he constructed the first continental army, and under innumerable vexations and difficulties. No man was ever placed in a more embarrassing situation. His troops were raw and undisciplined; and the members of the Continental Congress, from whom he received his commission, were not united among themselves. He had all the responsibility of the war, and yet had not sufficient means to prosecute it with the vigor which the colonies probably anticipated. His success, in the end, *was* glorious and unequivocal; but none other than he could have secured it, and not he, even, unless he had been sustained by a loftiness of character almost preternatural.

The English forces, at this time, were centred in Boston under the command of General Gage, and were greatly inferior in point of numbers to the American troops who surrounded them. But the troops of Gage were regulars and veterans, and were among the best in the English army. He was recalled in order to give information to the government in reference to the battle of Bunker Hill, and was succeeded in October by General Howe.

The first campaign of the war was signalized by the invasion of Canada by the American troops, with the hope of wresting that province from the English, which was not only disaffected, but which was defended by an inconsiderable force. General Montgomery, with an army of three thousand, advanced to Montreal, which surrendered. The fortresses of Crown Point and Ticonderoga had already been taken by Colonel Ethan Allen. But the person who most distinguished himself in this unfortunate expedition was Colonel Benedict Arnold, who, with a detachment of one thousand men, penetrated through the forests, swamps, and mountains of Maine, beyond the sources of the Kennebec and, in six weeks from his departure at Boston, arrived on the plains of Canada, opposite Quebec. He there effected a junction with the troops of Montgomery, and made an assault on the strongest fortress in America, defended by sixteen hundred men. The attack was unsuccessful, and Montgomery was killed. Arnold did not retire from the province, but remained encamped upon the Heights of Abraham. This enterprise, though a failure, was not without great moral results, since it showed to the English government the singular bravery and intrepidity of the nation it had undertaken to coerce.

The ministry then resolved upon vigorous measures, and, finding a difficulty in raising men, applied to the Landgrave of Hesse for seventeen thousand mercenaries. These, added to twenty-five thousand men enlisted in England, and the troops already sent to America, constituted a force of fifty-five thousand men — deemed amply sufficient to reduce the rebellious colonies. But these were not sent to America until the next year.

In the mean time, General Howe was encamped in Boston with a force, including seamen, of eleven thousand men, and General Washington, with an army of twenty-eight thousand, including militia, was determined to attack him. In February, 1776, he took possession of Dorchester Heights, which command the harbor. General Howe found it expedient to evacuate Boston, and sailed for Halifax with his army, and Washington repaired to Philadelphia to deliberate with Congress.

But Howe retired from Boston only to occupy New York; and when his arrangements were completed, he landed at Staten Island, waiting for the arrival of his brother, Lord Howe, with the expected reënforcements. By the middle of August they had all arrived, and his united forces amounted to twenty-four thousand men. Washington's army, though it nominally numbered twenty thousand five hundred, still was composed of only about eleven thousand effective men, and these imperfectly provided with arms and ammunition. Nevertheless, Washington gave battle to the English; but the result was disastrous to the Americans, owing to the disproportion of the forces engaged. General Howe took possession of Long Island, the Americans evacuated New York, and, shortly after, the city fell into the hands of the English. Washington, with his diminished army, posted himself at Haerlem Heights.

But before the victory of Howe on Long Island was obtained, Congress had declared the Independence of the American States, (4th July, 1776.) This Declaration of Independence took the English nation by surprise, and firmly united it against the colonies. It was received by the Americans, in every section of the country, with unbounded enthusiasm. Reconciliation was now impossible, and both countries were arrayed against each other in fierce antagonism.

The remainder of the campaign of 1776 was occupied by

the belligerents in skirmishing, engagements, marchings and countermarchings, in the states of New York and New Jersey. The latter state was overrun by the English army, and success on either side, was indecisive. Forts Washington and Lee were captured. General Lee was taken prisoner. The capture of Lee, however, was not so great a calamity as it, at first, seemed; for, though a man of genius and military experience, his ambition, vanity, and love of glory would probably have led to an opposition to his superior officer, and to Congress itself. To compensate for the disasters in New Jersey, Washington, invested with new and extraordinary power by Congress, gained the battles of Princeton and Trenton, which were not only brilliant victories, but were attended by great moral effects, and showed the difficulty of subduing a people determined to be free. "Every one applauded the firmness, the prudence, and the bravery of Washington. All declared him to be the savior of his country; all proclaimed him equal to the most renowned commanders of antiquity, and especially distinguished him by the name of the *American Fabius*."

The greatness of Washington was seen, not so much by his victories at Princeton and Trenton, or by his masterly retreat before superior forces, as by his admirable prudence and patience during the succeeding winter. He had, for several months, a force which scarcely exceeded fifteen hundred men, and these suffered all manner of hardships and privations. After the first gush of enthusiasm had passed, it was found exceedingly difficult to enlist men, and still more difficult to pay those who had enlisted. Congress, composed of great men, and of undoubted patriotism, on the whole, harmonized with the commander-in-chief, whom, for six months, it invested with almost dictatorial power; still there were some of its members who did not fully appreciate the character or condition of Washington, and threw great difficulties in his way.

Congress about this time sent commissioners to France to solicit money and arms. These commissioners were Dr. Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee. They were not immediately successful; for the French king, doubtful of the result of the struggle, did not wish to incur prematurely the hostility of Great Britain; but they

induced many to join the American cause, and among others the young Marquis de La Fayette, who arrived in America in the spring of 1777, and proved a most efficient general, and secured the confidence and love of the nation he assisted.

The campaign of 1777 was marked by the evacuation of the Jerseys by the English, by the battles of Bennington and Brandywine, by the capture of Philadelphia, and the surrender of Burgoyne. Success, on the whole, was in favor of the Americans. They suffered a check at Brandywine, and lost the most considerable city in the Union at that time. But these disasters were more than compensated by the victory at Bennington and the capture of Burgoyne.

This indeed was the great event of the campaign. Burgoyne was a member of parliament, and superseded General Carleton in the command of the northern army — an injudicious appointment, but made by the minister in order to carry his measures more easily through the House of Commons. The troops under his command amounted to over seven thousand veterans, besides a corps of artillery. He set out from St. John's, the 16th of June, and advanced to Ticonderoga, which he invested. The American forces, under General Schuyler, destined to oppose this royal army, and to defend Ticonderoga, were altogether insufficient, being not over five thousand men. The fortress was therefore abandoned, and the British general advanced to the Hudson, hoping to open a communication between it and Lake Champlain, and thus completely surround New England, and isolate it from the rest of the country. But the delays attending the march of the English army through the forests enabled the Americans to rally. The defeat of Colonel Baum at Bennington, by Colonel Stark, added to the embarrassments of Burgoyne, who now was straitened for provisions; nevertheless, he continued his march, hoping to reach Albany unmolested. But the Americans, commanded by General Gates, who had superseded Schuyler, were strongly intrenched at the principal passes on his route, and had fortified the high grounds. The army of Burgoyne was moreover attacked by the Americans at Stillwater, and he was forced to retreat to Saratoga. His army was now reduced to five thousand men; he had only three days' provisions; all the passes were filled by the enemy, and he

was completely surrounded by fifteen thousand men. Under these circumstances, he was forced to surrender. His troops laid down their arms, but were allowed to embark at Boston for Europe. The Americans, by this victory, acquired forty-two pieces of brass artillery, four thousand six hundred muskets, and an immense quantity of military stores. This surrender of Burgoyne was the greatest disaster which the British troops had thus far experienced, and raised the spirits of the Americans to the highest pitch. Indeed, this surrender decided the fate of the war, for it proved the impossibility of conquering the Americans. It showed that they fought under infinitely greater advantages, since it was in their power always to decline a battle, and to choose their ground. It showed that the country presented difficulties which were insurmountable. It mattered but little that cities were taken, when the great body of the people resided in the country, and were willing to make sacrifices, and were commanded by such generals as Washington, Gates, Greene, Putnam, and Lee. The English ministry ought to have seen the nature of the contest; but a strange infatuation blinded the nation. There were some, however, whom no national pride could blind. Lord Chatham was one of these men. "No man," said this veteran statesman, "thinks more highly of the virtues and valor of British troops than I do. I know that they can achieve any thing except impossibilities. But the conquest of America is an impossibility."

There was one nation in Europe who viewed the contest with different eyes. This nation was France, then on the eve of revolution itself, and burning with enthusiastic love of the principles on which American independence was declared. The French government may not have admired the American cause, but it hated England so intensely, that it was resolved to acknowledge the independence of America, and aid the country with its forces

In the early part of the war, the American Congress had sent commissioners to France, in order to obtain assistance. In consequence of their representations, La Fayette, then a young man of nineteen years of age, freighted a ship at his own expense, and joined the American standard. Congress, in consideration of his illustrious rank and singular enthusiasm, gave him a commission of major-general. And gloriously did he fulfil the great expecta

tions which were formed of him; richly did he deserve the gratitude and praise of all the friends of liberty.

La Fayette embarked in the American cause as a volunteer. The court of France, in the early period of the contest, did not think it expedient openly to countenance the revolution. But, after the surrender of Burgoyne, and it was evident that the United States would succeed in securing their independence, then it was acknowledged, and substantial aid was rendered.

The winter which succeeded the surrender of Burgoyne is memorable for the sufferings of the American army encamped at Valley Forge, about twenty miles from Philadelphia. The army was miserably supplied with provisions and clothing, and strong discontent appeared in various quarters. Out of eleven thousand eight hundred men, nearly three thousand were barefooted and otherwise naked. But the sufferings of the army were not the only causes of solicitude to the commander-in-chief, on whom chiefly rested the responsibility of the war. The officers were discontented, and were not prepared, any more than the privates, to make permanent sacrifices. They were obliged to break in upon their private property, and were without any prospect of future relief. Washington was willing to make any sacrifices himself, and refused any payment for his own expenses; but, while he exhibited the rarest magnanimity, he did not expect it from others, and urged Congress to provide for the future pay of the officers, when the war should close. He looked upon human nature as it was, not as he wished it to be, and recognized the principles of self-interest as well as those of patriotism. It was his firm conviction that a long and lasting war could not, even in those times be sustained by the principle of patriotism alone, but required, in addition, the prospect of interest, or some reward. The members of Congress did not all agree with him in his views, and expected that officers would make greater sacrifices than private citizens, but, after a while, the plan of half-pay for life, as Washington proposed, was adopted by a small majority, though afterwards changed to half-pay for seven years. There was also a prejudice in many minds against a standing army, besides the jealousies and antipathies which existed between different sections of the Union. But Washington, with his rare practical good sense, combated

these, as well as the fears of the timid and the schemes of the selfish. The history of the Revolution impresses us with the greatness and bravery of the American nation; and every American should feel proud of his ancestors for the efforts they made, under so many discouragements, to secure their liberties; but it would be a mistake to suppose that nothing but exalted heroism was exhibited. Human nature showed its degeneracy in the camp and on the field of battle, among heroes and among patriots. The perfection of character, so far as man is ever perfect, was exhibited indeed, by Washington, but by Washington alone.

The army remained at Valley Forge till June, 1778. In the mean time, Lord North made another ineffectual effort to procure reconciliation. But he was too late. His offers might have been accepted at the commencement of the contest; but nothing short of complete independence would now satisfy the Americans, and this North was not willing to concede. Accordingly, new measures of coercion were resorted to by the minister, although the British forces in America were upwards of thirty-three thousand.

Evacuation of Philadelphia.

On the 18th of June, Sir Henry Clinton, who had succeeded Sir William Howe in command of the British forces, evacuated Philadelphia, the possession of which had proved of no service to the English, except as winter quarters for the troops. It was his object to proceed to New York, for which place he marched with his army, having sent his heavy baggage by water. The Americans, with superior forces, hung upon his rear, and sought an engagement. An indecisive one occurred at Monmouth, during which General Lee disregarded the orders of his superior in command, and was suspended for twelve months. There never was perfect harmony between Washington and Lee, and the aid of the latter, though a brave and experienced officer, was easily dispensed with.

No action of importance occurred during this campaign, and it was chiefly signalized by the arrival of the Count d'Estaing, with twelve ships of the line and four frigates, to assist the Americans. But, in consequence of disagreements and mistakes, this large armament failed to engage the English naval forces.

The campaign of 1779 was not more decisive than that of the preceding year. Military operations were chiefly confined to the

southern sections of the country, in which the English generally gained the advantage, having superior forces. They overran the country, inflamed the hostility of the Indians, and destroyed considerable property. But they gained no important victory, and it was obvious to all parties that conquest was impossible.

The campaign of 1780 is memorable for the desertion of General Arnold. Though not attended by important political results, it produced an intense excitement. He was intrusted with the care of the fortress of West Point, which commanded the Hudson River; but, dissatisfied, extravagant, and unprincipled, he thought to mend his broken fortunes by surrendering it to the British, who occupied New York. His treason was discovered when his schemes were on the point of being accomplished; but he contrived to escape, and was made a brigadier-general in the service of the enemy. Public execration loaded his name with ignominy, and posterity has not reversed the verdict of his indignant countrymen. His disgrace and ruin were primarily caused by his extravagance and his mortified pride. Washington fully understood his want of moral principle, but continued to intrust him with power, in view of the great services he had rendered his country, and his unquestioned bravery and military talents. After his defection, the American commander-in-chief was never known to intrust an important office to a man in whose virtue he had not implicit faith. The fate of Major André, who negotiated the treason with Arnold, and who was taken as a spy, was much lamented by the English. Neither his family, nor rank, nor accomplishments, nor virtues, nor the intercession of Sir Henry Clinton, could save him from military execution, according to the established laws of war. Washington has been blamed for not exercising more forbearance in the case of so illustrious a prisoner; but the American general never departed from the rigid justice which he deemed it his duty to pursue.

Treason of Arnold.

During this year, the American currency had singularly depreciated, so that forty dollars were worth only one in specie — a fact which shows the embarrassments of the country, and the difficulty of supporting the army. But the prospects of ultimate success enabled Congress, at length, to negotiate loans, and the army was kept together.

The great event in the campaign of 1781 was the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, at Yorktown, which decided the fate of the war Lord Cornwallis, who was an able commander, had been successful at the south, although vigorously and skilfully opposed by General La Fayette. But he had at last to contend with the main body of the American army, and French forces in addition, so that the combined armies amounted to over twelve thousand men. He was compelled to surrender to superior forces; and seven thousand prisoners, with all their baggage and stores, fell into the hands of the victors, 19th of October, 1781. This great event diffused universal joy throughout America, and a corresponding depression among the English people.

After this capitulation, the conviction was general that the war would soon be terminated. General La Fayette obtained leave to return to France, and the recruiting service languished. The war nevertheless, was continued until 1783; without, however, being signalized by any great events. On the 30th of November, 1782 preliminary articles of peace were signed at Paris, by which Great Britain acknowledged the independence of the United States, and by which the whole country south of the lakes and east of the Mississippi was ceded to them, and the right of fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland.

On the 25th of November, 1783, the British troops evacuated New York; and, shortly after, the American army was disbanded. The 4th of December, Washington made his farewell address to his officers; and, on the 23d of December, he resigned his commission into the hands of the body from which he received it, and retired to private life; having discharged the great trust reposed in him in a manner which secured the gratitude of his country and which will probably win the plaudits of all future generations.

The results of the Revolutionary War can only be described by enumerating the progressive steps of American aggrandizement from that time to this, and by speculating on the future destinies of the Anglo-Saxon race on the American continent. The success which attended this long war is in part to be traced to the talents and matchless wisdom and integrity of the commander-in-chief; to the intrepid courage and virtues of the armies he directed; to the self-confidence and inexperience of the English generals;

to the difficulties necessarily attending the conquest of forests, and swamps, and scattered towns; to the assistance of the French nation; and, above all, to the superintending providence of God, who designed to rescue the sons of the Pilgrims from foreign oppression, and, in spite of their many faults, to make them a great and glorious nation, in which religious and civil liberty should be perpetuated, and all men left free to pursue their own means of happiness, and develop the inexhaustible resources of a great and boundless empire.

The English nation acquiesced in an event which all felt to be inevitable; but Lord North was compelled to resign, and a change of measures was pursued. It is now time to contemplate English affairs, until the French Revolution.

REFERENCES. — The books written on the American Revolution are very numerous, an index to which may be seen in Botta's History, as well as in the writings of those who have treated of this great event. Sparks's Life and Correspondence of Washington is doubtless the most valuable work which has yet appeared since Marshall wrote the Life of Washington. Guizot's Essay on Washington is exceedingly able; nor do I know any author who has so profoundly analyzed the character and greatness of the American hero. Botta's History of the Revolution is a popular but superficial and overlauded book. Mr. Hale's History of the United States is admirably adapted to the purpose for which it is designed, and is the best compendium of American history. Stedman is the standard authority in England. Belsham, in his History of George III., has written candidly and with spirit. Smyth, in his lectures on Modern History, has discussed the Revolution with great ability. See also the works of Ramsay, Winterbotham, Allen, and Gordon. The lives of the prominent American generals, statesmen, and orators, should also be read in connection; especially of Lee, Greene, Franklin, Adams, and Henry, which are best described in Sparks's American Biography.