



THE STORY OF THE REVOLUTION

BY HENRY CABOT LODGE

THE TEST OF ENDURANCE

1779-1781

AS the year 1778 was closing, the scene of action was shifted from the North to the South. All eyes at the time were fixed on the events which began with the appearance of the British in Georgia, and, so far as this period is concerned, the habit has continued, in large measure, down to the present day. Thus it happens that these two years in the North, in the Congress and the camp, as well as over seas, are less well known, less rightly valued than any other period of the Revolutionary War. That this should be so was, at the time, wholly natural. The fall of Savannah, and its subsequent defence against the French and Americans, the capture of Charleston, the rapid success of the British arms, the defeat of Gates, the gradual development and hard fighting of Greene's great campaign, all drew the attention and filled the minds of men everywhere. Yet, important as these events were, the vital point still remained where Washington and his army watched the Hudson and kept the enemy pinioned in New York. If that army had failed or dissolved, the English forces would have swept down from the North to meet their brethren in the South, and nothing could have saved Greene then, for the one primary condition of his campaign was that no British soldiers should come from the North to break his communications, cut off his supplies, and take him in the rear. None came from the North. None could come. With a singleness of purpose and a strategical soundness which has never been fully appreciated, Washington clung to the central zone of the Middle States. Whatever came, he was determined that the British should never get the line of the Hudson and divide

New England—whence he drew most of his troops—from the great middle colonies. Neither Burgoyne on the North, nor Cornwallis on the South, could draw him from his position. Attacks on the extremities he knew were not deadly, and he felt sure that they could be repulsed; but if the centre was once pierced, then dire peril was at hand. So long as he kept an army together and the line of the Hudson open, so long as he could move at will, either eastward into New England, or southward into Virginia, he knew that the ultimate success of the Revolution was merely a question of time. The period of active fighting in the North was over; that of waiting—dreary, trying, monotonous waiting—had set in, and it lasted until the moment which Washington was watching for arrived—the great moment when a decisive stroke could be given which would end the war. Two years the waiting and watching went on—years of patience, suffering, and trial. Nothing was done that led straight to anything; nothing but the holding fast which was to bring the final victory.

Very hard to understand now was the victory thus achieved by keeping the army in existence and the Revolution alive during that time of sullen, dogged waiting. Everywhere were visible signs of exhaustion, of longings to have done with the business before it was really finished. Over seas the symptoms of fatigue were painfully apparent. England, as has always been the case when she is sore bested—and never was she in worse plight than then—was making a bold front to the enemies who ringed her round. She was suffering enormously. American war-ships

and privateers were tearing her commerce to pieces. Her naval prestige was hurt to the quick by John Paul Jones taking the *Serapis* in a hand-to-hand fight and circling Great Britain, wrecking and pillaging on land and sea. A race of seamen as bold and hardy as her own, flying the flag of her revolted colonies, swarmed along the highways of her commerce, and even in the English Channel were seizing her merchantmen and crippling her trade. Insurance rates rose ruinously, and English merchants faced losses which they would have deemed impossible five years before. France and Spain had both gone to war with her, threatened her coasts, employed her fleets, and soon beleaguered her great sentinel fortress at Gibraltar. Wherever her vast possessions extended, wherever her drum-beat was heard, there was war; in the Indian Ocean, as well as the Antilles, no colony was safe, and there was now no Pitt to guide the forces as in the days when she humbled the power of the House of Bourbon. But England set her teeth and would not yet cry hold. Her European enemies were suffering, too, and worse than she, for they were both unsound within, politically and financially. In France the disease which the monarchy had planted and which the Revolution alone could cure was already deeply felt. France was beginning to long for rest, and, despite her early energy in the American cause, she was ready to sacrifice that cause to her own interests at any moment. France desired peace—an ill omen for America, with its revolution only half fought out. With the ally of France the condition was even worse. Spain was corrupt, broken, rotten to the core, merely hiding her decrepitude under the mask of an empire which had once been great. Dragged into the war by France, she had no love whatever for the Americans—desired only to prey upon them and get what she could from the wreck of the British Empire. She, too, was feeling the strain of war, exhaustion was upon her, and she, too, longed for peace.

In such a situation, amid these powers of the Old World occupied only with their own interests and enfeebled by their own maladies, the fortunes of the young nation, struggling painfully into life on the other side of the Atlantic were in sufficiently evil

case. The work of saving them fell heavily upon the envoys of Congress, manfully battling for their cause in the midst of these adverse and selfish forces.

Help came to them and to the Revolution as it had come to the American armies so often, from the blunders of their adversary. Instead of trying to conciliate, England grew more and more offensive to all the neutral powers, and especially to those which were weak. She seized and searched their ships, interfered with their trade, and assumed to exercise an arrogant control over all their commerce. Hence protracted bickerings, protocols, notes, and all the machinery of diplomacy put into violent action with much running hither and thither of eminent persons and much speeding about of dusty couriers riding post haste with despatches. It is very difficult and not very profitable to follow these performances with their turns and windings and futilities of all sorts. But out of these dim and confused discussions came two results of real importance to the world, and particularly to the American revolution. One was the neutrality of the Northern powers headed by Russia and her redoubtable Empress, aimed against England, very troublesome and crippling to her in the days of a conflict which had grown world-wide. The other result of real importance and meaning was England's making war upon the Dutch. This was pure aggression born of a desire to break down a power once a formidable rival and still a competitor in trade. The Dutch were innocent enough, their only real crime having been to refuse to become England's ally. But innocence or guilt made no difference, England made war upon them. She dealt a last fatal blow to the nation which had shattered the power of Spain, played an equal part among the great states of Europe and given to England herself the one great man among her modern kings. Holland sank eventually under the attack, but England added one more foe to those who now surrounded her in her "splendid isolation," and she threw open to her revolted colonies another money-market, rich in capital which went forth in loans to the Americans, quick enough to take advantage of such an opportunity.

In the United States in 1779 the same relaxation of energy was apparent. Con-

gress passed the winter and spring in long debates as to the terms of peace. Gerard, the French Minister, was active among the members urging them to accept conditions which involved every sort of sacrifice, largely for the benefit of Spain. So eager was the desire for peace that a strong party in Congress backed up all the wishes of the French envoy. At one time it looked as if the navigation of the Mississippi might be given up, and the great Northeastern fisheries were actually abandoned. Finally Congress evaded both issues by resolving to send an envoy to Spain, for which post John Jay was chosen, and meantime to insist on the navigation of the Mississippi, while the matter of the fisheries was put over to a future treaty with Great Britain. In other respects the instructions were weak, with a plaintive desire to bring the war to an end at almost any price running all through them.

So Congress spent most of its time and strength in discussing the means of getting peace when the war was not yet fought out, and did little or nothing to sustain that war which was flagrant about it. Thirty thousand men at least were needed for any effective movement against New York, and the army was not a third of that number, and was dwindling instead of growing. Washington came to Philadelphia and passed a month there with Congress, urging, reasoning, explaining, beginning now to press for better union and a strong central government. Then he went back to the camp to continue the urgings and reasonings and stern advice on many subjects by letter. Not until March did Congress even vote additional battalions, and although this was well, voting men was by no means the same thing as getting them. The finances were in frightful disorder. Many great wars, perhaps most of them, have been fought on irredeemable paper, and it is no doubt true that this was probably the quickest, if not the only resource of Congress at the beginning. But to fight on paper money alone, to raise no money by taxation, in fact to get no money at all from the people was an impossible scheme. Yet this was precisely what Congress attempted to do, and they had no other supply to look to except foreign loans which were uncertain and insufficient. So one emission of bills

succeeded another, and the continental money sank rapidly, while speculators and forestallers threw on the disorders of the currency, and the government, poor though it might be, was robbed and plundered. The popular spirit relaxed its temper, encouraged thereto by the foreign alliances and disheartened by the domestic disorders and the greed of those who amassed fortunes from the fluctuations of prices and fattened on the public distress. It looked as if the American Revolution, rising victorious on the field of battle, might sink and wither away under the poison of civil and social disorder and debility.

Bad as all these things were in their effect upon the American cause and upon the people themselves, the actual personal suffering fell to the lot of the army by whose existence the revolution was sustained. Officers and men went unpaid for long periods, and when they received their pay it was in a paper currency which depreciated in their hands even before they could spend it or send it to their families. Hence great difficulty in holding the army together, and still greater difficulty in recruiting it. With lack of pay went lack of every provision and munition of war, and, as a consequence, ill-clothed, ill-armed, ill-fed soldiers. In the midst of these grinding cares and trials stood Washington, with the problem of existence always at his door, with the great duty of success ever present at his side, and with only the patriotism of his men and his own grim courage and tenacity of purpose to support him. Under the pressure of hard facts one plan after another had to be given up. A vigorous offensive campaign which would drive the British from the country was impossible. The next best thing was to keep them shut up where they were, and to hold fast, as had so wisely and steadily been done to the great central position in the valley of the Hudson, at the mouth of the great river whence blows could be struck hard and quickly either in New England or the Middle States which must never be separated no matter what happened.

So Washington resumed the defensive and watched and waited. To much purpose, as it in due course appeared, for the British seemed unable to make any effective movement, and lay cooped up in New

York close to their ships, with their vigilant foe always hovering near. Not until Washington could get an efficient army and the command of the sea would he be able to strike a fatal blow, and no man could tell when those conditions would come to pass. The silent general knew just what he needed, and equally well that he had it not. So he waited, unable to attack and ready to fight. The test of endurance had begun.

The British on their side displayed activity only in spasmodic dashes here and there, of little meaning and petty results. General Matthews, with 2,500 men, went to Virginia, made a burning, pillaging raid, destroyed a certain number of houses and tobacco ships, and came back with his futilities to New York. Tryon, once royal governor of New York, led another expedition of 2,600 men into Connecticut. Here, as in Virginia, burning and pillaging and some sharp skirmishes with militia, who managed to leave their marks on the king's troops. Villages, churches, houses, vessels, went up in smoke. A black trail marked the line followed by Tryon's raiders, and then he likewise returned to New York as empty in solid results as Matthews, and with a certain amount of destroyed property and increased hatred from the Americans to his credit.

The worthlessness of these performances and the utter uselessness of such plundering forays were quite apparent to Washington, and, except for the suffering of the people upon whom they fell, troubled him little. But there was another movement of the enemy which awakened his keenest interest, because in it he saw possibilities of real danger. Clinton, after the return of Matthews, had gone up the river and taken possession of Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, driving off the Americans and securing in this way control of Kings Ferry, an important line of communication between New York and New Jersey. Here was something which looked as if it had meaning. Perhaps an idea had come to Clinton, and possibly he was intending to master the Hudson Valley by building a line of formidable posts along the river. Certain it was that he had put a force of five hundred men at Stony Point, and was actively completing and strengthening the works there. If Clinton had any plan of

this perilous sort it must be nipped at the start. No British posts must be advanced to the North to endanger the American stronghold at West Point, which dominated and closed the river. So Washington decided to take Stony Point, and, as was his habit, chose the best man for the work, because in a desperate undertaking like this everything depended on the leader. His choice fell on Anthony Wayne, then a brigadier-general and one of Washington's favorite officers. Wayne came of fighting stock. His grandfather, a Yorkshireman, nearly a century before had gone to Ireland where he commanded a company of dragoons under William of Orange at the battle of the Boyne. From Ireland he had immigrated to the frontiers of Pennsylvania, and there his grandson was born in 1745. The family was in easy circumstances, and the boy received a good education, became a surveyor, and was trusted in important business by Franklin and other leading men of Philadelphia. He took an eager interest and active part in politics, but when the note of war came the spirit of the old captain of dragoons who had followed Dutch William blazed up in him and he went at once into the army. From that time forward he was constantly in the field. On the Northern frontier, in New York and New Jersey, and in the campaign about Philadelphia, Wayne, who had risen rapidly to general's rank, was always in the heat of every action. "Wherever there is fighting there is Wayne, for that is his business," was said of him at the time, and said most truly. He was always fighting with great dash, courage, and success, and extricating himself by his quickness and intrepidity from the dangers into which his reckless daring sometimes led him. "Black Snake" the Indians called him then, and many years later, when he had beaten them under the walls of an English post in very complete and memorable fashion, they named him "Tornado." He was fine-looking, soldierly, a great stickler for handsome dress and perfect equipment, so much so that some of the officers christened him "Dandy Wayne," but the men who loved and followed him called him "Mad Anthony," and the popular name has followed him in history. Such was the man whom Washington picked out for

the perilous task he wanted to have performed. Tradition says that when Washington asked Wayne if he would storm Stony Point, Wayne replied, "I will storm hell if you will plan it." A very honest bit of genuine speech this; quite instructive, too, in its way, and worth the consideration of the modern critic who doubts Washington's military capacity in which the man who risked his life upon it had entire confidence.

At all events so it fell out. Washington planned and Wayne stormed and carried out his chief's arrangements to the letter. By this time Stony Point had been strongly fortified, and the approach was difficult. On July 15th, Wayne and his troops left Sandy Beach and made their way through the mountains by a hard march along gorges and over swamps, until on the 16th, at eight o'clock in the evening, they were in the rear of the fort and within a mile and a half of the works. Wayne divided his force into two columns, one under Colonel Febiger on the right, the other under Colonel Butler on the left. At the extremity of each wing was a storming-party of a hundred to a hundred and fifty men who had volunteered for the duty and who marched with unloaded muskets, trusting wholly to the bayonet. At the head of each storming-party was a forlorn hope of twenty men. The reserve was composed of Lee's Light Horse, and three hundred men under General Muhlenburg constituted the covering-party. Not until the lines were formed did Wayne tell his men the errand on which they had come. Then, in accordance with Washington's direction, each man fixed a piece of white paper in his cap, and the watchword "The Fort is Ours," was given out. All was quickly done, for every detail had been accurately arranged. As soon as the columns were formed they moved rapidly forward. Murphy and his North Carolinians in the centre were delayed by the tide in crossing the morass, and as they came through they met an outpost. The alarm was given and a heavy fire of grape-shot and musketry opened upon them. On they went as if they were the only troops on the field, and every other column and division did the same. Wayne himself led the right wing. As he crossed the abattis a musket-ball struck him on the

head, bringing him down and wounding him slightly. Dazed as he was by the blow, he called out that if he was mortally hurt he wanted to die in the fort, and his aides picked him up and bore him forward. The rush of the well-directed columns was irresistible. So swift and steady was the movement that they passed the abattis and went up and over the breast-works without check or hesitation. All was finished in a few minutes. Some heavy firing from the works, a short sharp rush, a clash and push of bayonets in the darkness, and the Americans poured into the fort. They lost 98 men in killed and wounded, the British 94, while practically all the rest of the garrison to the number of 25 officers and 447 men were taken prisoners. All the guns and munitions of war, valued at nearly \$160,000, fell into the hands of the victors. The Americans, having won their fight in very complete fashion, levelled the works and withdrew. Soon afterward Clinton again occupied the Point, but only to abandon it finally in the autumn. The plan of taking possession of the Hudson by a series of fortified posts, if seriously intended, had been peremptorily stopped, and a sudden disaster had come to the British. It was a very gallant feat of arms, admirably planned, and bravely, punctually, and accurately performed. The unsteadiness of the Brandywine and of Germantown had disappeared, and the discipline of Valley Forge was very plain here to the eyes of all mankind. The men who had fought behind intrenchments at Bunker Hill had been made into soldiers able to assault works held by the best troops of England. The raw material was good to start with, and someone aided by experience had evidently been at work upon it.

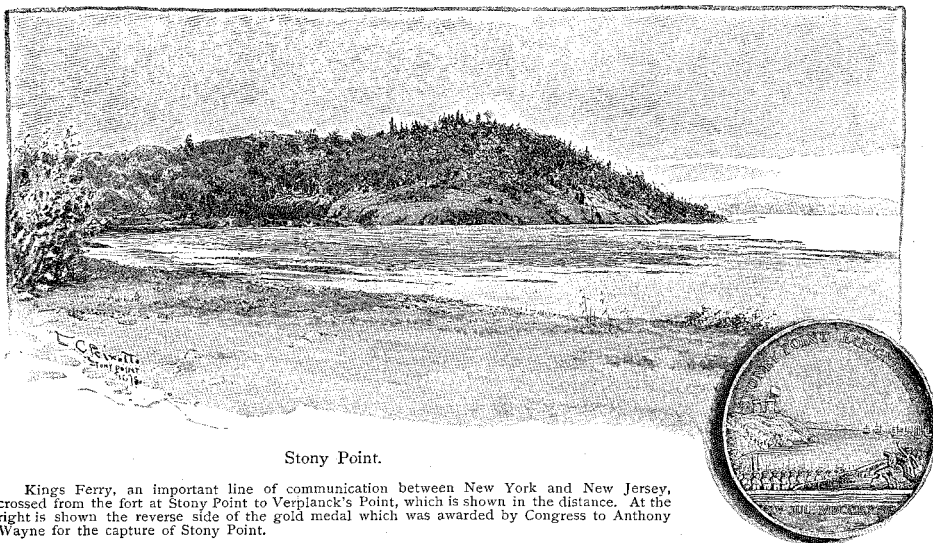
A month later the Americans were still further encouraged by another daring exploit. This time the leader was Major Harry Lee, of the Light Horse, and the attack was made on one of the strongest of the enemy's posts. Paulus Hook, where Jersey City now stands, was a low, sandy spur of land running well out into the river. At that time it was merely the point where the ferry-boat from New York landed, and whence the stage for Philadelphia started. The only buildings were the Tavern and stables for the use of the coaches and their

passengers, and the house of the guardian of the ferry. But the position was one of great natural military strength, in addition to being the vital point on the direct road to the South. Between the Hook and the main land was a morass, washed and often flooded by the tide, and crossed only by a narrow causeway used by the coaches and easily defended. Taking possession of this point when they first occupied New York, the British fortified it strongly with block-houses and redoubts, while on the water-side it was within easy reach of the city, and protected by the men-of-war. A more difficult place to reach it would have been difficult to conceive, and Washington had grave doubts as to making an attempt to surprise it, but finally gave a reluctant approval. Lee then had the roads and the surrounding country thoroughly examined, and sent out a scouting party under Captain Allen McLane, who prepared the way. Lee himself started on the morning of August 18th, and marching through the woods became separated from the Virginia contingent, which led to many subsequent charges and counter-charges of little moment now, but very bitter then. Whatever the reasons, certain it is that Lee found himself close to the Hook at midnight with only a hundred and fifty men. He knew that the ordinary garrison regiment and Van Buskirk's Loyal Americans amounted to at least two hundred. He did not know that Van Buskirk had left the Hook that very night with a hundred and thirty men to attack an American post, and that their place had been taken by Hessians from New York, some of the best of the regular troops. Had he known all, however, it would probably have made but little difference. He was as daring and reckless as Wayne, and the knowledge that he had only a hundred and fifty men did not check or frighten him. He had come to attack, and said that if he could not take the fort, he would at least die in it. So he gave the watchword "Be Firm," and started. It was after three o'clock, the tide was rising and the men struggled across the morass in silence. When they reached the ditch they plunged into the water, and then at last the garrison heard them and opened fire. But it was too late, and the Americans were too quick. Up they came, out of the ditch and into the works. A few

Hessians threw themselves into one block-house; about a dozen of the British were killed and wounded, and five Americans. One hundred and fifty-nine British soldiers surrendered, and with them Lee withdrew at once, for relief was already on its way from New York. It was not very easy to retreat with prisoners outnumbering his own force, and Lee had some hard marching and narrow escapes; but by his swiftness and energy he came through successfully, bringing his captives with him. Paulus Hook led to nothing except so far as it cooled the British and strengthened their purpose to stay close in New York, a very desirable feeling for the Americans to cultivate. We may read now the alarm and disgust it caused to the English officers in the letter of General Pattison to Lord Townshend. The joy on the American side corresponded to the depression on that of their enemies. It was becoming very clear that soldiers capable of storming posts like Stony Point and Paulus Hook lacked now only numbers and equipment to be able to face any troops in the open field. A long distance had been traversed from the panic-stricken flight at Kip's Bay to the firm unyielding charge over earth-works and into redoubts of the men who, without question or misgiving, followed "Mad Anthony Wayne" and "Light Horse Harry" in the darkness of those summer nights.

Little else was done by the Americans in the campaign, if such it could be called, of 1779. An elaborately prepared expedition against the British post at Castine, on the Penobscot, went to wreck and ruin. Both troops and ships were ill-commanded. The former landed, but failed to carry the works, and Sir George Collier, arriving with a sixty-four gun-ship and five frigates, destroyed two of the American vessels and compelled the burning of the rest. The troops took to the woods and made their way home as best they could. It was a dispiriting outcome of an attempt made with high hopes and great effort.

In New York Sullivan led an expedition against the Six Nations. He did not bring these allies of the Crown to action, but he burned their villages, marched through their country, showed them that the king could not protect them, cooled their zeal



Stony Point.

Kings Ferry, an important line of communication between New York and New Jersey, crossed from the fort at Stony Point to Verplanck's Point, which is shown in the distance. At the right is shown the reverse side of the gold medal which was awarded by Congress to Anthony Wayne for the capture of Stony Point.

and checked the recurring danger of Indian inroads upon the settlements.

The rest of the fighting in the North did not rise above small raids and petty affairs of outposts and partisan bands. Yet when the campaign closed, desultory as all its operations had been, the solid gain, which we can estimate now far better than could be done at the time, was all with the Americans. Clinton had been forced to abandon Rhode Island, and all New England was once more in American hands. He also felt compelled to withdraw from Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, and the Americans again took possession of Kings Ferry and controlled all the upper country. The British were confined more closely than ever to the city of New York, and Washington still held the great line of the Hudson in an iron grasp, and was master of the New England and Middle States clear from an enemy, firmly united and with free communications open between them. The first stage in the test for endurance had been passed successfully.

Then came the winter, one of unusual severity, with heavy snows and severe frosts. Military operations were out of the question, but the dreary months had to be lived through. It was a sore trial, and all the appeals of the Commander-in-chief to Congress for aid were vain. The executive part of the government, such as it was, stood motionless and paralyzed,

while the army was unpaid, provisions to feed the men could be gathered only with the utmost difficulty, and nothing effective was done to fill the thinning ranks. Much of the noblest and best work of the Revolution, that most instinct with patriotism was done in these winter camps by the half-starved, unpaid officers and men who formed the American army, and who, by their grim tenacity and stubborn endurance, kept that army in existence and the American Revolution with it. Very hard to bear then, very difficult to realize now, not picturesque or soul-stirring, like the battles and sieges which every one knows by heart, this holding the army together, and yet worthy of all praise and remembrance, for it was by this feat that the Revolution was largely won. In the midst of it all was Washington, facing facts unflinchingly, looking ahead, planning, advising generally with no result, but sometimes getting a little done when much was impossible. Altogether a very noble and human figure contending against many weaknesses, stupidities, and hindrances of all sort, with a courage and patience which merit the consideration of all subsequent generations.

As Washington foresaw, without recruits and proper support from the drooping Congress, his army dwindled. In May he appears to have had only seven thousand men; a month later less than four thousand, to hold the Middle and Eastern

States. Bad news came from the South that Charleston had surrendered, and at that dark moment Knyphausen, with a powerful force, advanced into New Jersey. The militia turned out promptly, they were seasoned to war by this time, and, although greatly outnumbered, they fought stubbornly and fell back slowly before the British. At Springfield Maxwell made a determined stand, inflicted severe loss on the Hessians, and gave time for Washington to come up and take a position so strong that Knyphausen, although he had twice as many men, did not venture to attack, and began his retreat, the Americans following him closely and engaging his rear successfully. The expedition degenerated into a plundering raid, was checked and accomplished nothing.

Soon after Clinton returned from the success at Charleston. He made a movement into New Jersey to aid that of Knyphausen, while, at the same time, he sent troops to threaten the American communications on the Hudson. Washington dealt with the latter diversion, while Greene prepared to give battle at Springfield. But after a heavy cannonade the British withdrew, suffering not a little on the retreat from the American attacks and crossed over to Staten Island. The New Jersey campaign, if anything so serious had been intended, faded away harmlessly. It was the last attempt of the British to do anything of an offensive and far-reaching character by military operations in the North, and with the return of Clinton to New York not only their last but their best opportunity ended. When they invaded New Jersey, Washington was at his very weakest, and the public spirit was depressed and shaken by the disasters in the South. Clinton

outnumbered his opponent four to one, yet he failed to push his advantage home, and Washington stayed the advance of the British with his inferior force and threw them back on New York. The chance could never come again, for now a new factor appeared which made any

aggressive action by the British hopeless. Unable to defeat Washington alone, or to shatter his small but determined army, it was clearly out of the question to make any impression upon him when backed by a fine force of French regular troops, and on July 10, 1780, those troops, to the number of six thousand, and led by DeRochambeau, arrived in Newport. Clinton made a show of going to attack them, but it was only a show, and the real effort was concentrated in writing a



Anthony Wayne.

From an unpublished portrait by Henry Elouiz, 1795. Reproduced by permission of C. S. Bradford, Esq.

grumbling letter to the ministry and demanding reinforcements. It must be admitted that, ineffective as Clinton was in this instance, he was right in his judgment of the situation. The arrival of a French army made the cause of England hopeless in the North without large reinforcements and capable commanders, neither of which she was able to furnish. But although the coming of the French was in reality decisive, at the moment it was fruitful to Washington only in disappointed hopes and frustrated plans. The effect on the country was to make people believe that with these well-equipped allies the war was really at an end, and that no further effort on their part was needed. This idea filled Washington with anger and disgust, not merely because it was utterly unfounded, but because to him it seemed entirely ignoble. He had always said and believed that the Revolution must be won by Americans, could be won in no other way, and would not be worth winning



Drawn by F. C. John.

The Capture of Stony Point by Wayne.

As Wayne was crossing the abatis a musket-ball struck him on the head. Dazed as he was by the blow, he called out that if he was mortally hurt he wanted to die in the fort, and his aides picked him up and bore him forward.—Page 455.

otherwise. He rejoiced in the coming of the French because he felt it ought to spur Congress and people alike to renewed exertions, and when it acted as a sedative and his own army seemed still to diminish instead of increase, he was filled with mortification and anxiety. His one idea, with this new support of the French open to him, was to fight, and to that end he tried every plan, but all in vain. One difficulty after another appeared. His own army was short of powder and supplies, and the new levies dragged slowly in. Still these were his old familiar enemies, and he could have dealt with them as he always did in some fashion. Those on the side of the French were more serious. The French ships could not get into the harbor of New York, there was sickness in the army, the British threatened Newport, and finally blockaded it, and Rochambeau would not move without the second detachment, which was expected, but which was securely shut up by the English fleet at Brest. A very trying time it was to all concerned, but chiefly to the man upon whom the great responsibilities rested. So the summer slipped away, full of trial, irritation, and disappointment, with nothing done and nothing attempted. A summer of appeals to the French, and of stern letters to Congress, in which we can read to-day all the bitterness of spirit which filled the man of action who knew just what he wanted to do, who longed to strike, and who was yet bound hand and foot.

From the time when the French landed, Washington had wished to meet Rochambeau, for vigorous as his letters were, he knew the importance of a personal meeting. But he did not dare to leave his army or the great river to which he had

clung so desperately for so many weary months, knowing that there he held the enemy by the throat. At last, as summer was passing into autumn, it seemed as if he could go with safety, and on September 18th, he left Greene in command and started for Hartford where he met De Rochambeau on the 20th. He was a man of few holidays, and this little change from the long and dreary anxiety of the army and the camp was pleasant to him. His spirits rose as he rode, and the heartfelt greetings of the people in the towns as he passed to and from Hartford touched and moved him deeply. Pleasant indeed was this little bit of sunshine, coming in the midst of days darkened with care and never

ending, often fruitless toil, and yet it was only the prelude to one of the hardest trials Washington was called to bear. It seems as if this uneasiness and unwillingness to leave the army were almost prophetic, but even the most troubled and foreboding fancy could not have pictured the ugly reality which he was suddenly called upon to meet face to face.

Benedict Arnold was a native of Rhode Island. Descended from an early governor of the colony, whose name he bore, he represented one of the oldest and best families in the State. He was well educated, but ran away at the age of fifteen to join the Northern army in the old French war, and then wearying of his service, he deserted and came home alone through the wilderness. This was the beginning of a life of reckless adventure in peace and war. From his escapade on the frontier he turned to earn his own living in the modest capacity of an apothecary's clerk. Then he became an apothecary and bookseller himself, made money and abandoned these quiet avocations for the life of a



Major Henry Lee.
("Light Horse Harry.")

From a painting by C. W. Peale in 1768.

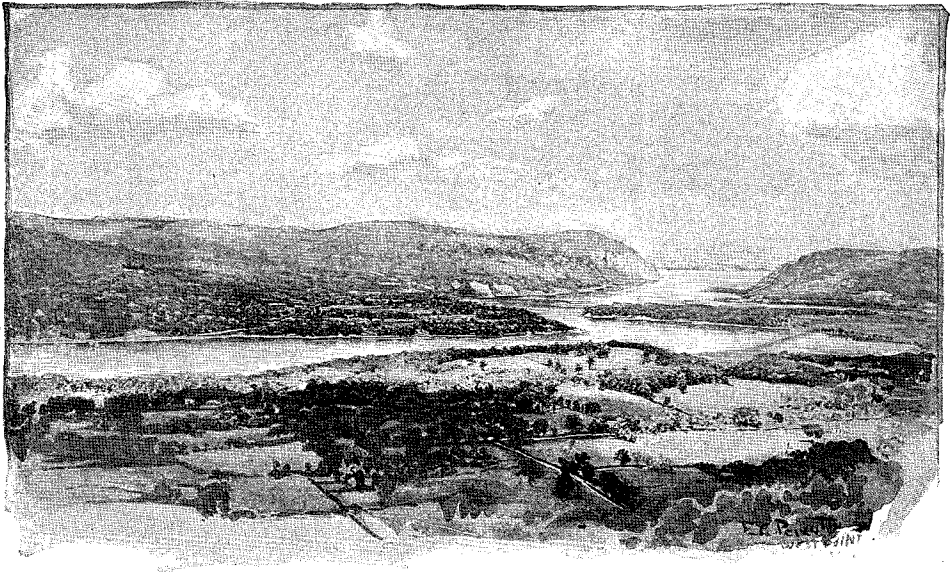


Drawn by C. O. DeLand.

The Capture of Paulus Hook by Major Lee.
Up they came out of the ditch and into the works.—Page 456.

merchant. He carried on commerce with Canada, the West Indies, and Europe, made many voyages on his own ships, something much more congenial to him than standing behind a shop-counter, saw the world, had adventures, and shot a British captain in a duel for calling him "a d—d Yankee." He was conspicuous for good looks, physical strength and high

across the Maine wilderness was one of the most desperate ever made, but he brought his men through after inconceivable hardships and sufferings and laid siege to Quebec. He headed the assault upon the town in the bitter cold of New Year's eve, and was badly wounded. Still he held on all through the winter, keeping Quebec besieged, was relieved in



Fort Putnam.

West Point.

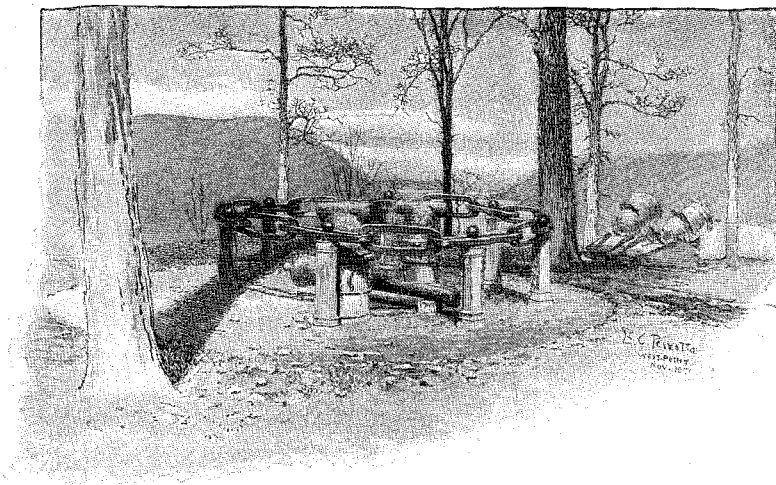
Constitution Island.

The Hudson River at West Point.

The Beverly Robinson house, from which Arnold escaped to the Vulture, stood among the trees directly opposite West Point.

personal courage. He was in New Haven when the news arrived of the fight at Lexington. To such a temperament the note of war was an irresistible appeal, and he offered to lead the Governor's Guards at once to the scene of action. The general in command thought that regular orders should be awaited, the select-men of the town refused ammunition, and Arnold thereupon threatened to break open the magazine, bore down resistance, got the powder and marched to Cambridge. From that time forward he was in the forefront of the fighting. He was with Allen at Ticonderoga, and captured St. Johns. He returned to Cambridge and obtained command of the expedition to Canada from the East, which was to meet that of Montgomery descending the St. Lawrence from the West. His march

the spring, and then shared in the retreat of the Americans before the British advance. On Lake Champlain he gathered a fleet of small vessels and fought a fierce and stubborn action with the British. He was defeated by superiority of numbers, but he brought off part of his ships and all his surviving men to Ticonderoga. In this gallant fight, comparatively little known and never fully appreciated, Arnold so crippled his enemy that he prevented the advance of Carleton that year, and this was a potent cause in the delays which brought Burgoyne and the great peril of the Revolution to wreck the following summer. In that decisive campaign he played a brilliant part. At Freeman's Farm he repulsed the attempt to turn the left, and if supported would have won a complete victory. But Gates supported

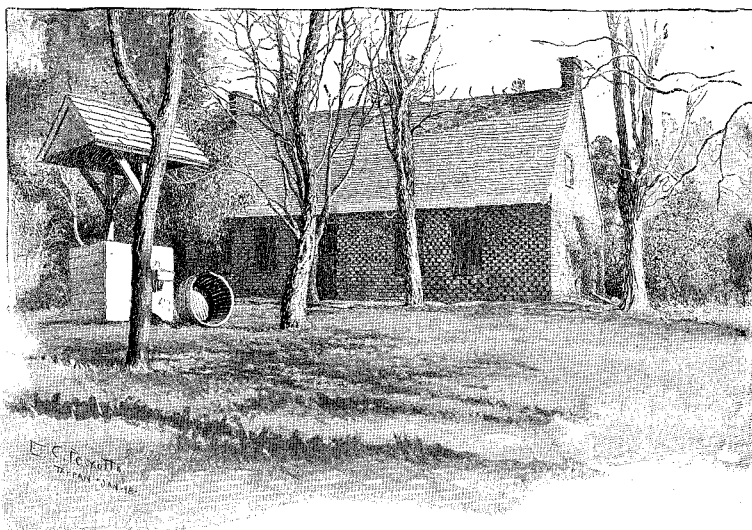


Part of the Great Chain (now in the collection of relics at West Point) which was Stretched Across the Hudson Between West Point and Constitution Island to Obstruct Navigation.

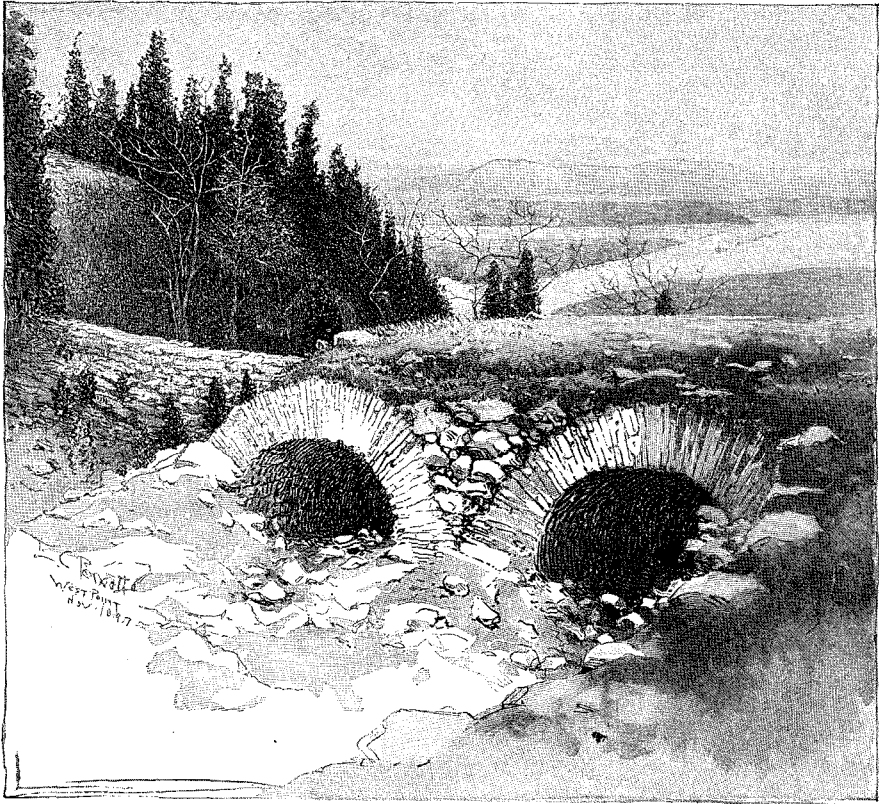
Each link is more than two feet long and weighs one hundred and forty pounds. The chain was held in place by a series of logs and anchors.

no one, and had no conception of how to win a battle. After the fight Arnold gave way to his temper, never of the pleasantest, and an angry quarrel ensued; Arnold was thereupon relieved, but not actually superseded, and remained in the camp. In the battle of October 7th, without orders, he went upon the field as a volunteer, and in a series of splendid charges broke the British lines and flung them back shattered

beyond recovery. Again he was badly wounded in the same leg as at Quebec, and was carried on a litter to Albany, where he had a slow recovery. Congress at last did him the tardy justice of a commission, which gave him his rightful seniority, and as he was still too lame for active service, he was put in command at Philadelphia after its evacuation by the British.



Headquarters at Tappan from which the Order for André's Execution was Issued.



Old Fort Putnam—the Key to the Defences at West Point—Showing the Magazines.

In the distance are Constitution Island and the Hudson River.

Thus came the turning-point of his life. A very brilliant record up to this time was his, none more so in the American army. Great qualities were in this man, great force for good or evil, say some of those critics who are wise after the event. But very plain even then to all men were the military talents, the disregard of danger, the readiness for every peril, and a wild dare-devil spirit which shrank from nothing. That spirit had led him through the Maine woods, over the walls of Quebec, across the decks of the ships at Valcour Bay and into the thick of the British squadrons in New York. It had endeared him to Washington, who loved above all men a ready, fearless fighter, indifferent to responsibilities and careless of danger. These were the qualities which made him one of the heroes of the army and of the popular imagination. But that same dare-devil temper and reckless spirit which stopped at nothing were quite capable of going as unhesi-

tatingly in one direction as another. We now know that Arnold had neither morals nor convictions, and a man so destitute of honor and conscience, when utterly reckless and fearless of consequence, is the most dangerous man that can be produced.

Had Arnold never been compelled to leave the field he might have come down to us as one of the bravest and best of our Revolutionary soldiers. He left the field to command in a city, with the opportunity of wrong-doing, and all the base qualities of a thoroughly sordid and immoral nature hidden under a splendid personal courage and the display of real military talents which had asserted themselves often on the day of battle then came out. In Philadelphia he married Miss Shippen, the handsome daughter of a Tory family. Then he lived among loyalists and heard their talk. Then he spent money and gambled away his fortune, so that at the end of two years he found himself in sore straits. He had a

quarrel with Joseph Reed, charges were preferred, and a committee of Congress acquitted him. More accusations were made, but a court-martial acquitted him on the serious charges, and Washington, in reprimanding him as required by the court, really gave him high praise because he thought Arnold a persecuted man. There is no excuse for Arnold in all this, for Congress had a singular aptness in favoring the inferior and frowning upon the best officers. They treated Morgan and Greene little better than they did Arnold, until events sternly taught them the necessary lesson. That these attacks angered Arnold is not to be questioned, but that which really moved him was the fact that he was poor, and the conviction that the American Revolution, then in the desperate stress of sullen endurance, had failed. To a man with the rat instinct largely developed, that was enough. The dare-devil courage, the keen mind, and the cold heart would do the rest.

Washington followed up his laudatory reprimand by offering Arnold the command of one of the wings of the army, which the latter declined, on the ground that his wounds still forbade active service. The real reason was that since early in the spring he had been in communication with the British, writing, under a feigned name, to Major André of Clinton's staff, and in order to make profitable terms for his treachery, it was necessary that he should have something to sell. A division of the Continental army was not salable, and could not be delivered. Hence the refusal, and much active effort and intrigue, which finally procured for him the command of West Point. All Arnold's communications with André were under the fit guise of a commercial correspondence, and here at last was a valuable piece of property to barter and sell. West Point had been selected by Washington as the position where he could best hold the Hudson fast and prevent any advance of the enemy up the valley, either by land or water. The place had been elaborately and strongly fortified, and no less than three thousand men garrisoned the works. It was almost impregnable to attack, its loss would have been a grievous disaster to the American cause, and the British determined to buy and Arnold to

sell it. He took command early in August, and at once attempted to open communications through Beverly Robinson with reference ostensibly to that gentleman's confiscated property. Washington checked this scheme innocently but effectively by deciding that such matters belonged to the civil and not to the military authority. Still Clinton insisted that there must be a personal interview with his agent, and various abortive attempts were made to bring about a meeting. At last, on the night of September 21st, Arnold contrived to have André brought off by Joshua Hett Smith from the sloop-of-war Vulture, which was lying in the river below the Point. The young Englishman was directed not to go within the American lines, not to change his uniform, and to accept no papers. With a light heart André landed at Long Clove, where Arnold met him, and the two mounted and rode through Haverstraw to Smith's home, inside the American lines. André had disobeyed his first order. Then the conspirators went to work. Clinton was to come up the river with ships from Rodney's fleet, surprise West Point on September 25th; and Arnold, having scattered his men, was to promptly surrender and then lure Washington to come with reinforcements to destruction. Arnold was to receive as reward a commission as Brigadier-General in the British army, and a sum of money. It was all "hire and salary, not revenge." These interesting negotiations consumed much time, and the day was well advanced when they ended. While they were pending, there was a sound of firing, and the conspirators saw from the window an American battery shell the Vulture and force her to drop down the river. An uncomfortable sight this for André, but Arnold bore it with entire philosophy apparently, and rode off, leaving his guest to get back to New York as best he might. He provided him with passes and also papers, plans of the fort and the like. André accepted these papers, and violated his second instruction. The day wore slowly away, and André began to think of his escape. Then it appeared that Smith, a very careful person, had no notion of running the risk of taking his guest off to the Vulture. So it was agreed that they should go by land. André then changed his uniform

and put on ordinary clothes. He thus broke his third and last instruction, and was now in every respect within the definition of a spy. They started at dusk, passed through the American lines, spent the night at a house in the neighborhood, and resumed their march in the early morning. After having proceeded a little way, the careful and innocent Smith parted from his guest, and went back to report to Arnold that all was well. André rode on cheerfully, feeling that all danger was over. He was crossing the neutral ground, and would soon reach the British lines. Suddenly, out of the bushes came three men, rough-looking fellows, one in a refugee's uniform, who bade the traveller stand. André was in the region of the guerillas, who belonged to one party or the other in name, and fought steadily for their own hand. André concluded that these men were "cow-boys," partisans of his own side, and or-

dered them to give way, as he was a British officer. It appeared, however, that dress had misled him. These unwelcome persons were "Skinners," as the American guerillas were pleasantly called. A very unpleasant discovery this to a British officer travelling in disguise from the American lines. So Arnold's pass was produced, but with little effect on these highly irregular combatants. Then bribes were tried. André thought that if he could have given enough, they would have released him. But events at least are on the side of the "Skinners." They were three in number—Paulding, Williams, and Van Wart. They searched André, found the fatal papers in his boots, and Paulding, being able to read, an accomplishment not shared by his companions, at once with great justice, pronounced the prisoner a spy, and said subsequently that after finding the papers ten thousand guineas would not have

General Arnold is gone to the Enemy. I have just now received a line from him enclosing one to Mrs. Arnold dated on board the Diligent. From this circumstance it is plain to be seen that he has gone to the Enemy. The command of the Garrison is the present devolves on you. I request you will be as vigilant as possible that the Enemy may not be in contemplation of attempting to enter this town even to night against these Post. I wish you to make immediately after receipt of this the best disposition you can of your force and to have a proportion of men in such a position as to be able to defend the River. You will hear from me further tomorrow.

I am Sir
Your most obedt Servt
G. Washington

Dated: Headquarters, Robinson's House, September 25, 1780.

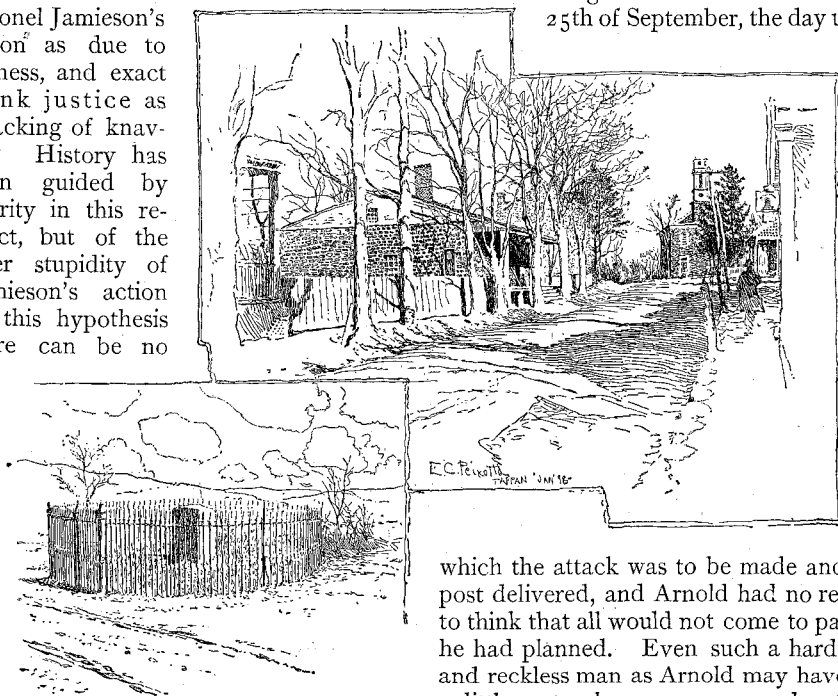
Letter from General Washington to Colonel Wade, apprising him of Arnold's treason.
(Reproduced in fac-simile for the first time.—By permission of Stuart C. Wade, Esq.)

bought André's freedom. Certain it is that they refused his very handsome offers, took him to Northcastle, and won a secure and very well-earned place in history by their firm and intelligent action.

Colonel Jamieson, to whom they delivered their captive, was either less intelligent, or less honest than the rough free lances of the neutral ground. Charity would describe Colonel Jamieson's action as due to dulness, and exact frank justice as smacking of knavery. History has been guided by charity in this respect, but of the utter stupidity of Jamieson's action on this hypothesis there can be no

reach to New Salem. When the young officer saw that the game was up he revealed his name and rank and wrote a letter to Washington, making the same confession. The conspiracy had failed, for the message which was to bring Clinton and the British fleet had been stopped, and one of the conspirators was in the toils.

At West Point, however, none of these things were known. It was the 25th of September, the day upon



The House in which André was Imprisoned is Shown on the Left (above). The Inclosed Stone (below) Marks the Place where André was Executed.

doubt. He ordered that André be taken to Arnold's headquarters, with a letter from himself explaining the circumstances, and that the papers be sent to Washington. If this amiable arrangement had been carried out, all would have gone well and André would have escaped. But luckily intelligence and honesty had not wholly departed from Northcastle. Major Benjamin Tallmadge, returning from a scout, saw the blunder that had been committed and forced Jamieson to recall André and his escort, although he could not prevent the despatch of the letter to Arnold. Under the guard of Sergeant John Dean and his men, vigilant and incorruptible, André was held fast and taken out of Jamieson's

which the attack was to be made and the post delivered, and Arnold had no reason to think that all would not come to pass as he had planned. Even such a hardened and reckless man as Arnold may have felt a little natural nervousness under these conditions. If he did, the first event of the day was not likely to console him, for at breakfast appeared Hamilton and McHenry, aides of the commander-in-chief. Washington had returned sooner than had been expected, and it was going to be extremely difficult to betray West Point under his very eyes. The General himself had turned off to look at some redoubts, and telling his aides that like all young men they were in love with Mrs. Arnold, had bade them ride on to the Robinson house. So a pleasant party sat down to breakfast, one of them revolving many things in his mind about which he did not converse. Presently a note was brought to Arnold. He read it with but slight appearance of emotion, said he must go to West Point, and left the room. The note was Jamieson's letter. The plot

was discovered; all that remained was flight. To his wife, who followed him from the room, he told what had happened. She fainted, and Arnold, pausing at the breakfast-room to say that Mrs. Arnold was ill, rushed from the house, flung himself into his barge, and under pretense of a flag of truce was rowed to the "Vulture." The treason had failed, and the traitor had escaped.

Washington came to the house, had a hasty breakfast, and went over to West Point to visit the works. When he reached the fort, no salute broke the quiet of the morning, no guard turned out to receive him, no commandant was there to greet him. Surprised not to find Arnold, he made the tour of the works, and then returned to the house to be met, as he came up from the river, by Hamilton with the Jamieson letter. Washington took the blow with the iron self-control of which he alone was capable. To Lafayette and Knox, when he showed the letter, he merely said, "Whom can we trust now?" for the idea that the conspiracy might be widespread was that which first absorbed his mind. But there was no confusion. The orders went thick and fast. Hamilton was sent to try to intercept Arnold, unfortunately too late. To Wade went the message: "Arnold has gone to the enemy. You are in command. Be vigilant." Every precaution was taken, every arrangement made, every danger guarded against. There was really little need, for Arnold had no accomplices. He had meant to have no sharer in the rewards, and he had no partners in his crime. When night came, Washington said to Captain Webster, who commanded the guard, "I believe I can trust you," and the son of that brave New Hampshire soldier in all his brilliant career never won a higher meed of praise. Throughout the night the sentry outside the room of the commander-in-chief heard him pacing up and down, the steady footfall sounding clear in the still autumn night. Washington had said nothing and done everything at the moment the blow fell, but when night came and he was alone, he could neither sleep nor rest. It was not alone the imminent peril to his cause which filled his

mind, but the thought of the traitor. He had trusted Arnold because he so admired his fighting qualities, he had helped him and stood by him, and the villain had sold his post, tried to wreck the Revolution, and fled to the enemy. It was very hard to bear in silence, but all Washington said afterward was that in his opinion it was a mistake to suppose that Arnold suffered from remorse, because he was incapable of it.

The rest of the story is easily told. André was tried and condemned as a spy. No other verdict was possible. He was hanged and met his death with the perfect courage of a well-bred and gallant gentleman. Joshua Hett Smith, the cautious and elusive, was also tried, slipped through the fingers of justice, and lived to write, many years after, an account of the conspiracy from his own point of view. Arnold received his reward in money and rank, served in the British army, and left descendants who in England rose to distinction in later days.

Thus the treason came to naught. If it had succeeded it would have been a grave disaster, but would not have changed the course or outcome of the Revolution. It failed, and had no result whatever except upon the two conspirators. There hangs about it the mystery and attraction which always attach to dark plottings pregnant with possibilities, but there is nothing in it but the individual interest which is inseparable from such a fate as that of André, and such an unusual exhibition of cold and sordid perfidy as that of Arnold.

So the summer ended. No military operations had been attempted, and Clinton had tried in vain to substitute bribery and treachery for a campaign in the field. The French had arrived, but despite Washington's efforts, all combinations for an active movement had failed. The second stage in the trial of endurance had closed, and both sides retired to winter quarters, Clinton to New York, and Washington to New Jersey, where he provided for his men in a line of cantonments. The American army was still in existence, the line of the Hudson was still in Washington's unyielding grasp, and the last scene of the war was about to open.



A NEW YORK NOCTURNE

(On the Elevated at 110th Street)

By Charles G. D. Roberts

ABOVE the hollow deep where lies
The city's slumbering face,
Out, out across the night we swing,
A meteor launched in space.

The dark above is sown with stars,
The humming dark below
With sparkle of ten thousand lamps
In endless row on row.

Tall shadow-towers with glimmering lights
Stand sinister and grim
Where upper deep and nether deep
Come darkly rim to rim.

Our souls have known the midnight awe
Of mount, and plain, and sea ;
But here the city's night enfolds
A vaster mystery.