

Fort Edward, which the Americans abandoned on his approach. Before he accomplished this last success, he had to encounter the most formidable interruptions to his march, from the nature of the country, and the artificial obstacles which the enemy had created. There were no adequate supplies to be obtained as they proceeded; and the army depended upon salt provisions brought by the lakes from Canada. The Indians who had joined Burgoyne committed atrocities without rendering any effectual aid; and their employment by the British provoked a determined resistance in the New England States. To encounter invaders, whose cruelties were proclaimed with violent exaggerations throughout every town and hamlet, a large irregular army was speedily collected. The command was given to general Gates and to general Arnold. Burgoyne too soon found the enormous difficulties of his enterprise. "In all parts," he wrote home, "the industry and management in driving cattle, and removing corn are indefatigable and certain." He could obtain no intelligence of general Howe. With stores for thirty days, which he had collected during a month, he crossed the Hudson to Saratoga. The army of Gates was encamped on a range of hills called Behmus's Heights. On the 19th of September a battle was fought, in which the victory of the British secured no real advantage, for the Americans retired to their lines. The two armies continued in front of each other till the 7th of October. The stores of Burgoyne were rapidly diminishing; and on that day he sent out a detachment of fifteen hundred men for the purpose of covering a foraging party. Arnold attacked them, and compelled a retreat, with a loss of six cannon. He then assaulted Burgoyne's lines; and was repulsed where the British occupied them, but succeeded in forcing the entrenchments defended by a German reserve. The royal army quitted their encampment in the night, and sought a safer position on some higher ground. The next day Burgoyne saw the necessity of retreating to Saratoga, leaving his sick and wounded behind him. He was now encompassed with enemies on every side; and, worst of all, his provisions were nearly exhausted, though for some days the troops had been upon short rations. Three thousand five hundred men were all that remained. The general called a council of war; and it was determined to treat with the enemy. A message was sent to the American head-quarters with a flag of truce. The answer of general Gates was, that as the army of general Burgoyne was reduced in force, their provisions exhausted, their horses and baggage taken or destroyed, their retreat cut off, their camp invested, they could only be allowed to surrender as prisoners of war, and were required to ground their

arms within their lines. The unanimous resolve in the British camp was to reject the terms. It was finally agreed that the army should march out of the camp with the honours of war, and pile their arms at the command of their own officers; that a free passage should be granted to Great Britain, upon the condition that the troops should not serve again in North America during the war. On the 17th of October the Convention was signed; and the small and disheartened army received a supply of fresh provisions, and commenced their march to Massachusetts. The conduct of the American army towards the vanquished was marked by the utmost delicacy and consideration. The conduct of the Congress was very different. They refused to permit the embarkation of Burgoyne and his men from Boston till the court of Great Britain had ratified the Convention; and under various pretences the British were detained for so long a period as to justify the indignation of contemporary statesmen and of future historians, against this signal instance of bad faith on the part of the American government.

The Session of Parliament was opened on the 18th of November. There was no change in the tone of the royal speech. The "obstinacy of the rebels—a deluded and unhappy multitude—called for a steady pursuit of measures for the re-establishment of constitutional subordination." It was known that Chatham, greatly restored in health, intended to move an amendment upon the Address. By general consent, the great orator, in all the fire of his youth and all the majesty of his maturity, never exceeded this almost last effort of his genius. The duke of Grafton says, "in this debate he exceeded all that I had ever admired in his speaking." This speech was admirably reported by Hugh Boyd, and thus, taken altogether, gives the most correct idea of Chatham's peculiar powers. He set forth the encouragement which France was giving to the ministers and ambassadors of those who are called rebels. "Can there be a more mortifying insult? Can even our ministers sustain a more humiliating disgrace? Do they dare to resent it?" He foreshadowed the fatal event of Saratoga. "My lords, you cannot conquer America. What is your present situation there? We do not know the worst; but we know that in three campaigns we have done nothing and suffered much. Besides the sufferings, perhaps total loss of the Northern force, the best appointed army that ever took the field, commanded by sir William Howe, has retired from the American lines. . . . As to conquest, therefore, my lords, I repeat, it is impossible. You may swell every expense and every effort still more extravagantly; pile and accumulate every assistance you can buy or borrow; traffic and

barter with every pitiful little German prince that sells and sends his subjects to the shambles of a foreign prince; your efforts are for ever vain and impotent—doubly so from this mercenary aid on which you rely; for it irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your enemies, to overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty. If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never—never—never.” He then exclaimed, Who is the man who has dared to authorize and associate to our arms the tomahawk and scalping-knife of the savage? and dwelt on this stain on the national character. Though the orator was indignant at the manner in which the war was carried on, the statesman did not give his approval to the object which the Americans now proposed to themselves. “The independent views of America have been stated and asserted as the foundation of this address. My lords, no man wishes for the due dependence of America on this country more than I do. To preserve it, and not confirm that state of independence into which your measures hitherto have driven them, is the object which we ought to unite in attaining. The Americans, contending for their rights against arbitrary exactions, I love and admire. It is the struggle of free and virtuous patriots. But, contending for independency and total disconnection from England, as an Englishman, I cannot wish them success; for in a due constitutional dependency, including the ancient supremacy of this country in regulating their commerce and navigation, consists the mutual happiness and prosperity both of England and America.”

Chatham having moved his amendment to the Address, lord Sandwich replied, and was succeeded by lord Suffolk, one of the Secretaries of State. One passage of his lordship's speech was as follows: “The noble earl, with all that force of oratory for which he is so conspicuous, has charged administration as if guilty of the most heinous crimes, in employing Indians in general Burgoyne's army; for my part, whether foreigners or Indians, which the noble lord has described by the appellation of savages, I shall ever think it justifiable to exert every means in our power to repel the attempts of our rebellious subjects. The Congress endeavoured to bring the Indians over to their side, and if we had not employed them, they would most certainly have acted against us; and I do freely confess, I think it was both a wise and necessary measure, as I am clearly of opinion, that we are fully justified in using every means which God and Nature has put into our hands.” The duke

of Grafton thus describes the reply of Chatham to this position: “He stood up with a degree of indignation that added to the force of the sudden and unexampled burst of eloquence which must have affected any audience, and which appeared to me to surpass all that we have ever heard of the celebrated orators of Greece or Rome.” Having denounced the horrible notion of attributing the sanction of God and Nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping-knife, he thus proceeded: “These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation. I call upon that right reverend bench, those holy ministers of the Gospel, and pious pastors of our Church—I conjure them to join in the holy work, and vindicate the religion of their God. I appeal to the wisdom and the law of this learned bench, to defend and support the justice of their country. I call upon the Bishops to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn; upon the learned Judges to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your lordships, to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country, to vindicate the national character. I invoke the genius of the Constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls, the immortal ancestor of this noble lord frowns with indignation at the disgrace of his country. In vain he led your victorious fleets against the boasted Armada of Spain; in vain he defended and established the honour, the liberties, the religion—the Protestant religion—of this country, against the arbitrary cruelties of popery and the Inquisition, if these more than popish cruelties and inquisitorial practices are let loose among us—to turn forth into our settlements, among our ancient connections, friends, and relations, the merciless cannibal, thirsting for the blood of man, woman, and child! to send forth the infidel savage—against whom? against your Protestant brethren; to lay waste their country, to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name with these horrible hell-hounds of savage war—hell-hounds, I say of savage war! Spain armed herself with blood-hounds to extirpate the wretched natives of America, and we improve on the inhuman example even of Spanish cruelty; we turn loose these savage hell-hounds against our brethren and countrymen in America, of the same language, laws, liberties, and religion, endeared to us by every tie that should sanctify humanity.”

“My lords, I am old and weak, and at present unable to say more; but my feelings and indignation were too strong to have said less. I could not have slept this night in my bed, nor reposed my head on my pillow, without giving this vent to my eternal abhorrence of such preposterous and enormous principles.”

On the 3rd of December, colonel Barré, having called upon lord George Germaine "to declare, upon his honour, what was become of general Burgoyne and his brave troops," he admitted that he had received a piece of very disastrous intelligence from Quebec. Furious was the indignation against the ministry. Charles Fox declared that an army of ten thousand men, destroyed through the obstinate wilful ignorance and incapacity of the noble lord, called loudly for vengeance. A gallant general was sent like a victim to be slaughtered. He was ordered to make his way to Albany to wait the orders of sir William Howe; but general Howe knew nothing of the matter, for he was gone to a different country, and left the unhappy Burgoyne and his troops to make the best terms for themselves. Fox moved for copies of instructions to Burgoyne, which motion was negative.

Washington's position in his winter quarters of Valley Forge was such as to demand the utmost exercise of his energy and fortitude. His commissariat department was in a frightful state of incapacity. He wrote to Congress on the 23rd of December, "Unless some great and capital change suddenly takes place in that line, this army must inevitably be reduced to one or other of these three things—starve, dissolve, or disperse, in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they can." In answer to some presumptuous remarks of members of Congress, reproaching his going into winter quarters, he says, "I can assure these gentlemen that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets." Steuben arrived in Washington's camp at this period of suffering. He found the military administration entrusted to departments having separate powers—quartermaster-general, war-commissary, provisions' commissary, commissary or the treasury, paymaster of forage,—"bad copies of a bad original—that is to say, they had imitated the English administration, which is certainly the most imperfect in Europe. . . . The English system, bad as it is, had already taken root. Each company and quarter-master had a commission of so much per cent. on all the money he expended. It was natural, therefore, that expense was not spared."* In the condition of the troops he found disorder and confusion supreme. The men were engaged only for three, six, or nine months, so that it was impossible to have a regiment or a company complete. "I have seen a regiment consisting of thirty men, and a company of one corporal." A general would have

*"Steuben's Life," p. 114—Extracts from his MS. papers.

thought himself lucky to find a third of the men ready for action whom he found upon paper. "The arms at Valley Forge were in a horrible condition, covered with rust, half of them without bayonets, many from which a single shot could not be fired." The men were literally naked. Officers mounted guard in a sort of dressing-gown made of an old blanket. The formation of the regiments was as varied as their mode of drill, which only consisted of the manual exercise, each colonel having a system of his own. They could only march in files, after the manner of the Indians. Such, according to Steuben, was the condition of an army that was to resist the regularly disciplined troops of England, provided with necessaries of war at an unbounded expense. It may be instructive to see how the Prussian officer set about bringing this irregular force into something like military order, with the sanction of Washington. He drafted a hundred and twenty men from the line, as a guard for the chief-in-command. He drilled them himself twice a day. "In a fortnight my company knew perfectly how to bear arms, had a military air, knew how to march, deploy, and execute some little manœuvres with excellent precision." In the course of instruction he departed altogether from the general rule. "In our European armies a man who has been drilled for three months is called a recruit; here, in two months, I must have a soldier. In Europe, we had a number of evolutions very pretty to look at when well executed, but in my opinion absolutely useless so far as essential objects are concerned." He reversed the whole system of eternal manual and platoon exercises, and commenced with manœuvres. He soon taught them something better than the pedantic routine which was taught in manuals of tactics. To the objectors against Steuben's system it was answered, "that in fact there was no time to spare in learning the minutiae—the troops must be prepared for instant combat." The sagacious German had his men at drill every morning at sunrise; and he soon made the colonels of regiments not ashamed of instructing their recruits.