, and wrote a letter in answer to Governor Tryon's, briefly setting forth the grounds of their discontent and the reasons of their conduct, and referring to their agents for particular explanations. From the style and tone of the letter, it was obviously penned by Ethan Allen.

Neither was the opportunity to be passed over, by Allen and his proscribed friends, of vindicating themselves against the aspersions cast upon them by their enemies, and the stigma of being pointed out to the world as rioters, abettors of mobs, and felons. They sent a joint despatch to Governor Tryon, in the nature of a protest against the treatment they had received, and in justification of their motives and acts. Allen was

again the penman for his brethren, and, considering their provocations, and the degree of excitement to which they had been wrought up, their remonstrance was clothed in language sufficiently respectful, breathing the spirit of men conscious of their dignity, and resolute in the defence of their rights, but ready to meet the awards of justice and abide by the decision of a fair and impartial tribunal. Some of their arguments are put in a forcible manner. "If we do not oppose the sheriff and his *posse*," say they, "he takes immediate possession of our houses and farms; if we do, we are immediately indicted as rioters; and when others oppose officers in taking their friends so indicted, they are also indicted, and so on, there being no end of indictment against us so long as we act the bold and manly part and stand by our liberty. And it comes to this at last, that we must tamely be dispossessed, or oppose officers in taking possession, and, as a next necessary step, oppose the taking of rioters, so called, or run away like so many cowards and quit the country to a number of cringing, polite gentlemen, who have ideally possessed themselves of it already."

Again; "Though they style us rioters for opposing them, and seek to catch and punish us as such, yet in reality themselves are the rioters, the tumultuous, disorderly, stimulating faction, or in

tudes at the same time answering each dischrage with huzzas, and every demonstration of delight. It was accounted a day of triumph to the heroes of Bennington, and a harbinger of tranquillity to the settlers, who had hitherto been harassed by the incessant tumults of the present, or the vexatious uncertainty of the future.

But unluckily this season of rejoicing was of short duration. It was indeed premature; for although the terms brought back by the commissioners held out an appearance of reconciliation, yet the seeds of mischief were not eradicated, and they immediately began to spring up with their former vigor. The conciliatory resolve of the governor and council moreover contained an ambiguity, which seemed at first to escape the notice of the people, in the excess of their hilarity. The New York grantees were desired to cease from prosecuting any more civil suits, till the King's pleasure should be known; but nothing was said about putting in execution the suits already decided in their favor, and no prohibition intimated against their taking possession of lands claimed in consequence of such decisions, or sending surveyors to fix boundaries and localities. Hence it is obvious, that all the actual sources of dissension and tumult remained in their full force.

It was unfortunate, that an example occurred while the negotiation was pending. Soon after

the commissioners set off for New York, intelligence was brought to Bennington, that a noted surveyor, employed by the New York claimants, had found his way into some of the border townships, and was busy in running out lands. A small party rallied, with Colonel Allen at their head, went in pursuit of the surveyor, fell upon his track in the woods, overtook and seized him, intending to punish him in a manner suited to their ideas of the audaciousness of his offence. They broke his instruments, examined and tried him before a court organized according to their manner, found him guilty, and passed sentence of banishment, threatening the penalty of death, should he ever again be caught within the limits of the interdicted territory. At this juncture they heard of the success of the mission to New York, which occasioned them to dismiss the surveyor without personal injury, and to rescind their harsh sentence.

During this expedition Colonel Allen and his party also dispossessed the tenants of an intruder, near the mouth of Otter Creek, where, under the shield of a New York title, he had taken a sawmill and other property from the original settlers, and appropriated them to himself, adding tenements and improvements for his laborers. Colonel Allen expelled the tenants, burnt their habitations, restored the sawmill to its first owner, and broke

the millstones of a gristmill, which he could not burn without endangering the sawmill.

The fame of these exploits travelled with speed to New York, and kindled the anger of Governor Tryon and the members of his council. The governor wrote a letter of sharp rebuke to the inhabitants of the Grants, complaining of this conduct as an insult to government, and a violation of public faith. This letter was taken into consideration by the committees of several townships assembled at Manchester, who voted to return an answer, which was drafted by Ethan Allen, secretary to the convention. In regard to the prominent points, Mr. Allen argued in behalf of his associates, that the public faith was not plighted on their part, till after the ratification at Bennington of the terms brought back by their commissioners, and that the transactions so severely censured took place previously to that event. If there was any breach of faith in the case, it was declared to have been on the part of the land-jobbers in New York, who sent a surveyor into the disputed domain, while the commissioners were negotiating for a reconcilement of differences. As to putting the intruders at Otter Creek again into possession, which the governor had demanded in a somewhat peremptory manner, they declined doing it, assigning as a reason that those persons were justly removed, and that the

governor could not fail to be of the same opinion when duly informed of facts. The assembled committees moreover declared explicitly, that, by the terms of reconciliation, they did not expect any settlements or locations would be attempted on the lands in question, till his Majesty's pleasure should be known. If such were not the meaning and intent of the governor, in the proposal he had sent by the commissioners, then their act of ratification was a nullity.

To put the matter on this footing was at once to revive all the old difficulties; for the governor had no power to stop the course of law, by prohibiting those persons from taking possession of their lands, who had been confirmed in their claims by the regular decisions of the courts. All such claimants, and agents acting in their behalf, the settlers had determined to resist by force, and had given practical proofs of their resolution, which were not to be mistaken. They had also resolved to pursue, expel, or otherwise punish any person within the disputed district, who should presume to accept an office civil or military under the authority of New York. Like the Tories of the Revolution, these people were considered as the worst kind of enemies, and treated with uncommon severity. In an unlucky hour two or three of them accepted from Governor Tryon commissions of justices of the peace,

and had the hardihood to act in their official dignity. The indignation and wrath of the Green Mountain Boys were roused. In one instance the unhappy delinquent was brought before the Committee of Safety, where the resolve of the convention was read to him, forbidding any one in the territory to hold an office under the colony of New York; and then judgment was pronounced against him, in the presence of many persons, by which he was sentenced to be tied to a tree, and chastised "with the twigs of the wilderness" on his naked back, to the number of two hundred stripes, and immediately expelled from the district, and threatened with death if he should return, unless specially permitted by the Convention.

In the midst of these rigors, the mode of punishment was sometimes rather ludicrous than severe. In the town of Arlington lived a doctor, who openly professed himself a partisan of New York, and was accustomed to speak disrespectfully of the convention and committees, espousing the cause of the New York claimants, and advising people to purchase lands under their title. He was admonished by his neighbors, and made to understand, that this tone of conversation was not acceptable, and was requested to change it, or at least to show his prudence by remaining silent. Far from operating any reform, these

hints only stirred up the ire of the courageous doctor, who forthwith armed himself with pistols and other weapons of defence, proclaiming his sentiments more boldly than ever, setting opposition at defiance, and threatening to try the full effects of his personal prowess and implements of warfare on any man, who should have the temerity to approach him with an unfriendly design. Such a boast was likely to call up the martial spirit of his opponents, who accordingly came upon the doctor at an unguarded moment, and obliged him to surrender at discretion. He was thence transferred to the Green Mountain Tavern, in Bennington, where he was arraigned before the committee, who, not satisfied with his defence, sentenced him to a novel punishment, which they ordered to be put in immediate execution.

Before the door of this tavern, which served the double purpose of a court-house and an inn, stood a signpost twenty-five feet high, the top of which was adorned with the skin of a catamount, stuffed to the size of life, with its head turned towards New York, and its jaws distended, showing large naked teeth, and grinning terror to all who should approach from that quarter. It was the judgment of the court, that the contumacious doctor should be tied in a chair, and drawn up by a rope to the catamount, where he was to remain suspended two hours; which punishment

was inflicted, in the presence of a numerous assemblage of people, much to their satisfaction and merriment. The doctor was then let down, and permitted to depart to his own house.

On two or three occasions Colonel Allen was near being taken, in consequence of the rewards offered for him in the governor's proclamations. When he made excursions abroad, whether for military or other purposes, he commonly went armed with a musket and a brace of pistols. Being on a tour to the north, in company with a single friend, he one evening entered a house not many miles from Crown Point, in which, to his surprise and after it was too late to retreat, he found there were two sergeants and ten men. He was known to the sergeants, and soon had reason to suspect, that they intended to seize him. Putting the best face upon the matter, however, and concealing his suspicions, he called for supper, conversed in great good humor with the sergeants, asked them to drink with him, and the evening passed away merrily till bedtime. It then appeared, that there were no spare beds in the house, as they had all been taken by the first comers; but these persons very civilly proposed to yield their claims to Colonel Allen, and pressed him with a show of earnestness to accept their offer. He declined it, with thanks for their courtesy, declaring that he could not think of depriv-

ing them of their rest merely for his personal accommodation, and that, as the weather was warm, he and his companion would seek lodgings in the barn. To hide their real design they left their guns behind. The sergeants accompanied them to the barn, saw them safely in their quarters, wished them a good night's repose, and returned to the house. By a previous concert a young girl in the family took the first opportunity unseen to carry the guns to the barn. The sergeants waited till they supposed the two travellers were asleep, and that there would be no danger from their pistols, and then stole softly out, flushed with the prospect of speedily entrapping the renowned leader of the Green Mountain Boys. But their imaginary victory ended in disappointment. Colonel Allen, having succeeded in his scheme of deceiving his pursuers, had arisen and departed, and the night screened him from their search.

At another time, while he was on a visit to his brother in Salisbury, Connecticut, a plot was laid by several persons, residing between that place and Hudson's River, to come upon him by surprise, seize, and carry him to Poughkeepsie jail. This plot was accidentally discovered in time to defeat the designs of the conspirators.

Meantime the spirit of hostility between the two parties continued to increase, the New York

claimants being resolved to enforce their claims by all the power they could put in action, and the original settlers equally determined to resist aggression by every species of force, which they could wield. Hence commotions, riots, mobs, and bloodshed were common occurrences, though the settlers adhered strictly to their declared principle of acting on the defensive, never pursuing offenders beyond their own domain, but showing little mercy to those, who dared to violate their decrees, question their authority, and above all to step over the line of demarkation as the agents of their enemies. At last the New York grantees, discouraged with this mode of conducting so fruitless a contest, combined their influence, and applied to the Assembly of that province for legislative aid. The result was a law, purporting to be an act for preventing tumultuous and riotous assemblies, and punishing rioters, which may safely be pronounced the most extraordinary specimen of legislative despotism, that has ever found a place in a statute-book. After naming Ethan Allen, Seth Warner, Remember Baker, and several others, as the principal ringleaders in the riots, the law empowers the governor and council to send out an order, requiring those persons, or any others indicted for offences, to surrender themselves for commitment to one of his Majesty's justices of the peace within seventy days from

the date of the order; and in case the summons should not be obeyed, the person neglecting to surrender himself was to be adjudged and deemed as convicted, and to suffer death if indicted for a capital offence; and moreover the Supreme Court was authorized to award execution, in the same manner as if there had been an actual trial, proof of guilt, and a judicial sentence.*

On the same day that this law was enacted, the governor sent out another proclamation, offering a reward for apprehending and imprisoning Ethan Allen and seven of his associates, as if never tired of exercising this prerogative of his office, although hitherto without the least shadow of success. The object of the law and of the proclamation was to draw from their strong-holds the principal rioters, as they were called, and inflict upon them such punishments as would quell their opposition, and dishearten their followers. The effect was far otherwise. The committees of the several townships assembled in convention, and took up the subject with more calmness, than could have been anticipated under circumstances so irritating. They reviewed the causes of the

* This act, certainly one of the most curious in the annals of legislation, was passed on the 9th of March, 1774, and may be seen in Ethan Allen's *Narrative of the Proceedings of the Government of New York, &c.*, p. 23. And also in Slade's *Vermont State Papers*, p. 42.

controversy, asserted anew their rights, affirmed that they were not the aggressors, that all the violence to which they had been accessory was fully justified by the laws of self-preservation, and that they were determined to maintain the ground they had taken, without fear or favor, at every hazard and every sacrifice. They closed their public proceedings by a resolve, that all necessary preparations should be made, and that the inhabitants should hold themselves in readiness at a minute's warning to defend those among them, "who, for their merit in the great and general cause, had been falsely denominated rioters;" declaring at the same time, that they would act only on the defensive, and that in all civil cases, and criminal prosecutions really such, they would assist the proper officers to enforce the execution of the laws.

In addition to these public doings of the people at large by their representatives, the proscribed persons, at the head of whom was Ethan Allen, published a manifesto, to which they jointly affixed their names, containing a defence of themselves and free remarks on the New York act and proclamation. To look for moderation as a shining quality in a paper of this kind, is perhaps more than would be authorized by the nature of the case, or the character of the individuals concerned; yet it expresses sentiments, which we

should be sorry not to find in men, whom we would respect, and in whom we would confide in the hour of peril. It speaks in a tone of deep complaint of the injuries they have suffered from the vindictive persecutions of their enemies, protests against the tyrannical abuse of power, which would arraign them as criminals for protecting their own property, and threatens retaliation upon all, who should attempt to put in execution against them the sanguinary edict of the New York Assembly. But in the midst of the sea of dangers, with which they seemed to be surrounded, they braced themselves up with the consolatory reflection, "that printed sentences of death will not kill us; and if the executioners approach us, they will be as likely to fall victims to death as we." They furthermore proclaimed, that, should any person be tempted, by the "wages of unrighteousness offered in the proclamation," to apprehend any of them or their friends, it was their deliberate purpose to inflict immediate death upon so rash and guilty an offender.

To this pitch of legalized infatuation on the one part, and of animosity and violence on the other, had the controversy attained by imbibing new aliment at every stage, when it was suddenly arrested by events of vastly greater moment, which drew away the attention of the political leaders in New York from these border feuds to

affairs of more vital interest. The revolutionary struggle was on the eve of breaking out, and the ferment, which had already begun to agitate the public mind from one end of the continent to the other, was not less active in New York than in other places. From this time, therefore, the Green Mountain settlers were permitted to remain in comparative tranquillity. Several years elapsed, it is true, before they released themselves entirely from the claims of their neighbors, and established their independence on an undisputed basis; yet they always acted as an independent community, assumed and exercised the powers of a separate body politic, and secured at last, to the fullest extent, their original demands and pretensions. Ethan Allen had a large share in bringing the contest to its happy termination; but before we proceed any further with this subject, it is necessary to follow him through a different career, and trace the series of incidents, which befell him in the war of the Revolution.

At this point in our narrative, however, it is proper to turn our attention for a moment to a literary performance by Ethan Allen, which had some influence in its day, and which is still valuable for the historical matter it embodies. Having zealously embarked in the cause of the Green Mountain Boys, to which he was prompted both by interest and ambition, he applied his vigorous

mind to a thorough investigation of the subject. He pursued his researches into the ancient charters, followed out their bearings upon each other in regard to boundary lines, studied the history of the colonies, and thus collected a mass of authentic materials, which, with an account of recent events known to him personally, he compiled into a volume extending to more than two hundred pages. He, who in this work shall expect to find flowers of rhetoric, or a polished diction, or models of grammatical accuracy, or the art of a practised writer, will be disappointed; but, clothed in the garb of an unformed style and confused method, there are many sagacious remarks and pertinent expressions, many strong points of argument stated with force, if not with elegance, many evidences of a mind accustomed to observe and think, draw its own inferences, and utter its sentiments with a fearless reliance on its own resources and guidance.*

* The work is entitled *A Brief Narrative of the Proceedings of the Government of New York, &c.*, printed at Hartford, 1774. The supplementary part contains a reply to a pamphlet published a short time before in New York, by authority, entitled *A State of the Right of the Colony of New York, with Respect to its Eastern Boundary, &c.* It is hardly necessary to observe, that the particulars of the present memoir have thus far been chiefly derived from these two publications; to which may be added Ira Allen's *History of Vermont.*

Early in the year 1775, as soon as it was made manifest by the attitude assumed on the part of the British government against the colonies, and by the conduct of General Gage in Boston, that open hostilities must inevitably commence in a short time, it began to be secretly whispered among the principal politicians in New England, that the capture of Ticonderoga was an object demanding the first attention. In the month of March, Samuel Adams and Dr. Joseph Warren, as members of the Committee of Correspondence in Boston, sent an agent privately into Canada, on a political mission, with instructions to ascertain the feelings of the people there in regard to the approaching contest, and to make such reports as his observations should warrant. Faithful to his charge, and vigilant in his inquiries, this agent sent back intelligence from Montreal, and among other things advised, that by all means the garrison of Ticonderoga should be seized as quickly as possible after the breaking out of hostilities, adding that the people of the New Hampshire Grants had already agreed to undertake the task, and that they were the most proper persons to be employed in it.

This hint was given three weeks anterior to the battle of Lexington, and how far it influenced future designs may not be known ; but it is certain, that, eight days after that event, several gentle-

men at that time attending the Assembly in Hartford, Connecticut, concerted a plan for surprising Ticonderoga, and seizing the cannon in that fortress, for the use of the army, then marching from all quarters to the environs of Boston. Although these gentlemen were members of the Assembly, yet the scheme was wholly of a private nature, without any overt sanction from the authority of the colony. A committee was appointed, at the head of which were Edward Mott and Noah Phelps, with instructions to proceed to the frontier towns, inquire into the state of the garrison, and, should they think proper, to raise men and take possession of the same. To aid the project, one thousand dollars were obtained from the treasury as a loan, for which security was given.

On their way the committee collected sixteen men in Connecticut, and went forward to Pittsfield, in Massachusetts, where they laid open their plan to Colonel Easton and Mr. John Brown, who agreed to join them, and they proceeded in company to Bennington. Colonel Easton, being in command of a regiment of militia, proposed to engage some of them in the expedition, and enlisted volunteers as he passed along, between forty and fifty of whom reached Bennington the next day. As no time was to be lost, a council of war was immediately called, in which it was voted that Colonel Ethan Allen should send out par-

ties to the northward, secure the roads, and prevent intelligence from passing in that direction. This was accordingly done. Colonel Allen's Green Mountain Boys having been collected as speedily as possible, the little army marched, and arrived at Castleton on the evening of the 7th of May.

Here another council of war was held, and Ethan Allen was appointed the commander of the expedition, James Easton the second in command, and Seth Warner the third. Being thus organized they proceeded to fix a plan of operations. It was decided that Colonel Allen and the principal officers, with the main body of their forces, consisting of about one hundred and forty men, should march directly to Shoreham, opposite to Ticonderoga. A party of thirty men, commanded by Captain Herrick, was at the same time to move upon Skenesborough, take Major Skene * and his people into custody, seize all the boats that could be found there, and hasten with them down the Lake to meet Colonel Allen at Shoreham. Captain Douglass was also despatched to Panton, beyond Crown Point, in search of boats, which were to be brought to Shoreham, as it was supposed the boats at that place would

* The son of Governor Skene, who was likewise called Major Skene, and who was at this time absent in England.

be inadequate to the transportation of the troops across the Lake.

The position now occupied was nine miles from Skenesborough, and twenty-five from Ticonderoga by the route to be traversed. Just as these arrangements were settled, the men selected for each party, and the whole prepared to march, Colonel Arnold arrived from Massachusetts, having been commissioned by the Committee of Safety of that colony, without any knowledge of what had been done in Connecticut, to raise men and proceed on the same enterprise. He brought no men with him, but had agreed with officers in Stockbridge to enlist and send forward such as could be obtained, making all haste himself to join the expedition, which he did not hear was on foot till he came to that town. A difficulty now arose, which threatened for the moment to defeat the whole scheme. Arnold claimed the command of all the troops, by virtue of his commission from the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, averring that this was a superior appointment to that of any other officer concerned, and demanding the preference as his right. The rumor soon got to the ears of the soldiers, who broke out into vehement clamors, and were on the point of a mutiny, declaring that they would serve under no officers except those with whom they had engaged, and that they would club

their muskets and march home. The flame was quenched by the prudent conduct of Colonels Allen and Easton; and when Arnold discovered, that his pretensions met with no favor either from the men or their leaders, he yielded to necessity and agreed to unite with them as a volunteer.

The march was pursued according to the original plan, and Colonel Allen arrived without molestation on the shore of the Lake opposite to Ticonderoga. It was important to have a guide, who was acquainted with the grounds around the fortress, and the places of access. Allen made inquiries as to these points of Mr. Beman, a farmer residing near the Lake in Shoreham, who answered, that he seldom crossed to Ticonderoga, and was little acquainted with the particulars of its situation; but that his son Nathan, a young lad, passed much of his time there in company with the boys of the garrison. Nathan was called, and appeared by his answers to be familiar with every nook in the fort, and every passage and by-path by which it could be approached. In the eye of Colonel Allen he was the very person to thread out the best avenue; and by the consent of the father and a little persuasion Nathan Beman was engaged to be the guide of the party. The next step was to procure boats, which were very deficient in number, as neither Captain Herrick nor Captain Douglass had sent any from

Skenesborough or Panton. Eighty-three men only had crossed, when the day began to dawn; and while the boats were sent back for the rear division, Colonel Allen resolved to move immediately against the fort.

He drew up his men in three ranks, addressed them in a short harangue, ordered them to face to the right, and, placing himself at the head of the middle file, led them silently but with a quick step up the heights on which the fortress stood, and before the sun rose he had entered the gate and formed his men on the parade between the barracks. Here they gave three huzzas, which aroused the sleeping inmates. When Colonel Allen passed the gate, a sentinel snapped his fusee at him, and then retreated under a covered way. Another sentinel made a thrust at an officer with a bayonet, which slightly wounded him. Colonel Allen returned the compliment with a cut on the side of the soldier's head, at which he threw down his musket and asked quarter. No more resistance was made. Allen demanded to be shown to the apartment of Captain Delaplace, the commandant of the garrison. It was pointed out, and Colonel Allen, with Nathan Beman at his elbow, who knew the way, hastily ascended the stairs, which were attached to the outside of the barracks, and called out with a voice of thunder at the door, ordering the astonished captain

instantly to appear, or the whole garrison should be sacrificed. Started at so strange and unexpected a summons, he sprang from his bed and opened the door, when the first salutation of his boisterous and unseasonable visitor was an order immediately to surrender the fort. Rubbing his eyes and trying to collect his scattered senses, the captain asked by what authority he presumed to make such a demand. "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress," replied Allen. Not accustomed to hear much of the Continental Congress in this remote corner, nor to respect its authority when he did, the commandant began to speak; but Colonel Allen cut short the thread of his discourse by lifting his sword over his head, and reiterating the demand for an immediate surrender. Having neither permission to argue nor power to resist, Captain Delaplace submitted, ordering his men to parade without arms, and the garrison was given up to the victors.*

* The facts respecting Nathan Beman were related to me by a gentleman, who received them from Nathan Beman himself. Whether this exploit of his boyhood was the only one performed by him during the war, I know not; but his martial aptitude was displayed in another career, he having been for many years a noted hunter of wolves, on the northern borders of New York between Lakes Champlain and Ontario.

This surprise was effected about four o'clock in the morning of the 10th of May. Warner crossed the Lake with the remainder of the troops, and marched up to the fort. The whole number of men under Colonel Allen, as reported by the committee on the spot, in a letter to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, dated the day after the assault, was one hundred and forty from the New Hampshire Grants, and seventy from Massachusetts, besides sixteen from Connecticut. The prisoners were one captain, one lieutenant, and forty-eight subalterns and privates, exclusive of women and children. They were all sent to Hartford, in Connecticut. The principal advantage of the capture, except that of possessing the post, was one hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, also swivels, mortars, small arms, and stores. The cannon only were of much importance.

As soon as the prisoners were secured, and the bustle of the occasion had a little subsided, Colonel Allen sent off Warner with a detachment of men to take Crown Point. Strong head-winds drove back the boats, and the whole party returned the same evening. The attempt was renewed a day or two afterwards, and proved successful. A sergeant and eleven men, being the whole garrison, were made prisoners. Sixty-one good cannon were found there, and fifty-three unfit for service. Previously to this affair, Colonel

Allen had sent a messenger to Captain Remember Baker, who was at Onion River, requesting him to join the army at Ticonderoga with as large a number of men as he could assemble. Baker obeyed the summons; and when he was coming up the Lake with his party, he met two small boats, which had been despatched from Crown Point to carry intelligence of the reduction of Ticonderoga to St. John's and Montreal, and solicit reinforcements. The boats were seized by Baker, and he arrived at Crown Point just in time to unite with Warner in taking possession of that post.

Thus the main object of the expedition was attained; but the troubles of the leaders were not at an end. No sooner had the fort surrendered, than Arnold assumed the command, affirming that he was the only officer invested with legal authority. His pretensions were not heeded, and although he was vehement and positive, yet it was in vain to issue orders, which nobody would obey; and finally he consented to a sort of divided control between Colonel Allen and himself, he acting as a subordinate, but not wholly without official consideration. He had behaved with bravery in the assault, marching on the left of Colonel Allen, and entering the fortress side by side with him. When the Connecticut committee perceived his design, they repelled it upon the principle, that the gov-

ernment of Massachusetts had no concern in the matter, that the men from that colony under Colonel Easton were paid by Connecticut, and that he could be considered in no other light than a volunteer. The same committee installed Colonel Allen anew in the command of Ticonderoga and its dependencies, which by a formal commission they authorized him to retain, till Connecticut or the Continental Congress should send him instructions. A narrative of the particulars was despatched by an express to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, who confirmed the appointment, and directed Arnold not to interfere.

The party that went to Skenesborough came unawares upon Major Skene the younger, whom they took prisoner, seizing likewise a schooner and several batteaux, with all which they hastened to Ticonderoga. Allen and Arnold now formed a plan to make a rapid push upon St. John's, take a king's sloop that lay there, and attempt a descent upon the garrison. The schooner and batteaux were armed and manned; and, as Arnold had been a seaman in his youth, the command of the schooner was assigned to him, while the batteaux were committed to the charge of Allen. They left Ticonderoga nearly at the same time, but the wind being fresh the schooner outsailed the batteaux. At eight o'clock on the evening of the 17th of May, Arnold was within thirty miles of

St. John's; and, as the weather was calm, he fitted out two batteaux with thirty-five men, leaving the schooner behind and proceeding to St. John's, where he arrived at six o'clock the next morning, surprised and took a sergeant and twelve men, and the king's sloop of about seventy tons with two brass six-pounders and seven men, without any loss on either side. The wind proving favorable, he stayed but two hours and then returned, taking with him the sloop, four batteaux, and some valuable stores, having destroyed five batteaux, being all that remained. He was induced to hasten away, because large reinforcements were momentarily expected from Montreal and Chamblee.

About fifteen miles from St. John's he met Colonel Allen, pressing onward with his party. A salute of three discharges of cannon on the one side, and three volleys of musketry on the other, was fired, and Allen paid Arnold a visit on board the king's sloop. After inquiring into the situation of things, Allen determined to proceed to St. John's and keep possession there with about one hundred men. He arrived just before night, landed his party, and marched about a mile towards Laprairie, where he formed an ambuscade to intercept the reinforcements hourly expected. But finding his men greatly fatigued, and ascertaining that a force much superior to his own was on its approach, he retired to the other side of the

river. In this position he was attacked early in the morning by two hundred men, and driven to his boats, with which he returned to Ticonderoga. His loss was three men taken prisoners, one of whom escaped in a few days.

While this train of events was in progress, Colonel Easton had repaired to Massachusetts and Connecticut, instructed by Colonel Allen and the committee to explain to the governments of those colonies the transactions attending the capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and to solicit aids to secure these conquests. Since the affair had begun in Connecticut, the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts seemed well inclined to let that colony have both the honor and burden of maintaining the acquisitions, which had been gained under her auspices, and wrote to the governor of Connecticut, disclaiming all motives of interference, and recommending the business to his special charge. Governor Trumbull immediately prepared for sending up a reinforcement of four hundred men. But in truth, neither party was ambitious of assuming the responsibility of further operations, till the views and intentions of the Continental Congress should be known. Messengers were accordingly despatched to Philadelphia; and also to the Convention of New York, in which province the conquered posts were situate Policy as well as courtesy required that New

York should be consulted, since the coöperation of that colony was essential to the harmony and success of any future measures. The Continental Congress approved what had been done, and requested Governor Trumbull to send a body of troops to Lake Champlain, sufficient to defend the garrisons of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, till further orders from the Congress, and at the same time desired the Convention of New York to supply the said troops with provisions. This arrangement was carried into effect, and one thousand troops were ordered to march from Connecticut under the command of Colonel Hinman.

Meantime Allen and Arnold kept their stations, the former as commander-in-chief at Ticonderoga, and the latter at Crown Point, where he acted the part rather of a naval than of a military officer, having under his care the armed sloop and schooner, which had been taken, and a small flotilla of batteaux. Some of Colonel Allen's men went home, but others came in, both from the New Hampshire Grants, and from Albany county, so that his numbers increased. A few men also joined Arnold, whom he had engaged in Massachusetts, when he crossed the country to execute the commission of the Committee of Safety.

Flushed with his successes, and eager to pursue them, Colonel Allen began to extend his views more widely, and to think of the conquest of

Canada. Persuaded that such an undertaking was feasible, and foreseeing its immense importance to the cause in which the country was now openly embarked, he wrote the following letter to the Provincial Congress of New York.

"Crown Point, 2 June, 1775.

"GENTLEMEN,

"Before this time you have undoubtedly received intelligence, not only of the taking of the fortified places on Lake Champlain, but also of the armed sloop and boats therein, and the taking possession of a schooner, which is the property of Major Skene, which has been armed and manned, and of the conversion of them, with a large train of artillery, to the defence of the liberty and the constitutional rights of America. You have likewise undoubtedly been informed, that the expedition was undertaken at the special encouragement and request of a number of respectable gentlemen in the colony of Connecticut. The pork forwarded to subsist the army by your directions evinces your approbation of the procedure; and, as it was a private expedition, and common fame reports that there is a number of overgrown Tories in the province, you will the readier excuse me in not taking your advice in the matter, lest the enterprise might have been prevented by their treachery. It is here reported, that some of them

have been converted, and that others have lost their influence.

"If in those achievements there be any thing honorary, the subjects of your government, namely, the New Hampshire settlers, are justly entitled to a large share, as they had a great majority of the soldiery, as well as the command, in making those acquisitions; and, as you justify and approve the same, I expect you already have or soon will lay before the grand Continental Congress the great disadvantage it must inevitably be to the colonies to evacuate Lake Champlain, and give up to the enemies of our country those invaluable acquisitions, the key either of Canada or of our own country, according to which party holds the same in possession, and makes a proper improvement of it. The key is ours as yet, and provided the colonies would suddenly push an army of two or three thousand men into Canada, they might make a conquest of all that would oppose them, in the extensive province of Quebec, unless reinforcements from England should prevent it. Such a division would weaken General Gage, or insure us Canada. I would lay my life on it, that with fifteen hundred men I could take Montreal. Provided I could be thus furnished, and an army could take the field, it would be no insuperable difficulty to take Quebec.

"This object should be pursued, though it should take ten thousand men, for England cannot spare but a certain number of her troops; nay, she has but a small number that are disciplined, and it is as long as it is broad, the more that are sent to Quebec, the less they can send to Boston, or any other part of the continent. And there will be this unspeakable advantage in directing the war into Canada, that, instead of turning the Canadians and Indians against us, as is wrongly suggested by many, it would unavoidably attach and connect them to our interest. Our friends in Canada can never help us, until we first help them, except in a passive or inactive manner. There are now about seven hundred regular troops in Canada.

"It may be thought, that to push an army into Canada would be too premature and imprudent. If so, I propose to make a stand at the Isle-aux-Noix, which the French fortified by intrenchments the last war, and greatly fatigued our large army to take it. It is about fifteen miles on this side of St. John's, and is an island in the river, on which a small artillery placed would command it. An establishment on a frontier, so far north, would not only better secure our own frontier, but put it in our power better to work our policy with the Canadians and Indians, or, if need be, to make incursions into the territory of Canada, the same

as they could into our country, provided they had the sovereignty of Lake Champlain, and had erected head-quarters at or near Skenesborough. Our only having it in our power, thus to make incursions into Canada, might probably be the very reason why it would be unnecessary so to do, even if the Canadians should prove more refractory than I think for.

"Lastly, I would propose to you to raise a small regiment of rangers, which I could easily do, and that mostly in the counties of Albany and Charlotte, provided you should think it expedient to grant commissions, and thus regulate and put them under pay. Probably you may think this an impertinent proposal. It is truly the first favor I ever asked of the government, and, if granted, I shall be zealously ambitious to conduct for the best good of my country, and the honor of the government. I am, Gentlemen, &c.

"ETHAN ALLEN."

In forming an estimate of this letter, it is to be remembered, that no person had as yet ventured publicly to recommend an invasion of Canada. It had in fact hitherto been the policy of Congress to give as little offence to the Canadians as possible, this course being thought the most likely to conciliate their friendship. A resolve passed that assembly, the day before the above letter was

written, expressing a decided opinion, that no colony or body of colonists ought to countenance any incursion into Canada. The same sentiments had been declared in a public manner by the New York Provincial Congress. Ethan Allen's letter, therefore, had little chance of meeting with favor from the persons to whom it was addressed. The merit of being the first to suggest plans, which were afterwards adopted by the national councils, as of great political moment, was nevertheless due to him. Before the end of three months from the date of his letter, an expedition against Canada was set on foot by Congress, and seconded by the voice of the whole nation. Colonel Allen's advice was deemed bold and incautious when it was given, but subsequent events proved, that its basis was wisdom and forethought; and had it been heeded, and a competent force pushed immediately into Canada, before the British had time to rally and concentrate their scattered forces, few in numbers and imperfectly organized, there can be no reasonable doubt, that the campaign would have been successful, instead of the disastrous failure, which actually ensued, and which may be ascribed more to the wavering sentiments and tardy motions of Congress in projecting and maturing the expedition, than to any defect in the plan or in the manner of its execution.

As Colonel Allen knew it was at this time the prevailing policy to secure the neutrality of the Canadians, he made no hostile demonstrations towards Canada, after the prudent measure in conjunction with Arnold of seizing all the water-craft at St. John's; unless the sending of a reconnoitring party over the line may be considered a belligerent act. It is evident, however, that he did not look upon it in that light; for when his party of four men returned, and reported that they had been fired upon by about thirty Canadians, he interpreted it as a breach of peace on the side of the assailants. Embracing this as a fit opportunity, he wrote a paper, combining the two properties of a complaint and an address, which was signed by him and Colonel Easton, and despatched to a confidential person at Montreal, with directions to have it translated into French and circulated among the people. The idea of neutrality was put forward in this paper, as the one which the Canadians ought to cherish, since they had no direct interest in taking part with the English, and certainly no cause for joining in a quarrel against their neighbors of the other colonies.

The troops from Connecticut under Colonel Hinman at length arrived at Ticonderoga, and Colonel Allen's command ceased. His men chiefly returned home, their term of service having

expired. He and Seth Warner set off on a journey to the Continental Congress, with the design of procuring pay for the soldiers, who had served under them, and of soliciting authority to raise a new regiment in the New Hampshire Grants. In both these objects they were successful. By an order of Congress they were introduced on the floor of the House, and they communicated verbally to the members such information as was desired. Congress voted to allow the men, who had been employed in taking and garrisoning Ticonderoga and Crown Point, the same pay as was received by officers and privates in the American army; and also recommended to the Provincial Congress of New York, that, after consulting with General Schuyler, "they should employ in the army to be raised for the defence of America those called Green Mountain Boys, under such officers as the said Green Mountain Boys should choose." This matter was referred to the government of New York, that no controversy might arise about jurisdiction, at a time when affairs of vastly greater moment demanded the attention of all parties.

Allen and Warner repaired without delay to the New York Congress, presented themselves at the door of the hall, and requested an audience, the resolve of the Continental Congress having already been received and discussed. An embar-

rassing difficulty now arose among the members, which caused much warmth of debate. The persons, who asked admittance, were outlaws by an existing act of the legislature of New York, and, although the Provincial Congress was a distinct body from the old assembly, organized in opposition to it, and holding its recent principles and doings in detestation, yet some members had scruples on the subject of disregarding in so palpable a manner the laws of the land, as to join in a public conference with men, who had been proclaimed by the highest authority in the colony to be rioters and felons. There was also another party, whose feelings and interest were enlisted on the side of their scruples, who had taken an active part in the contest, and whose antipathies were too deeply rooted to be at once eradicated. On the other hand, the ardent friends of liberty, who regarded the great cause at stake as paramount to every thing else, and who were willing to show their disrespect for the old assembly, argued not only the injustice but tyranny of the act in question, and represented in strong colors the extreme impolicy of permitting an cient feuds to mar the harmony and obstruct the concert of action, so necessary for attaining the grand object of the wishes and efforts of every member present. In the midst of the debate, Captain Sears moved that Ethan Allen should

be admitted to the floor of the House. The motion was seconded by Melancton Smith, and was carried by a majority of two to one. A similar motion prevailed in regard to Seth Warner.

When these gentlemen had addressed the House they withdrew, and it was resolved, that a regiment of Green Mountain Boys should be raised, not exceeding five hundred men, and to consist of seven companies. They were to choose their own officers, except the field-officers, who were to be appointed by the Congress of New York; but it was requested that the people would nominate such persons as they approved. A lieutenant-colonel was to be the highest officer. The execution of the resolve was referred to General Schuyler, who immediately gave notice to the inhabitants of the Grants, and ordered them to proceed in organizing the regiment.

Meantime Allen and Warner had finished their mission, and returned to their friends. The committees of several townships assembled at Dorset to choose officers for the new regiment. The choice fell on Seth Warner for lieutenant-colonel, and on Samuel Safford for major. This nomination was confirmed by the New York Congress. Whether Colonel Allen declined being a candidate, or whether it was expected that the regiment would ultimately have a colonel, and that he would be advanced to that post, or wheth-

er his name was omitted for any other reason, I have no means of determining. At any rate he was not attached to the regiment, and in a few days he joined General Schuyler at Ticonderoga as a volunteer. He wrote a letter of thanks to the New York Congress in the following words. "When I reflect on the unhappy controversy, which has many years subsisted between the government of New York, and the settlers on the New Hampshire Grants, and also contemplate the friendship and union that have lately taken place, in making a united resistance against ministerial vengeance and slavery, I cannot but indulge fond hopes of a reconciliation. To promote this salutary end I shall contribute my influence, assuring you, that your respectful treatment not only to Mr. Warner and myself, but to the Green Mountain Boys in general in forming them into a battalion, is by them duly regarded; and I will be responsible, that they will reciprocate this favor by boldly hazarding their lives, if need be, in the common cause of America."

Knowing the value of Colonel Allen's experience and activity, General Schuyler persuaded him to remain in the army, chiefly with the view of acting as a pioneer among the Canadians. In pursuance of this design, as soon as the army reached Isle-aux-Noix, an address to the people of Canada was written by General Schuyler, the

drift of which was to convince them that the invasion was exclusively against the British, and in no degree intended as an encroachment on the rights and liberties of the ancient inhabitants. On the contrary they were invited to unite with the Americans, and participate in the honorable enterprise of throwing off the shackles of an oppressive government, asserting the claims of justice, and securing the enjoyment of freedom. This address was committed to the hands of Ethan Allen, who was instructed to proceed with it into Canada, make it known to the inhabitants in such a manner as his discretion should dictate, and ascertain as far as he could their temper and sentiments.

He went first to Chamblee, where he found many persons friendly to the American cause, and among them several men of the first respectability and influence. He was visited by these gentlemen, and by the militia captains in that neighborhood, who seemed well disposed to join with the Americans, if there was any chance of their coming forward in such numbers as to hold out a probability of success. They furnished Colonel Allen with a guard, who constantly attended him under arms, and escorted him through the woods. He sent a messenger to the chiefs of the Caghnawaga Indians, proffering to them peace and friendship. They returned the compliment by delegating two

of their tribe, with beads and a belt of wampum, to hold a conference with Colonel Allen and confirm the friendly disposition of the Caghnawagas. The ceremony was performed with much parade and solemnity, according to the Indian manner. After spending eight days on this mission, traversing different parts of the country between the Sorel and St. Lawrence, and conversing with many persons, Colonel Allen returned to the army at Isle-aux-Noix. The result of his observation was, that, should the American army invest St. John's, and advance into Canada with a respectable force, a large number of the inhabitants would immediately join in arms with the Americans; but till such a movement should be made, it was not likely that there would be any open indications of hostility to the British power. His conduct in executing this service was approved by General Schuyler.

Just at this time the command of the Canada expedition devolved on General Montgomery, who advanced to St. John's, and laid siege to that garrison. Colonel Allen was immediately despatched to retrace his steps, penetrate the country, and raise as many of the inhabitants as he could to unite in arms with the American forces. He had been absent a week, when he wrote as follows to General Montgomery.

"I am now at the parish of St. Ours, four leagues from Sorel to the south. I have two hundred and fifty Canadians under arms. As I march, they gather fast. There are the objects of taking the vessels in the Sorel and General Carleton. These objects I pass by to assist the army besieging St. John's. If that place be taken, the country is ours; if we miscarry in this, all other achievements will profit but little. I am fearful our army will be sickly, and that the siege may be hard; therefore I choose to assist in conquering St. John's. You may rely on it, that I shall join you in about three days with five hundred or more Canadian volunteers. I could raise one or two thousand in a week's time, but I will first visit the army with a less number, and, if necessary, go again recruiting. It is with the advice of the officers with me, that I speedily repair to the army. God grant you wisdom and fortitude and every accomplishment of a victorious general."

Unluckily these anticipations were blighted in their bloom. In an evil hour Colonel Allen was induced to change his judicious determination of joining General Montgomery without delay, and to give ear to a project, which proved the ruin of his bright hopes, and led him into a fatal snare. He had marched up the eastern bank of the St. Lawrence as far as Longueil, nearly opposite to Montreal, and was pressing on towards

St. John's, according to the tenor of his letter. Between Longueil and Laprairie he fell in with Major Brown, who was at the head of an advanced party of Americans and Canadians. Brown requested him to stop, took him aside, and proposed to unite their forces in an attack on Montreal, representing the defenceless condition of the town, and the ease with which it might be taken by surprise. Relying on the knowledge and fidelity of Brown, and ever ready to pursue adventures and court danger, Colonel Allen assented to the proposal, and the plan was matured on the spot. Allen was to return to Longueil, procure canoes, and pass over with his party in the night a little below Montreal; and Brown at the same time was to cross above the town, with about two hundred men, and the attack was to be made simultaneously at opposite points.

True to his engagement, Allen crossed the river on the night of the 24th of September, with eighty Canadians and thirty Americans, and landed them undiscovered before daylight, although the canoes were so few and small, that it was necessary to pass back and forth three times in conveying over the whole party. The wind was high and the waves rough, which added to the peril of an adventure sufficiently hazardous in itself. The day dawned, and Colonel Allen waited with impatience for the signal of Major

Brown's division having landed above the town. He set guards in the road to stop all persons that were passing, and thus prevent intelligence of his approach from being carried into Montreal. When the morning was considerably advanced and no signal had been given, it was evident that Major Brown had not crossed the river. Colonel Allen would willingly have retreated, but it was now too late. The canoes would hold only one third of his party. A person detained by his guard had escaped and gone into the town, and presently armed men were seen coming out. He posted his men in the best manner he could, and prepared to maintain his ground. About forty British regulars, two or three hundred Canadians, and a few Indians, constituted the assailing force. The skirmish continued an hour and three quarters, when Colonel Allen agreed to surrender to the principal British officer, upon being promised honorable terms. His men had all deserted him in the conflict, except thirty-eight, who were included in his capitulation. Seven of these were wounded. They were treated civilly by the officers while marching into Montreal, and till they were delivered over to General Prescott, whose conduct is described as having been peculiarly harsh, and in all respects unworthy of an officer of his rank. His language was coarse and his manner unfeeling. After conversing with his pris-

oner, and asking him if he was the same Colonel Allen, who had taken Ticonderoga, he burst into a passion, threatened him with a halter at Tyburn, and ordered him to be bound hand and foot in irons on board the Gaspee schooner of war. In this situation Colonel Allen wrote the following letter to General Prescott.

"HONORABLE SIR,

"In the wheel of transitory events I find myself a prisoner and in irons. Probably your Honor has certain reasons to me inconceivable, though I challenge an instance of this sort of economy of the Americans during the late war towards any officers of the Crown. On my part, I have to assure your Honor, that when I had the command and took Captain Delaplace and Lieutenant Felton, with the garrison at Ticonderoga, I treated them with every mark of friendship and generosity, the evidence of which is notorious even in Canada. I have only to add, that I expect an honorable and humane treatment, as an officer of my rank and merit should have, and subscribe myself your Honor's most obedient humble servant.

"ETHAN ALLEN." *

* The account of the capture of Ticonderoga, which has been given above, and of the subsequent events of

No answer to this letter was returned. Colonel Allen's irons were massive, and so fastened as to give him constant pain. He was handcuffed, and his ankles were confined in shackles, to which was attached a bar of iron eight feet long. In this plight he was thrust into the lowest part of the ship, where he had neither a bed nor any article of furniture, except a chest, on which by the favor of some humane sailor he was allowed to sit, or lie on his back, the only recumbent posture that his irons would suffer him to assume. His companions in arms, who capitulated on the same terms as their leader, were fastened together in pairs with handcuffs and chains.

For more than five weeks the prisoners were kept in this manner on board the Gaspee, treated as criminals, and subject to every indignity from the officers, and from persons who came to see them out of curiosity. After the repulse of Governor Carleton at Longueil, by Warner and his brave Green Mountain Boys, the state of affairs in Montreal began to put on a more doubtful aspect. It was deemed advisable to send off the prisoners,

---

Colonel Allen's life till he was taken prisoner, has been drawn entirely from original manuscripts, in the public offices of Massachusetts and New York, and among General Washington's papers. The particulars respecting his captivity are chiefly gathered from his own "*Narrative*," written and published shortly after his release.

that there might be no danger of a rescue, in case of the sudden approach of General Montgomery's army, which might be daily expected.

In a short time Colonel Allen found himself at Quebec, where he was transferred to another vessel, and then to a third, a change most favorable to his health and comfort. Captain Littlejohn, the commander of the last vessel, was particularly civil, generous, and friendly, ordering his irons to be knocked off, taking him to his own table, and declaring that no brave man should be ill used on board his ship. Unhappily this respite from suffering was of short continuance. Arnold appeared at Point Levi, on the 9th of November, with an armed force, descending from the forests like an apparition of enchantment in some fairy tale. The news of the surrender of St. John's and the capitulation of Montreal to General Montgomery came soon afterwards. These events were looked upon as the harbinger of greater disasters, in the downfall of Quebec, and the conquest of the whole province. In anticipation of the fate of St. John's and Montreal, a vessel of war, called the Adamant, had been got in readiness to carry despatches to the government. The prisoners were put on board this vessel, and consigned to the charge of Brook Watson, a merchant of Montreal. Several other loyalists were passengers, and among them Guy Johnson.

Under his new master, Colonel Allen soon discovered, that he was not to expect the urbanity and kindness of Captain Littlejohn. His handcuffs were replaced, and he and thirty-three other prisoners, manacled in the same manner, were confined together in a single apartment, enclosed with oak plank, which they were not suffered to leave during the whole passage of nearly forty days. Where there is so much to censure in the hardened insensibility, which could inflict sufferings like these on prisoners, whose only crime was their bravery, it should be mentioned as one softening feature, that as much provision was served to them as they wanted, and a gill of rum a day to each man; so that the negative merit of not adding starvation to confinement, insults, and chains, should be allowed to have its full weight. The name of Brook Watson had already become notorious. Three or four months previously to his sailing for England, he had been at New York and Philadelphia, visited many persons of distinction, especially members of the Continental Congress, and conducted himself in such a manner as to leave the impression, that he was a warm friend to the American cause. Immediately after his return to Montreal, letters written by him to persons in General Gage's army at Boston were intercepted, which proved him to have deserved the character rather of a spy than a friend. He had

art, insincerity, and talent. He was the same Brook Watson, who was afterwards Lord Mayor of London.

It was a joyful day for the prisoners when the Adamant entered the harbor of Falmouth. Their long and close confinement had become extremely irksome and painful. They were now brought on deck, and permitted to breathe the fresh air, and were cheered with the light of day. In a short time they were landed, and marched to Pendennis Castle, about a mile from the town. Great crowds were attracted to witness so novel a sight; and if all the prisoners were habited in the costume of Colonel Allen, it is no wonder that their curiosity was excited. While he was on his recruiting tour he had clothed himself in a Canadian dress, consisting of a short, fawn-skin, double-breasted jacket, a vest and breeches of sagathy, worsted stockings, shoes, a plain shirt, and a red worsted cap. In this garb he was taken; and, as it had never been changed during his captivity, he was exhibited in it to the gazing multitudes of Falmouth. Robinson Crusoe on his island could hardly have presented a more grotesque appearance. The people stared, but no insult was offered to the prisoners on their way to the castle.

In this new abode they found their condition much improved, being lodged in an airy room, and indulged with the luxury of bunks and straw

Their irons were still kept on, but they were kindly treated, and furnished with fresh and wholesome provisions. Colonel Allen was particularly favored by the commandant of the castle, who sent him a breakfast and dinner every day from his own table, and now and then a bottle of wine. Another benevolent gentleman supplied his board with suppers, and in the article of good living his star of fortune had probably never been more propitious. The renown of his adventure at Ticonderoga had gone before him; and as that fortress had a notoriety in England, on account of its importance in former wars, the man who had conquered it was looked upon as no common person, though now in chains and stigmatized with the name of rebel. He was permitted to walk on the parade-ground within the walls of the castle, where many respectable people from the neighborhood paid him a visit, and conversed with him on various topics. His bold and independent manner, fluency of language, and strong native talent, contrasted with the singularity of his appearance, in his Canadian dress and handcuffs, awakened the surprise and contributed to the amusement of his auditors. Though in bondage, and completely at the mercy of his enemies, he was eloquent on the theme of patriotism, boasted the courage and firmness of his countrymen, and pledged himself that they would never

cease to resist oppression, till their just claims were allowed, and their liberty secured. These political harangues, if they had no other effect, served to lighten the weight of his chains, and to give a seeming impulse to the leaden wings of time.

Notwithstanding the comparative amelioration of his circumstances, Colonel Allen's mind was not perfectly at ease in regard to the future. General Prescott's hint about his gracing a halter at Tyburn rested upon his thoughts, and gave him some uneasiness amidst the uncertain prospects now before him. But despondency and fear made no part of his character, and, even when hope failed, his fortitude was triumphant. Prepared for the worst that might happen, he bethought himself of trying the effect of a stratagem. He asked permission to write a letter to the Continental Congress, which was granted. He depicted in vivid colors the treatment he had received from the beginning of his captivity, but advised the Congress not to retaliate, till the fate that awaited him in England should be known, and then to execute the law of retaliation not in proportion to the small influence of his character in America, but to the extent demanded by the importance of the cause for which he had suffered. The despatch was finished, and handed over for inspection to the officer, who had permitted him to write. This

officer went to him the next day, and reprimanded him for what he called the impudence of inditing such an epistle. "Do you think we are fools in England," said he, "and would send your letter to Congress with instructions to retaliate on our own people? I have sent your letter to Lord North." This was precisely the destination for which the writer intended it, and he felt a secret satisfaction that his artifice had succeeded. He wished the ministry to know his situation and his past sufferings, and to reflect, that his countrymen had it in their power to retaliate in full measure any acts of violence meditated against his person. A letter on these subjects, written directly to a minister by a prisoner in irons, would not have been forwarded.

Whatever ideas the ministry may have entertained when the prisoners were landed, it was soon perceived that lenient measures were the most advisable. The opposition made a handle of an act so outrageous, as that of treating as malefactors and chaining men, who had been taken bravely fighting in a cause, for which a whole continent was in arms; and it was now too late to talk of hanging the revolted colonists on the plea of rebellion. Moreover it was known, that St. John's and Montreal had surrendered to Montgomery, and that the very officers, who had captured these men and sent them to England, were in the hands

of the Americans. It was furthermore rumored, that certain gentlemen had resolved to try the effect of the *Habeas Corpus* act in setting the prisoners at liberty, or at least in bringing them to a trial before a proper magistrate, to ascertain whether they were legally guilty of any offence, which justified their confinement. To silence popular clamor, and prevent rash consequences, the government determined to regard them as prisoners of war, and to send them back to America. For this purpose they were ordered on board the Solebay frigate, where their irons were taken off, after they had worn them about three months and a half.

Just at this time the grand armament was preparing to sail from Ireland, under Sir Peter Parker and Lord Cornwallis, with troops to act against North Carolina, according to a plan formed by the ministry in consequence of the representations of Governor Martin, that a numerous body of loyalists was ready to take up arms in that colony, as soon as they should be encouraged by the coöperation of a sufficient force from Great Britain. The troops were to be put on board in the harbor of Cork, where the vessels destined for the expedition rendezvoused, and among them the Solebay frigate. From the captain of this ship Colonel Allen had early proofs, that the prisoners were to expect neither lenity nor civil treatment. His

first salutation was to order them in an imperious tone to leave the deck, and never appear there again, adding that the deck was the "place for gentlemen to walk." Allen was conducted down to the cable-tier, where he was left to accommodate himself as well as he could. Being ill of a cold, and his health much impaired by his late sufferings, the natural buoyancy of his spirits failed him in this comfortless abode, and he felt himself, as he has expressed it, "in an evil case," imagining his enemies to have devised this scheme of effecting, by a slow and clandestine process, what it was impolitic for them to do in the open face of day with the eyes of the public upon them.

His despondency, however, gradually wore off, and, two days afterwards, wanting fresh air and exercise, he resolved to try the experiment of appearing on deck, having washed, shaved, and adjusted his dress in the best manner his scanty wardrobe would allow. The captain saw him, and demanded in an angry voice, if he had not been ordered not to come on deck. Colonel Allen replied, that he had heard such an order from him, but at the same time he had said, "the deck was the place for gentlemen to walk," and, as he was Colonel Allen and a gentleman, he claimed the privilege of his rank. Whether influenced by this kind of logic, or by some other reason, the captain contented himself with utter-

ng an oath, and cautioning the prisoner never to be seen on the same side of the ship with him. There was encouragement even in this harsh greeting, since it did not amount to an absolute prohibition; and, by taking care to keep at a proper distance from the captain, he was afterwards permitted to walk the deck, though sometimes capriciously and rudely ordered off. His condition below was somewhat amended by the generosity of the master-at-arms, an Irishman, who offered him a place in a little berth fitted up for himself with canvass between the decks, in which he was kindly allowed by the occupant to remain till the ship arrived in America.

When it was known at Cork, that Colonel Allen and his fellow-prisoners were in the harbor on board the Solebay, several gentlemen of that city determined to convey to them substantial evidences of their sympathy. A full suit of clothes was sent to each of the privates; and Colonel Allen's wardrobe was replenished with fine broadcloth sufficient for two suits, eight shirts and stocks ready made, several pairs of silk and worsted hose, shoes, and two beaver hats, one of which was richly adorned with gold lace. Nor did the bounty of the philanthropists of Cork end here. Although they had clothed the naked, they did not consider the work of benevolence finished till they had fed the hungry. A

profuse supply of sea-stores came on board for Colonel Allen, consisting of sugar, coffee, tea, chocolate, pickled beef, fat turkies, wines, old spirits, and other articles suited for a voyage. Each of the privates also received tea and sugar. Added to this, a gentleman visited Colonel Allen, in behalf of the donors, and offered him fifty guineas, which, after the other tokens of their munificence, he declined to accept, retaining only seven guineas as a relief in case of pressing necessity.

The above articles were admitted on board by the second lieutenant, while his superiors were on shore; but when the captain returned and was informed what had been done, he was angry, and swore that "the American rebels should not be feasted at this rate by the rebels of Ireland." He took away all the liquors, except a small quantity, which was secreted by the connivance of the second lieutenant, and he appropriated to the use of the crew all the tea and sugar, that had been given to the privates. The clothing they were permitted to keep.

The fleet put to sea from Cork on the 13th of February, consisting of forty-three sail, with about two thousand five hundred troops. The weather was fine, and the effect was beautiful as the ships sailed out of the harbor; but they had been at sea only five days, when a terrible storm

arose, which raged with unabated violence for twenty-four hours, dispersed the fleet, and shattered several of the transports so much, that they were obliged to put back to Cork and the southern ports of England. The Solebay received no essential injury, and she proceeded on her voyage. Before they left Cork the prisoners were divided and assigned to three different ships. This gave their leader some uneasiness, for they had been brave, and true to the cause in which they suffered, and had borne all their calamities with a becoming fortitude. It turned out, however, that they were better treated on board the other ships, than they had been while with him. The only incident worthy of being commemorated, which happened to Colonel Allen during the voyage, was the change of his Canadian costume for one fabricated from the superfine broadcloths received in Cork. This metamorphosis was effected by the aid of the captain's tailor, whose services were granted on this occasion as a special favor. Clad in his new suit with his silk stockings and laced hat, the prisoner made a more respectable figure on deck, and enjoyed privileges, which at first had been denied.

It was with some regret, therefore, that, after his arrival at Cape Fear River, in North Carolina, he found himself transferred to the Mercury frigate, the captain of which he describes as

tyrannical, narrow-minded, and destitute of the common feelings of humanity. The only consolation in this change of circumstances was, that his original companions in captivity were brought together again on board this ship, except one who had died on the passage from Ireland, and another who had escaped by an extraordinary exertion of swimming, after the fleet arrived on the coast, and who safely reached his home in New England. The captain ordered the purser not to let the prisoners have any thing from his store, and forbade the surgeon's attending them in sickness. Every night they were shut down in the cable-tier, and indeed they passed a miserable existence both day and night, being told, when they complained of such treatment, that it was a matter of little consequence, as they would be hanged when they arrived in Halifax.

The Mercury sailed from Cape Fear River on the 20th of May, and touched at the Hook off New York the first week in June. At this time General Washington with the American army had possession of New York, and the British shipping lay in the outer harbor near the Hook. The Mercury remained here three days, during which time Governor Tryon, and Mr. Kemp, the attorney-general of New York under the old government, came on board. Tryon eyed Allen, as they were walking on different parts of the

deck, but did not speak to him. It is natural to presume, that the late governor saw with a secret satisfaction the man in safe custody, who had caused him so much unavailing trouble in writing proclamations. Kemp was the same attorney, whom Allen had met at Albany, when he attended the court there as agent for the patentees of the New Hampshire Grants. No man had been more active in pressing the New York claims, or in stirring up persecutions against the Green Mountain Boys; and of course no one had acquired among them a more odious notoriety. This accidental meeting with Ethan Allen must have called up peculiar associations in the minds of both the governor and the attorney-general.

The Mercury arrived in Halifax after a short passage from New York. The prisoners were put into a sloop, then lying in the harbor, and a guard watched them day and night. In this confinement they were served with so scanty an allowance of provisions, that they suffered cruelly from the distress of hunger, which, added to attacks of the scurvy, made their condition more deplorable than it had been at any former time. They were still under the direction of the captain of the Mercury, to whom they wrote letter after letter, imploring medical aid and other assistance, but in vain. The captain was deaf to their calls,

took no notice of their complaints, and, to get rid of their importunities, he ordered the guards to bring him no more letters. Their case seemed now reduced to the verge of despair. Allen resolved, however, to make one more effort. He wrought so far upon the compassion of one of the guards, as to persuade him to take a letter directed to Governor Arbuthnot, which was faithfully communicated. Touched with the claims of humanity, the governor immediately sent a surgeon to the prisoners, with instructions to administer such relief to the sick as was necessary, and also an officer, to ascertain and report the grounds of their complaint. This officer discharged his duty well, and the result was, that the next day they were removed from their dismal quarters on board the prison-sloop to the jail in Halifax.

To seek the asylum of a jail is not a usual experiment for attaining happiness. In the present instance, however, it was a fortunate one for the sufferers, inasmuch as it was the means of relieving them from the pains of hunger, and procuring for them the attendance of a physician. In other respects their condition was little amended, since more than thirty persons were shut up in one room, several of them in various stages of sickness, with hardly a single accommodation, that could in any manner contribute to their comfort or convenience. Some of Allen's fellow-prisoners

had been sent to the hospital, and others employed in the public works, so that only thirteen of those taken in Canada now remained with him.

Among the American prisoners, whom Allen met in Halifax jail, was Mr. James Lovell of Boston, a gentleman eminent for his learning and character, who, after his release, was many years a member of the Continental Congress. His zeal in the cause of his country, and frankness in avowing his sentiments, had made him an object of suspicion and odium to the British commander in Boston, where he was first imprisoned; and, when that city was evacuated, he was carried into captivity, and locked up in the jail of Halifax in the same apartment with prisoners of the lowest class.

There were now together four American officers, besides Mr. Lovell, who, by the custom of war and the practice then existing in regard to British prisoners taken by the Americans, had a right to their parole; but this was never granted. They were kept in close confinement till orders came from General Howe to send them to New York. Partial negotiations had commenced between General Washington and General Howe for the exchange of prisoners, and certain principles had been laid down, by the mutual agreement of the parties, as a basis upon which to proceed. Moreover Congress had instructed General Washington to make a special application in

favor of Mr. Lovell and Colonel Allen, proposing to exchange Governor Skené for the former, and an officer of equal rank for the latter. The legislature of Connecticut had also interfered in behalf of Allen, and eighteen of the prisoners taken with him, who were natives of that State, and solicited Congress and the Commander-in-chief to use all practicable means for effecting their release. The same had been done by the Massachusetts legislature in the case of Mr. Lovell.

After the intelligence of Allen's being in Halifax reached his friends, a project was formed by his brother, Levi Allen, to visit him there and attempt to procure his liberty. The State of Connecticut voted money to pay the expense of this enterprise, but the arrival of the prisoners in New York rendered it unnecessary.

The Lark frigate, on board of which were Mr. Lovell, Colonel Allen, and their companions, sailed from Halifax about the middle of October. Luckily they found themselves at last under an officer, Captain Smith, who treated them with the politeness of a gentleman, and with the feelings of a man capable of sympathizing in the distresses of the unfortunate. The first interview is thus described by Colonel Allen. "When I came on deck, he met me with his hand, welcomed me to his ship, invited me to dine with

him that day, and assured me that I should be treated as a gentleman, and that he had given orders that I should be treated with respect by the ship's crew. This was so unexpected and sudden a transition, that it drew tears from my eyes, which all the ill usages I had before met with were not able to produce; nor could I at first hardly speak, but soon recovered myself, and expressed my gratitude for so unexpected a favor, and let him know, that I felt anxiety of mind in reflecting, that his situation and mine was such, that it was not probable it would ever be in my power to return the favor. Captain Smith replied, that he had no reward in view, but only treated me as a gentleman ought to be treated. He said, this is a mutable world, and one gentleman never knows but it may be in his power to help another."

An opportunity soon occurred of verifying this last remark. They had not been at sea many days, when it was discovered that a conspiracy was on foot to destroy the captain and the principal officers, and seize the ship. An American captain, who had commanded an armed vessel, and been recently taken prisoner, was the chief conspirator. He revealed his designs to Colonel Allen and Mr. Lovell, requesting their coöperation in bringing over the other prisoners, about thirty in number, and telling them that several of

the crew were ready to join in the plot. It was known that there were thirty-five thousand pounds in money on board, and the plan of the conspirators was to take the ship into an American port, where they expected to divide the booty according to the usual rules of captures. Without waiting to discuss the laws of war, or to reason about the infamy and criminality of such an act with men, who were prepared to execute it, Colonel Allen declared with his usual decision and vehemence, that he would not listen a moment to such a scheme, that, in its mildest character, it was a base and wicked return for the kind treatment they had received, and that he would at every personal hazard defend Captain Smith's life. This rebuff was unexpected by the conspirators, and it threw them into a distressing dilemma, since the fear of detection was now as appalling to them as the danger of their original enterprise. They then requested him to remain neutral, and let them proceed in their own way, but this he peremptorily refused; and he finally succeeded in quelling the conspiracy, by adhering to his resolution, and promising, that, as he had been consulted in confidence, he would not divulge the matter, if the leaders would pledge themselves instantly to abandon the design. In the present state of things they were glad to accept such terms. At the conclusion of this affair Colonel Allen was forcibly reminded of the words of Captain Smith.

Before the end of October the Lark frigate anchored in the harbor of New York, and the prisoners were removed to the Glasgow transport. Mr. Lovell was exchanged in a few days for Governor Skene; and Colonel Allen, after remaining four or five weeks in the transport, where he met with very civil usage, was landed in New York and admitted to his parole. Here he had an opportunity of witnessing the wretched condition and extreme sufferings of the American prisoners, who had been taken in the battle on Long Island and at Fort Washington, and who were left to perish of hunger, cold, and sickness in the churches of New York. He speaks of these scenes as the most painful and revolting, that could be conceived. Indeed numerous concurring testimonies have established it as a fact, of which not a shadow of doubt can now be entertained, that human misery has seldom been seen in such heart-rending forms or under circumstances so aggravating. The motives of the enemy for practising or permitting cruelties so little consonant to the dictates of humanity, the customs of civilized warfare, and every principle of sound policy, are not a fit theme of inquiry in this narrative. The fact itself is an indelible stain, deep and dark, in the character of Sir William Howe, which no array of private virtues, of military talents, or public acts, will hide or obscure. The picture drawn by Allen, colored as it may be

by the ardor of his feelings, is vivid and impressive, and its accuracy is confirmed by the declarations of several other persons, who also related what they saw.

While he was on his parole in New York, a British officer of rank and importance sent for him to his lodgings and told him that his fidelity, though in a wrong cause, had made an impression upon General Howe, who was disposed to show him a favor, and to advance him to the command of a regiment of loyalists, if he would join the service, holding out to him at the same time brilliant prospects of promotion and money during the war, and large tracts of land at its close. Allen replied, "that if by faithfulness he had recommended himself to General Howe, he should be loth by unfaithfulness to lose the general's good opinion;" and as to the lands, he was by no means satisfied, that the King would possess a sufficient quantity in the United States at the end of the war to redeem any pledges on that score. The officer sent him away as an incorrigible and hopeless subject.

In the month of January, 1777, he was directed with other prisoners to take up his abode on the western side of Long Island, being still on parole, and allowed the usual freedom under such circumstances within certain prescribed limits. Here he remained in a condition of comparative

comfort till August, when he was suddenly apprehended, environed with guards, conducted to the provost-jail in New York, and put into solitary confinement. This act was on the pretence of his having infringed his parole, which he affirmed was untrue, and the whole proceeding unjust and malicious. But the cause was now of little moment, since he was chiefly concerned with the effect. For the space of three days he was immured in his cell without a morsel of food. The sergeant, who stood at the door, refused to be moved by offers of money or appeals to his compassion, and repelled every advance with a soldier's oath and the brief reply, that he would obey his orders. The pains of hunger became extreme, but they were at last assuaged; and in a few days he was transferred to another apartment of the jail, where he found himself in company with more than twenty American officers.

From this place he was not removed till the end of his captivity. After being shut up for more than eight months in the provost-jail, a confinement of which the prisoners were ever accustomed to speak with disgust and horror, the day of liberty dawned upon him.

Neither his countrymen generally, nor the supreme council of the nation, had at any time lost sight of his sufferings, or ceased to express their sympathy. Congress had on several occasions

proposed his exchange; but it was prevented after his arrival in New York by the difficulties, which embarrassed and defeated all attempts for effecting a general cartel between Washington and Howe. It was finally agreed, that he should be exchanged for Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell; and on the 3d of May, 1778, he was taken from prison and conducted under guard to a sloop in the harbor, and thence to Staten Island. Here he was politely received by the British commander, and kindly treated for two days, when Colonel Campbell arrived from Elizabethtown, under the charge of Mr. Elias Boudinot, the American Commissary-General of prisoners. It may easily be conceived that the meeting was one of mutual congratulation and joy. The two released captives drank a glass of wine together in celebration of the event, and Colonel Allen returned immediately with Mr. Boudinot to Elizabethtown.

His feelings, on once more touching the soil and breathing the air of freedom, will be left to the imagination of the reader. He was now restored to his country, the object of a patriotic devotion, that neither the cruelty nor the enticements of the enemy could diminish; in whose cause he had suffered a captivity of two years and seven months, under all the rigor of chains, hunger, and harsh usage. Insensibility made no part of his nature, and the soul must be callous

indeed, that would not thrill with emotion at the recollections of the past, the realities of the present, and the visions of the future, that now thronged upon his mind.

Notwithstanding the strong associations and tender ties, which drew him towards his home and friends, the impulse of gratitude was the first he obeyed. The lively interest taken in his condition by the Commander-in-chief, and his efforts to procure his release, were known to him, and he resolved to repair without delay to head-quarters, and express in person his sense of the obligation. The army was at Valley Forge, and as he advanced into the country on his way to that place, he was everywhere greeted by the people with demonstrations of strong interest, not unmixed with curiosity at seeing a man, the incidents of whose life had given him renown, and whose fate while in the hands of the enemy had been a subject of public concern. General Washington received him cordially, and introduced him to the principal officers in camp, who showed him many civilities.

Having thus discharged a duty, which he believed to be demanded by justice and gratitude as the first fruit of his liberty, and having remained a few days only at Valley Forge, he turned his face towards the Green Mountains, and hastened to join his family and former associates. From

Valley Forge to Fishkill he travelled in company with General Gates, who was proceeding to take command of the army on the North River. In the evening of the last day of May, Colonel Allen arrived in Bennington, unexpected at that time by his friends, and a general sensation was immediately spread throughout the neighborhood. The people gathered around him, and, with a delight which could be realized only under circumstances so peculiar, he witnessed the joy that beamed from every countenance, and heard the accents of a hearty welcome uttered by every voice. It was a season of festivity with the Green Mountain Boys, and the same evening three cannon were fired, as an audible expression of their gladness. Nor did the scene of hilarity end with that day. The next morning Colonel Herrick, who had distinguished himself by his bravery under the veteran Stark in the battle of Bennington, ordered fourteen discharges of cannon, "thirteen for the United States and one for young Vermont," as a renewed and more ample compliment to the early champion and faithful associate of the Green Mountain Boys.

Congress was equally mindful of the services and of the just claims of Colonel Allen. As soon as he was released from captivity, they granted him a brevet commission of colonel in the Continental army, "in reward of his fortitude, firmness,

and zeal in the cause of his country, manifested during the course of his long and cruel captivity, as well as on former occasions." It was moreover resolved, that he should be entitled, during the time he was a prisoner, to all the benefits and privileges of a lieutenant-colonel in the service of the United States. That is, he was to receive the pay and other emoluments of that rank. As the brevet commission of colonel did not entitle him to pay, he was allowed seventy-five dollars a month from the date of that commission, till he should be called into actual service. How long this allowance was continued, I have no means of ascertaining. It does not appear, that he ever joined the Continental army. From the above proofs, however, it is evident, that the proceedings of Congress in regard to him were generous and honorable, manifesting at the same time a proper sense of his past sufferings, and respect for his character.

During his absence, important changes had taken place in the affairs of the New Hampshire Grants. The inhabitants had made a gradual progress in maturing and establishing a new form of government, having declared their territory an independent State, under the name of *Vermont*, framed and adopted a new constitution, and organized the various branches of government by the election of a governor and other civil

officers. In effecting these objects they had encountered numerous obstacles, both from the internal distractions caused by the invasion of Burgoyne's army, and from the machinations and adverse influence of external foes. The embers of the old feud with New York were stirred up afresh, when the people of Vermont presumed to talk of independence and a separation from that State. Governor Clinton, and several other prominent individuals in New York, had been warmly enlisted at an early day against the pretensions of the Green Mountain Boys; and although they were far from abetting or vindicating the rash measures of the colonial administration, yet they were strenuous in asserting the supremacy of New York over the whole territory as far as Connecticut River, and in demanding from the people an obedience to the laws of that State. Hence it followed, that the controversy was only narrowed in its extent, but not at all changed in its principles.

Ethan Allen arrived just in time to buckle on his armor, and enter with renovated vigor into a contest, in which he had been so conspicuous and successful a combatant from its very beginning, and with all the tactics of which he was perfectly familiar. Governor Clinton, by the authority of the New York Legislature, had recently sent out a proclamation, reprobating and

annulling the bloody statute heretofore mentioned, acknowledging that attempts contrary to justice and policy had been made to dispossess the original patentees of their lands, and putting forth certain overtures for a reconciliation of differences, but taking care to assert the absolute power of New York over the persons and property of such, as did not choose to accept these proposals. According to the tenor of these overtures, the patents of the governor of New Hampshire were all to be confirmed, but a continuance of the quit-rents was claimed from the purchasers, as under the colonial system, and the unsettled lands were reserved as the property of the State.

The grand feature of the proclamation was the assumption of supremacy, and this was the point most essential to the people of Vermont, since it struck at the root of their political existence. The overtures were dressed up in such a manner, as to have a plausible appearance, and to be likely to lead astray those persons, who thought less of preserving their political rights, than of the immediate security of their possessions. The more wise and wary, however, took the alarm, and among these was Ethan Allen. He saw a fatal danger lurking beneath a show of proffered indulgences and fair professions. The cautious Trojan distrusted the Greeks even in their acts of apparent generosity; and the leader of the

Green Mountain Boys looked with an eye of equal suspicion on the spontaneous advances of the New Yorkers. In short, every proposal, come from what quarter it might, which did not imply the entire independence of Vermont as a separate State and government, was in his view to be disdained and repelled.

In this spirit he wrote an address to the inhabitants of Vermont, stating briefly the grounds of their claims to the privilege of self-government, and exhorting them not to relax for a moment in their efforts to attain the end for which they had struggled so long and so hard. A large part of his address was taken up in animadverting on Governor Clinton's proclamation, in which, as with a good deal of ingenuity and force he made it appear, the overtures of New York held out to them nothing which they did not already possess, and would deprive them of the dearest of earthly treasures, their liberty. His arguments and his mode of stating them were suited to the people, whom he addressed, and without doubt produced the desired effect of confirming their confidence in themselves, and inciting them to union and perseverance.

Sometimes he touches on personal incidents. Alluding to the bloody act of proscription, which had been passed under Governor Tryon, he observes; "In the lifetime of that act I was called

by the Yorkers an outlaw; and afterwards by the British I was called a rebel; and I humbly conceive, that there was as much propriety in the one name as the other; and I verily believe, that the King's commissioners would now be as willing to pardon me for the sin of rebellion, provided I would afterwards be subject to Britain, as the legislature above mentioned, provided I would be subject to New York; and I must confess I had as lief be a subject of the one as the other, and it is well known I have had great experience with them both."

In his concluding remarks on the overtures in the proclamation he says, still addressing himself to the people; "The main inducement I had in answering them was, to draw a full and convincing proof from the same, that the shortest, best, and most eligible, I had almost said the only possible way of vacating those New York interfering grants, is to maintain inviolable the supremacy of the legislative authority of the independent State of Vermont. This, at one stroke, overturns every New York scheme, which may be calculated for our ruin, makes us freemen, confirms our property, and puts it fairly in our power to help ourselves in the enjoyment of the great blessings of a free, uncorrupted, and virtuous civil government. You have fought, bled, and hitherto conquered, and are as deserving of these

good fruits of your valor, hazard, and toil, as any people under heaven.

"You have experienced every species of oppression, which the old government of New York, with a Tryon at their head, could invent and inflict; and it is manifest, that the new government are minded to follow in their steps. Happy is it for you, that you are fitted for the severest trials. You have been wonderfully supported and carried through thus far in your opposition to that government. Formerly you had every thing to fear from it; but now, you have little to fear, for your public character is established, and your cause known to be just. In your early struggles with that government you acquired a reputation of bravery; this gave you a relish for martial glory, and the British invasion opened an ample field for its display, and you have gone on conquering and to conquer until tall grenadiers are dismayed and tremble at your approach. Your frontier situation often obliges you to be in arms and battles; and by repeated marching, scoutings, and manly exercises, your nerves have become strong to strike the mortal blow. What enemy of the State of Vermont, or what New York land-monopolizer, shall be able to stand before you in the day of your fierce anger!"

By harangues like this, abounding more in strong and pointed expressions, than in good taste

ng to be controlled by the voice of a majority. Upon this basis the committees were intrusted with all the power requisite to form regulations for local purposes. The conventions attained the same objects in a broader sphere, and with higher authority. The system was peculiarly felicitous in being adapted to communities of every description, and to small numbers as well as large. Its principles were likewise the elements of the best constructed governments; and hence the people were gradually trained up in the art of self-control, and qualified to assume and maintain the character of an independent State, even while embarrassed by the hostility and interference of the neighboring powers. It is remarkable, that the plan of conventions and committees, which was adopted by all the States at the beginning of the Revolution, had previously been eight years in practice among the first settlers of Vermont.

Considering the part, which Ethan Allen had acted before his captivity, and the consistency of his conduct, it was to be expected, that he would embark with his accustomed zeal in a cause, which had now acquired a new importance, and especially as it was still involved in the old quarrel with New York. As his countrymen had not forgotten the military rank to which they raised him in the season of their former perils, nor the services he rendered at the head of the Green Moun-

tain Boys, and were disposed to profit again by his sword, as well as by his pen and his counsels, he was, soon after his return, appointed general and commander of the militia of the State. A stronger proof of confidence could not have been shown, more particularly at this time, when an invasion of the British from Canada might at any moment be apprehended, and when the delicate relations subsisting between Vermont and two adjoining States threatened an ultimate resort to arms as a possible consequence, either to quell internal factions, or to resist aggressions from abroad.

Meantime an incident occurred, which encumbered the affairs of Vermont with other difficulties. For certain political reasons, sixteen townships in the western parts of New Hampshire, bordering on Connecticut river, formed a combination to desert from that State and join themselves to Vermont. They sent a petition for that purpose to the Vermont legislature; but it was at first no farther acted upon than to refer it to the people. At the next meeting of the legislature it was found, that a majority of the legal voters was in favor of admitting the sixteen townships. Hence a new enemy was raised up, and the field of discord enlarged. The governor of New Hampshire wrote a spirited protest to the governor of Vermont, claiming the sixteen townships

as a part of that State, and deprecating such an unwarrantable dismemberment. He wrote at the same time to the Continental Congress, demanding their interference in a matter of vital moment, not only to New Hampshire, but to every State in the Union, should such a disorganizing act be tolerated as a precedent.

The Vermont Assembly saw their error too late to retract it, since they had referred the subject to the people, and were bound to abide by their decision. To set the thing in as fair a light as it would bear, however, they appointed General Allen a special agent to proceed to Philadelphia, and explain to Congress this point and others requiring explanation, and endeavor as far as possible to ascertain the views of the members in regard to the independence of Vermont, and what was to be expected from the future deliberations of that body.

Furnished with proper instructions, General Allen repaired to Philadelphia, and applied himself to the duties of his mission. He soon discovered the undertaking to be surrounded with more difficulties, than he had anticipated. Distinct from the absolute merits of the case, there were in Congress party divisions, emanating from various sources, which prevented any union of action or sentiment on the subject of Vermont. The New England members were mostly in favor of granting

independence. This was not less the dictate of sound policy, than of the natural feelings of attachment to people closely allied to themselves and their constituents. Another State in the bosom of New England would of course strengthen the power and influence of the whole in the general scale. It was to be presumed, therefore, that the New England States would second the claims of Vermont; nor was this presumption weakened by any hereditary good will, that had formerly existed between those States and New York.

Unfortunately New Hampshire, for the reasons above stated, had been induced to deviate from the line of her neighbors, under the apprehension that her interests were in jeopardy. She was indeed meditating ambitious projects of her own, and forming a design to defeat the pretensions of Vermont, by extending her jurisdiction as far as Lake Champlain, and drawing the whole territory within her limits. She thus placed herself in rivalship with New York, in hostility to Vermont, and at variance with the other adjoining States.

Taking these considerations into view, and the known enmity of the New York members, General Allen's prospects of carrying back a satisfactory report to his friends were faint and discouraging. The southern delegates were indifferent, or only adhered to one side or the other as a

means of exerting a party influence. It is doubtless true, also, that several members were conscientiously opposed to any decision by Congress, believing the question not to come within the powers intrusted to that assembly. They argued, that the subject could not rightfully be brought before them in any shape, except in obedience to special instructions from the respective States. Others again denied the power of Congress to interfere at all, affirming that Vermont was in fact independent, and had a right to set up such a scheme of government as she chose. This was a short mode of settling the controversy, but it would hardly satisfy the scruples of New York, or the aspiring hopes of New Hampshire.

On his return from this mission, General Allen presented a report to the legislature of Vermont, containing the result of his observations, in which he gave it as his opinion, "that the New York complaints would never prove of sufficient force in Congress to prevent the establishment of the State of Vermont," and advised the legislature by all means to recede from the union with the sixteen townships, since it could never be approved by Congress without violating the articles of confederation, by which the rights and original extent of each State were guarantied. On this topic he spoke with decision and force.

In addition to the general objects of his mission,

the visit to Congress was not without advantage to himself and his constituents. It made him intimately acquainted with the views of the delegates in Congress, and with the arguments used by various individuals and parties. He ascertained likewise how far policy and individual bias on the one hand, and a regard for the absolute merits of the question on the other, operated in giving a complexion to the national councils.

This knowledge had an important influence on the future proceedings of Vermont. General Allen turned it to an immediate account, and he wrote a treatise vindicating the course hitherto pursued by Vermont, and maintaining the justice of her claim to set up such a form of government, as the people themselves should judge most conducive to their prosperity and happiness.* Mr. Jay said of this book, in writing to a member of Congress when it first appeared, "There is quaintness, impudence, and art in it." He might have added, argument and the evidences of a good cause.

In these unwearied labors for the defence of the rights and dignity of the State, and in superintending its military affairs as commander of the

* The tract was entitled, *A Vindication of the Opposition of the Inhabitants of Vermont to the Government of New York, and of their Right to form an Independent State.* It was published in 1779, by order of the Governor and Council, or with their approbation.

militia, General Allen's time was fully employed. It was at this period, that the British generals in America began to meditate the scheme of bringing Vermont into a union with Canada, by taking advantage of the disputes, which had continued so long and waxed so warm, that it was supposed Vermont had become alienated from Congress and the opposing States, and would be ready to accept tempting overtures from the British. This idea received encouragement from the circumstance, that Congress afforded but a slender defence to the frontiers of Vermont, although the governor of Canada was in condition to make a descent with a force sufficient to bear down any opposition, that could be interposed by the whole strength of the State. The first step was to bring over some of the leaders; and as Ethan Allen was the most conspicuous of these, and also the military chieftain, the attempt was made upon him. That his views might be ascertained on this subject, the following letter was written to him by Beverly Robinson, colonel of a regiment of loyal Americans, or, in other words, refugees adhering to the British cause and embodied in the British army.

New York, March 30th, 1780.

"Sir,

"I am now undertaking a task, which I hope you will receive with the same good intention, that

inclines me to make it. I have often been informed, that you and most of the inhabitants of Vermont are opposed to the wild and chimerical scheme of the Americans, in attempting to separate this continent from Great Britain, and to establish an independent State of their own; and that you would willingly assist in uniting America again to Great Britain, and restoring that happy constitution we have so wantonly and unadvisedly destroyed. If I have been rightly informed, and these should be your sentiments and inclination, I beg you will communicate to me without reserve whatever proposals you would wish to make to the Commander-in-chief, and I here promise that I will faithfully lay them before him according to your directions, and I flatter myself I can do it to as good effect as any person whatever. I can make no proposals to you until I know your sentiments; but I think, upon your taking an active part, and embodying the inhabitants of Vermont in favor of the crown of England to act as the Commander-in-chief shall direct, that you may obtain a separate government under the King and constitution of England, and the men be formed into regiments under such officers as you shall recommend, and be on the same footing as all the provincial corps are here.

"I am an American myself, and feel much for the distressed situation my poor country is in

at present, and am anxious to be serviceable toward restoring it to peace, and that mild and good government we have lost. I have therefore ventured to address myself to you on this subject, and I hope you will see it in a proper light, and be as candid with me. I am inclinable to think, that one reason why this unnatural war has continued so long is, that all the Americans, who wish and think it would be for the interest of this country to have a constitutional and equitable connexion with Great Britain, do not communicate their sentiments to each other so often and so freely as they ought to do.

"In case you should disapprove of my hinting these things to you, and do not choose to make any proposals to government, I hope you will not suffer any insult to be offered to the bearer of this letter; but allow him to return in safety, as I can assure you he is entirely ignorant of its contents; but if you should think it proper to send proposals to me, to be laid before the Commander-in-chief, I do now give you my word, that, if they are not accepted, or complied with by him, of which I will inform you, the matter shall be buried in oblivion between us. I will only add, that if you should think proper to send a friend of your own here, with proposals to the general, he shall be protected and well treated here, and allowed to return whenever he pleases.

I can add nothing further at present, but my best wishes for the restoration of the peace and happiness of America. I am, &c.

"BEVERLY ROBINSON."

This letter, artful and plausible as it was, made no impression upon the patriotism of Ethan Allen. Although written in February it was not received till July. He immediately sent back the messenger, and in confidence communicated the letter to the governor and a few other friends, who all agreed with him, that it was best to pass it over in silence. That they might not be outdone, however, in the allowable stratagems of war, they bethought themselves to turn to a profitable purpose this advance on the part of the enemy. The British were expected soon to appear on Lake Champlain in great force, and it was a thing of essential importance in the present difficult condition of Vermont, to ward off the impending danger. Several prisoners from this State were now in Canada, and it was advised that the gov ernor should write to the commander in Canada, proposing a cartel for an exchange. A letter was accordingly despatched with a flag. The object was to produce delay, and by a finesse to lead the enemy to pursue their ideas of drawing Vermont over to their interest. While this should be fostered, it was not probable they would attack the people, whom they wished to conciliate.

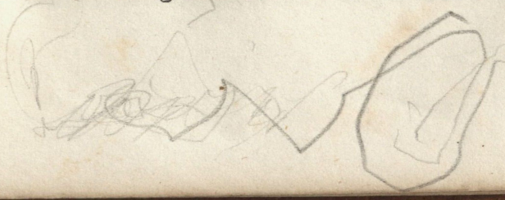
No answer was returned, till the enemy's fleet was seen coming up the Lake in a formidable attitude, spreading an alarm far and wide, and apparently threatening an immediate invasion. Many persons took their arms and marched to the frontier. But no hostile acts were committed. The commander on board the fleet sent a flag to General Allen, with a letter to the governor of Vermont, assenting on the part of General Haldimand, commander-in-chief of the British army in Canada, to the proposal for an exchange of prisoners, and offering a truce with Vermont till the cartel should be arranged.

This preliminary negotiation of a truce was conducted by General Allen. In defining the extent of territory, which the truce should cover, he included all the settlements as far west as the Hudson River. To this extension the British officer objected, as not being within the bounds of Vermont. Such an arrangement would moreover prevent the expedition up the Lake from acquiring honor, or attaining any ostensible object; whereas, if not hampered with the truce, it might act with some effect on the frontiers of New York. This was a strong motive for insisting, that the truce should be confined strictly within the limits of Vermont, but as General Allen was unyielding, the officer gave way, and it was definitively settled as reaching to Hudson's River.

This was a dictate of sound policy, as appeared in the subsequent history of Vermont. It had a conciliatory effect upon the inhabitants of that part of New York included in the truce. Their antipathy was disarmed, and at one time they even courted a union with Vermont.

As this was a secret arrangement, and not then made known publicly, the people were surprised to see the fleet retreating down the Lake, and the military disbanded and going home. Commissioners were appointed by the governor of Vermont to meet others from Canada, and settle the terms of a cartel. The season was so far advanced, however, that they were obstructed in their voyage across the Lake by the ice, and obliged to return. Nothing was done during the winter. The advantage thus far gained by Vermont was, that a campaign of the enemy on her borders had been rendered ineffectual. As a compensation, the British supposed they had made good progress in detaching from Congress the affections of a discontented province, and winning them over to the King.

As these transactions were well known to the enemy in New York, Colonel Robinson was concerned not to have received an answer to his letter. Thinking it might have miscarried, although he had sent a duplicate and triplicate, or assuming such a supposition as a pretence for



writing again, he despatched a second letter to Ethan Allen, dated February 2d, 1781. In this was enclosed a fourth copy of the first, and it contained the following paragraph.

"The frequent accounts we have had for three months past, from your part of the country, confirms me in the opinion I had of your inclination to join the King's cause, and assist in restoring America to her former peaceable and happy constitution. This induces me to make another trial in sending this to you, especially as I can now write with more authority, and assure you that you may obtain the terms mentioned in the above letter, provided you and the people of Vermont take an active part with us. I beg to have an answer to this as soon as possible, and that you will, if it is your intention, point out some method of carrying on a correspondence for the future; also in what manner you can be most serviceable to government, either by acting with the northern army, or to meet and join an army from hence. I should be glad if you would give me every information, that may be useful to the Commander in-chief here."

Shortly after receiving this second epistle, General Allen sent them both to the Continental Congress, accompanied by one of his own, in which he expressed in very emphatical language his sentiments in regard to the interests of Ver-

mont, and the unjustifiable attempts of the adjoining States to abridge her rights and even destroy her existence. Having explained the mode in which the letters came into his hands, and mentioned his having shown the first to Governor Chittenden and other gentlemen, he proceeds as follows.

"The result, after mature deliberation, and considering the extreme circumstances of the State, was, to take no further notice of the matter. The reasons for such a procedure are very obvious to the people of this State, when they consider that Congress have previously claimed an exclusive right of arbitrating on the existence of Vermont, as a separate government; New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts Bay at the same time claiming this territory, either in whole or in part, and exerting their influence to make schisms among her citizens, thereby, in a considerable degree weakening this government, and exposing its inhabitants to the incursion of the British troops, and their savage allies from the province of Quebec. It seems those governments, regardless of Vermont's contiguous situation to Canada, do not consider that their northern frontiers have been secured by her, nor the merit of this State in a long and hazardous war; but have flattered themselves with the expectation, that this State could not fail (with their help) to be des-

olated by a foreign enemy, and that their exorbitant claims and avaricious designs may at some future period take place in this district of country.

"I am confident that Congress will not dispute my sincere attachment to the cause of my country, though I do not hesitate to say, I am fully grounded in opinion, that Vermont has an indubitable right to agree on terms of a cessation of hostilities with Great Britain, provided the United States persist in rejecting her application for a union with them; for Vermont, of all people, would be the most miserable, were she obliged to defend the independence of the united claiming States, and they, at the same time, at full liberty to overturn and ruin the independence of Vermont. I am persuaded, when Congress consider the circumstances of this State, they will be the more surprised, that I have transmitted to them the enclosed letters, than that I have kept them in custody so long; for I am as resolutely determined to defend the independence of Vermont, as Congress are that of the United States; and rather than fail, I will retire with hardy Green Mountain Boys into the desolate caverns of the mountains, and wage war with human nature at large."

The concluding words of this paragraph may be considered as characteristic of the writer; but

the sentiments expressed in the letter, respecting the allegiance due from Vermont to the United States, were unquestionably entertained by all the principal men of that State. Independence was their first and determined purpose ; and, while they were neglected by Congress, and, like another Poland, threatened with a triple partition between the adjoining States, they felt at liberty to pursue any course, that would secure their safety, and conduct them towards their ultimate object. It was on this principle, that they encouraged advances to be made by the British, and not that they ever had the remotest intention of deserting the cause of their country, or submitting in any manner to the jurisdiction of the English government.

While the war continued, however, these negotiations with the enemy were carried on with much address, and so successfully as to prevent any further hostilities from Canada. A correspondence was kept up, which was known only to a few persons, and was chiefly managed by Ethan Allen and his brother Ira Allen. Messengers came to them secretly with letters, and waited in concealment till consultations were held, and answers prepared, with which they returned to Canada. This was a slow process, but it served to amuse the enemy, and keep their hopes alive. While this could be done, Vermont was safe from

attack, and had only to apprehend the artifices of those, who were striving by the weapons of the civil power to annihilate her freedom.

The English ministry had at one time sanguine expectations from the prospect of affairs in this quarter. I have seen two letters from Lord George Germain to Sir Henry Clinton, one written in February and the other in June, 1781, wherein the minister congratulates the commander-in-chief on the happy return of the people of Vermont to their allegiance, and represents it as an important event. He adds, that, should Washington and the French meditate an irruption into Canada, they would find in Vermont an insurmountable barrier to their attempts; and also that General Haldimand would undoubtedly send a body of troops to act in conjunction with the people, secure the avenues through the country, and, when the season should admit, take possession of the upper parts of the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers, and cut off the communication between Albany and the Mohawk country. Again he observes, that, should the people of Vermont be menaced by a detachment from Washington's army, General Haldimand would have forces ready to throw in among them, by which they would be relieved from any fears of the resentment of Congress, and see it to be their wisest and safest course to return to their loyalty.

Such were the vagaries of Lord George Germain in his office at Whitehall, even within a few months of the capitulation at Yorktown. And in truth they present a very just specimen of the strange reveries, surprising ignorance, or wilful blindness of that minister, in regard to American affairs, during the whole war.

General Allen was not entirely occupied with the duties of his military station. At the next election after his return from captivity, he was chosen a representative to the Assembly of his State. How long he continued in public life as a legislator, or how long he retained the active command of the militia, I have not been able to ascertain. When peace was restored, however, he seems to have resumed his agricultural habits, and devoted himself to his private affairs. He was a practical farmer, accustomed to labor with his own hands, and submit to the privations and hardships, which necessarily attend the condition of pioneers in a new country.

In this retirement he published a work on a series of topics very different from those, which had heretofore employed his pen.* He says in

* The book is entitled, *Reason the only Oracle of Man, or a Compendious System of Natural Religion.* It was published at Bennington, in the year 1784. The preface is dated July 2d, 1782.

the Preface, that he had been from his youth addicted to contemplation, and had from time to time committed his thoughts to paper. This book purports to be the result of his lucubrations, revised, arranged, and prepared with much labor for the press. In its literary execution it is much superior to any of his other writings, and was evidently elaborated with great patience of thought and care in the composition. It is nevertheless a crude and worthless performance, in which truth and error, reason and sophistry, knowledge and ignorance, ingenuity and presumption, are mingled together in a chaos, which the author denominates a system. Some of the chapters on natural religion, the being and attributes of God, and the principles and obligations of morality, should perhaps be excepted from this sweeping remark; for, although they contain little that is new, yet they are written in a tone, and express sentiments, which may screen them from so heavy a censure.

Founding religion on the attributes of the Deity and the nature of things, as interpreted by reason, the author takes it for granted, that there is no necessity for a revelation, and thence infers, that the Christian Revelation and miracles are false; and he argues against the Old Testament upon the same principles. Historical facts and internal evidence, the only basis of

correct reasoning on this subject, are passed over in silence. There is no proof that the author ever examined them. It must be allowed, however, that he mistook some of the errors of Christian sects for the true doctines of revealed religion, and that his views, as to the reality and nature of the system itself, were perverted by this misapprehension.

If we may judge, also, from various passages in this book, some of his biographers have not done him strict justice in regard to his religious opinions. They have affirmed, that he believed in the metempsychosis of the ancients, or the transmigration of souls after death into beasts, or fishes, and that "he often informed his friends, that he himself expected to live again in the ferm of a large white horse." If he was absurd and frivolous enough to say such a thing in conversation, he has certainly expressed very different sentiments in his writings. No person could declare more explicitly his belief in a future state of rewards and punishments, and a just retribution, than he has done in the following passages contained in this book.

"We should so far divest ourselves," he observes, "of the incumbrances of this world, which are too apt to engross our attention, as to acquire a consistent system of the knowledge of our duty, and make it our constant endeavor in life to act

conformably to it. The knowledge of the being, perfections, creation, and providence of God, and the immortality of our souls, is the foundation of our religion." Again, "As true as mankind now exist and are endowed with reason and understanding, and have the power of agency and proficiency in moral good and evil, so true it is, that they must be ultimately rewarded or punished according to their respective merits or demerits; and it is as true as this world exists, and rational and accountable beings inhabit it, that the distribution of justice therein is partial, unequal, and uncertain; and it is consequently as true as that there is a God, that there must be a future state of existence, in which the disorder, injustice, oppression, and viciousness, which are acted and transacted by mankind in this life, shall be righteously adjusted, and the delinquents suitably punished."

To what extent these doctrines bear out the charge of a belief in the transmigration of souls, let the reader judge.

After the publication of the above work, I have not found recorded any events in the life of Ethan Allen, which are sufficiently important to be commemorated; unless it be the circumstance of his having been solicited, by Shays and his associates, to take command of the insurgents in Massachusetts. He rejected the proposal with disdain, sending back the messengers who brought it, with

a reprimand for their presumption, and at the same time writing a letter to the governor of Massachusetts, in which he expressed his abhorrence of the insurrection, and assured the governor that his influence should be used to prevent any of its agents and abettors from receiving countenance or taking refuge in Vermont. This was conformable to all his previous conduct; for, notwithstanding the scenes of turbulence in which he was often engaged, it should be remembered to his honor, that he was ever, in theory and practice, a firm supporter of civil government when founded in equity and the rights of the people. So rigid was he in his patriotism, that, when it was discovered that one of his brothers had avowed Tory principles, and been guilty of a correspondence with the enemy, he entered a public complaint against him in his own name, and petitioned the court to confiscate his property in obedience to the laws of the State.

Before the end of the war, General Allen removed from Bennington, which had long been his place of residence. He was next for a short time an inhabitant of Arlington, afterwards of Sunderland, and finally he settled himself in the vicinity of Onion River, where he and his brothers had purchased large tracts of land. He was twice married. His second wife, and children by both marriages, survived him. Through life

he possessed a robust constitution, and uncommonly good health; but his career was suddenly terminated by an apoplexy, at Burlington, in the year 1789.

We have thus sketched the principal incidents in the life of a man, who holds a place of some notoriety in the history of his times. His character was strongly marked, both by its excellences and defects; but it may safely be said, that the latter were attributable more to circumstances beyond his control, than to any original obliquity of his mind or heart. The want of early education, and the habits acquired by his pursuits in a rude and uncultivated state of society, were obstacles to his attainment of some of the higher and better qualities, which were not to be overcome. A roughness of manners and coarseness of language, a presumptuous way of reasoning upon all subjects, and his religious skepticism, may be traced to these sources. Faults of this stamp, and others akin to them, admit of no defence, though, when viewed in connexion with their causes, they may have claims to a charitable judgment. Had his understanding been weak, his temperament less ardent, his disposition less inquisitive, and his desire of honorable distinction less eager, the world would probably never have heard of his faults; the shield of insignificance would have covered them; but it was his destiny to be con-

spicuous, without the art to conceal or culture to soften his foibles.

Yet there is much to admire in the character of Ethan Allen. He was brave, generous, and frank, true to his friends, true to his country, consistent and unyielding in his purposes, seeking at all times to promote the best interests of mankind, a lover of social harmony, and a determined foe to the artifices of injustice and the encroachments of power. Few have suffered more in the cause of freedom, few have borne their sufferings with a firmer constancy or a loftier spirit. His courage, even when apparently approaching to rashness, was calm and deliberate. No man probably ever possessed this attribute in a more remarkable degree. He was eccentric and ambitious, but these weaknesses, if such they were, never betrayed him into acts dishonorable, unworthy, or selfish. His enemies never had cause to question his magnanimity, nor his friends to regret confidence misplaced or expectations disappointed. He was kind and benevolent, humane and placable. In short, whatever may have been his peculiarities, or however these may have diminished the weight of his influence and the value of his public services, it must be allowed, that he was a man of very considerable importance in the sphere of his activity, and that to no individual among her patriot founders is the State

of Vermont more indebted for the basis of her free institutions, and the achievement of her independence, than to ETHAN ALLEN.