

under the sway of a succession of weak though benevolent princes. The preservation of the national reputation, and the foundation of its prosperity, are to be ascribed to the excellent administrations of the elder and younger counts Bernstorff. The former conferred a most essential benefit on his country; inasmuch as, after the death of the czar Peter III., who as duke of Holstein had threatened the independence of Denmark, he managed by negotiation, to extirpate this root of perpetual contention and destructive wars, just at the moment when the ducal family succeeded to the supreme power in the greatest monarchy of the earth: the whole of Holstein was transferred to the court of Denmark; which, in return, gave up Oldenburg and Delmenhorst. These last hereditary estates of the kings of Scandinavia and of the future czars, are inhabited by about seventy-five thousand individuals, and yield an annual produce of scarcely four hundred thousand florins: the court of Petersburg bestowed them on a younger branch of that family which resides at Eutin, and administers the secularized bishoprick of Lubeck.

But even including Holstein, the population of Denmark scarcely exceeds two millions, and its revenues nine millions of florins: and hence the forty thousand troops and the twenty ships of the line which constitute its military and naval force, cannot be kept in activity during a few campaigns without subsidiary aids.

Most nations have failed to reach an elevation commensurate with their resources: but Sweden, on the contrary, has sunk into a state of torpor, the effect of exertions disproportionate to her strength. While other nations appear scarcely worthy of the good fortune which has attended them, Sweden, by her spirit and intelligence, raised herself to a pitch of political greatness, far beyond the power of her resources to maintain: even when fortune at length deserted the arms of this nation, she strove, during a long course of years and amid the turbulence of faction, to heal the wounds inflicted by her own heroic spirit; and when at length she had lost every thing of which it was in the power of adversity to deprive her, she retained the esteem of Europe, the remembrance of her former greatness, and an internal conviction of the possibility of recovering her lost importance.

The population of Sweden, amounting to about three millions, is capable, under a prudent administration, of supporting an army of fifty thousand men; and of providing effectual means for the prosecution of such wars as may be necessary to maintain the independence of the worthy successors of the Gustavuses. This country is deficient only in that commodity of which merit is so frequently destitute, namely, in money; but even this instrument is attainable by the pursuits of industry and commerce, and by an able and assiduous attention to the political circumstances of foreign courts.

LETTER XI.

View of the Affairs of Great Britain—Commencement and Progress of the American War. A. D. 1775—1778.

AFTER the peace of 1763, France paid to Great Britain ninety-five thousand pounds sterling, as a compensation for the islands in the West Indies, which had been wrested from her during the late war, and which were now restored to her; and the farther sum of six hundred and seventy thousand pounds, as a ransom for the prisoners of war. The king devoted his share of the captures, amounting to six hundred and ninety thousand pounds, to the public funds. In a few days afterward, the bank of England paid for the renewal of its charter, one hundred and ten thousand pounds, and the East India company engaged to pay an annual contribution of four hundred thousand pounds from the produce of its conquests. The national debt was diminished about ten millions in the space of twelve years; and of the remaining one hundred and twenty-nine millions, a funded stock was created to the amount of one hundred and twenty-four, paying interest. The sources of public

prosperity were now husbanded, and incalculably increased by new manufactures, the progress of the colonies, and the dominion of the sea. Labour rose in value, and became a premium for the increase of population, by which the numbers of those who had emigrated or fallen in war were soon repaired.

From this period we may date a new era in the science of agriculture in England. Of forty-two millions of acres, which the country is computed to contain, eight millions and a half yielded as much corn, in productive seasons, as would suffice for the maintenance of five millions of its population during five years. All the soil of the country became more productive, in proportion as greater attention was paid to accommodate the mode of culture to the circumstances of each particular district. The incredible increase of pasturage in thirty years doubled the exportation. The ordinary annual produce of wool was estimated at one million two hundred thousand pounds sterling; and the manufacture of this commodity quintupled its value, and gave employment to one million and a half of persons. In the year 1736, Ireland sent four hundred and fifty thousand ells of linen to the fairs, stately held in July and October, in the city of Chester; and in the year 1771, the quantity was doubled: and this was only half the quantity manufactured. The high price of the necessaries of life, and the unequal distribution of certain taxes, having diminished the manufacture of cloth in England, those of Scotland, which, in the year 1720, amounted to only three millions of ells, in 1759 produced more than ten millions eight hundred thousand.

The newly acquired province of Canada yielded furs to the amount of three hundred thousand, and the colonies thus supplied the materials for the manufacture of hats. The various mines of iron, steel, copper, and tin afforded employment in various ways for four hundred thousand persons; and the exportation of these articles, after supplying the home consumption, amounted to the annual value of six hundred thousand pounds. Forty thousand persons worked in the mines of Cornwall; and as many more in the lead, copper, and coal works in other parts of the kingdom. A prodigious number of families are supported by the manufactures of Sheffield, Leeds, and other towns; in iron and steel. The coal mines of Newcastle extend more than half a mile under the sea, and a thousand vessels are employed in conveying their produce. The herring fishery, which had been encouraged by a premium, annually produced one hundred and fifty thousand barrels. The fisheries on the banks of Newfoundland were carried on by the labour of twenty thousand persons, and the produce in salt fish amounted to four hundred thousand pounds sterling. The whole export trade of England advanced from six millions and a half sterling, which was its amount in the reign of queen Anne, to sixteen millions in the year 1775, and at the latter period, the quantity of metallic specie in circulation, exclusive of the paper currency, was eighteen millions. Although the commerce with Europe was neglected for that with America, yet the trade carried on with Germany sometimes amounted to eight hundred thousand pounds sterling. The capital invested in the West Indies, consisting of estates, slaves, and buildings, was, at this time, estimated at thirty millions, and the annual produce in sugar, rum, coffee, &c. &c. was about four millions.

These statistical statements, my dear son, I have given with the view of enabling you to judge of the resources of the country at a moment when she was called upon by the impolicy of her rulers to plunge into an unnatural war with the members of her own empire—a war commenced in rashness and folly—persevered in through a spirit of infatuation—and terminating in discomfiture and disgrace. To this subject permit me now to direct your attention.

A skirmish with a body of troops whom general Gage had ordered to take possession of the magazines at Lexington, was the commencement of open war; and Gage proclaimed martial law, A. D. 1775. The beginning of the contest was animated. The Americans exerted themselves in every possible way to enlist Canada in their cause, either by persuasion or force; and in an attack upon Quebec, their general, Montgomery, fell; while, on the other hand, the English laid siege to Boston, and burned Charlestown. Perceiving that

fire till evening, slipped their cables, and retired from the scene of action; but the Actæon of twenty-eight guns was unfortunately run aground, and set on fire. The design on Charleston was however abandoned, and sir Peter Parker immediately set sail for New-York. This failure of an attack upon one of the principal colonies, proved exceedingly unfavourable to the British cause, by inspiring the Americans with additional animation. Congress expressed its high approbation of the conduct of the officers who had so ably defended the fortress on Sullivan's island; and the hopes of America naturally rising with her success, the state of Virginia instructed their representative to move in congress, that America be declared independent. The debates on this subject were continued nearly a fortnight. John Adams was the principal supporter in congress of the declaration of independence. On this important question, however, he was strongly opposed by Mr. Dickenson, a person of temperate and pacific views. On the question being put, there appeared six of the colonies to have voted on either side, and the delegates from Pennsylvania were equally divided. In Maryland the delegates had been instructed, by a majority of seven counties to four, to oppose the question of independence, and they acted conformably to their instructions; but, having given in their votes, they withdrew from the assembly. They, however, became convinced upon reflection that their conduct in this respect was unwise. The dread of being excluded from the general confederation, and of being reproached by the other states—perhaps an apprehension of their resentment, all combined to change their opinions, and gave a new turn to their conduct. These delegates were instructed to return to the congress, and act in its deliberations as they thought would be most conducive to the interests of their country.

The fatal day at length arrived, July 4th, when thirteen British colonies in America declared themselves free and independent states, abjuring all allegiance to the British crown, and renouncing all political connexion with that country. Of this important document, the declaration of independence, it may be gratifying to give you in this place a summary of the contents. Thus it commences:—

“When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to the separation.” It then proceeds to state, that government being an institution for the happiness of the governed, whenever it becomes destructive of that end, it ought to be dissolved. Having laid down this general rule, it proceeds to enumerate the facts which, in the opinion of congress, prove the British government of their colonies to have been destructive of its end. They allege, that in every stage of their oppression, they had humbly petitioned the king for redress, but without effect. It is then declared, that “a prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.—We have applied,” say they, “also to our British brethren; we have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement; we have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow those usurpations which would inevitably interrupt our connexion and correspondence: they have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity; we must therefore acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind—in war, enemies; in peace, friends.” The declaration thus concludes:

“We, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown: that all political connexion between them

and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And, for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other, OUR LIVES, OUR FORTUNES, and OUR SACRED HONOUR.”

The declaration of independence on the part of the Americans was the passing of the Rubicon; and the points in dispute remained to be settled only by the success of arms. The conduct of the war on the part of Great Britain was now committed to general Howe; and his brother, lord Howe, was to be sent out to him at Halifax, with reinforcements from England. They were also vested with joint power, as commissioners under Lord North's conciliatory bill, to effect a pacification between the mother-country and her colonies. General Howe, impatient of his brother's delay, sailed from Halifax on the 11th of June, and about the end of the month arrived at Sandy Hook, near New-York, to which place lord Howe, finding he had left Halifax, followed him; and on joining him his lordship was, to his inexpressible grief, made acquainted with the American declaration of independence. He nevertheless resolved to make an effort towards accommodation; and with a view to this, he sent circular letters to the governors of the colonies, and a declaration to the colonists in general. He likewise sent a message to general Washington, and another to Dr. Franklin,⁽¹⁾ who was now returned from England and chosen a member of the congress, informing them that himself and his brother were invested with full powers for a pacification, and wished the step he had taken to be considered as the first advance to that desirable object. Washington replied, that, from what had transpired, it was obvious their powers extended merely to the granting of pardons; but that those who had committed no fault needed no forgiveness—that the Americans were only defending what they deemed their indisputable rights. The answer which Dr. Franklin returned was, that, preparatory to any propositions of amity or peace, it would be required that Great Britain should acknowledge the independence of America, reimburse the expenses of the war, and indemnify the colonies for the burning of their towns. Lord Howe answered, that while they held such sentiments, an amicable adjustment of their differences was wholly impracticable.

On the 22d of August, 1776, the British army landed on Long island, opposite to a large body of Americans which lay encamped near the village of Brooklyn. Between the two armies was a ridge of hills intersecting the island from east to west, through which lay three passes, each of which had been seized by the Americans, who placed strong detachments to guard them. In the evening of the 26th, the main body of the British army, under generals Clinton, Percy, and Cornwallis, marched forward to gain the eastern pass, which they effected without difficulty. At nine the next morning the action commenced by a cannonade on the right wing of the Americans, and Clinton, by a successful manœuvre, having turned the left wing, took the right in the rear, and immediately threw it into confusion. In their retreat to

(1) After the battle of Long island, the “noble brothers,” as the Howes were called, paroled the American general Sullivan (who was taken prisoner in that engagement), and despatched him with a message to congress. “The purport of the message was, that they had full powers, and that they were disposed to treat on terms of accommodation and peace. At the same time, they intimated, that as congress was not considered in the eye of majesty, as a legal assembly, they only desired a *private conference*, with a few individuals belonging to that body, in the character and capacity of *private gentlemen*!” To this extraordinary request congress could not consent; but deputed a committee from their body to inquire by what authority and on what terms his lordship and brother were empowered to negotiate. Dr. Franklin, having been in long habits of friendship and intimacy with lord Howe, was very judiciously named as one of this committee; his colleagues being “the honourable Mr. Rutledge of South Carolina, and John Adams, Esq., of Massachusetts,” since president of the United States. The conference, which took place on Staten island, and continued three or four hours, resulted in nothing favourable to the views of royalty; although when the parties took leave of each other, it was not without some tender emotions. His lordship, in parting with his old and much-esteemed friend, expressed a warm regard for the Americans, and the pain he felt for their approaching sufferings. Dr. Franklin, in his easy, sententious manner, thanked him for his regard, and assured him that “the Americans would show their gratitude, by endeavouring to lessen, as much as possible, all pain he might feel on their account, by exerting their utmost abilities in taking good care of themselves.”—AM. ED.

Brooklyn, general Sullivan and ten other American officers were taken prisoners. Their whole loss on this occasion was estimated at three thousand men, including one thousand prisoners, while not more than three hundred and fifty were lost by the British and Hessians.

During the night of the 29th the Americans withdrew unperceived, and crossed the channel which separates the island from New-York, carrying with them their stores and part of their artillery. The British commanders, however, resolved to push their success, and on the 15th of September the troops were landed on the island in which New-York is situated, taking up a position about three miles from the town. Washington, finding his troops dispirited by their late defeat, thought proper to abandon the town; and in his hasty retreat, left behind him both artillery and military stores. The British troops then took possession of the city, which was soon after set on fire by some incendiaries, and nearly a third part of it was reduced to ashes.

The British arms were now crowned with a series of successes. General Howe, having turned the works which the Americans still occupied at Kings-bridge, marched against Washington, who, aware of the inferiority of his troops, was too wary to be brought to an engagement. The British forces stormed fort Washington, and took two thousand six hundred men prisoners of war. They next seized fort Lee, and overran New-Jersey as far as Brunswick, while general Washington, who had passed the North river to protect those provinces, was obliged to retreat before him to Newark, and from thence, breaking down the bridge over the Raritan, to Princeton.

The American army was at this time so diminished by desertion and defeat, that its commander, in his flight to the Delaware, had little more than three thousand effective men to accompany him. Rhode Island yielded to the British forces with little opposition. Lord Cornwallis was fully aware of the wretched plight to which the affairs of the colonists were now reduced; but having pursued the retreating army to Brunswick, he was prohibited by the commander-in-chief from a farther pursuit, though he expressed his sanguine hope of being able to disperse the army of Washington, if allowed to follow it, or at least to capture his heavy baggage, before he could cross the Delaware. But general Howe persisted in recalling him. The sun of American independence now seemed to be on the eve of sinking into total darkness; but from the negligence of those who wished for its extinction, it soon rose again with renewed lustre. After an interval of several days, lord Cornwallis obtained permission to advance to Trenton; and the van of his army reached the Delaware, at the moment the rear-guard of the Americans had gained the opposite shore.

Among the incidents which at this time threw a gloom on the affairs of America, was the capture of general Lee, who commanded a body of the continental forces in the province of New-York. This officer, who was by birth an Englishman, was not only regarded as an able commander, but was peculiarly obnoxious to government, who viewed him in the light of a deserter from the king's service, the resignation of his commission not having been accepted. He was on his march with the few men he could keep together, to join general Washington, and had taken up his quarters in New-Jersey, at some distance from the main body. Intelligence of his situation being communicated to colonel Harcourt, he pushed on with a party of light horse, and, eluding the guard, seized the sentries, and carried off the general with a rapidity that prevented any rescue. His capture was a great triumph to the British, and equally mortifying to the colonists. Washington offered to exchange six field-officers for him; but the tender was rejected. (1) Lee was

(1) The young gentleman to whom these historical letters are addressed by the author, might naturally pause at this sentence, and ask an explanation. According to the account here given, the Americans had met with *nothing but disasters*, while "the British arms were crowned with a series of successes." How then came general Washington in possession of these prisoners of rank, "six field-officers," whom he offered to exchange for general Lee? As the author has not seen fit to enlighten his son Philip on this subject, it is thought proper, for the benefit of other youthful readers, to state a few facts which ought to have been mentioned in the present letter. A detachment of New-England volunteers, with two regiments of New-York militia, under the command of general Montgomery, had gallantly assailed and captured several British posts on the Canadian frontier, with many prisoners of various ranks, besides

committed to close custody; and it is supposed that a resolution had been taken in England to make him undergo the utmost rigour of martial law; but it was determined by congress, that full retaliation should be made, on the persons of prisoners in their hands, for any violence that should be used towards him.

But in the midst of these disasters and discouragements, congress preserved a firm countenance, and retained an unvaried appearance of dignity. On the 4th of October, they signed a treaty of perpetual union and confederacy between the thirteen colonies. They also set themselves assiduously to devise means for levying a new army, and providing pecuniary resources for its support. On the 10th of December, they published an address to the people in general, for the purpose of animating them to resistance, expatiating on the relentless and inhuman manner in which, they affirmed, war was carried on by their enemies. The ill success of the American arms began, however, to produce internal effects as much to be dreaded as those of external force. Timidity and discord generally prevailed among them. After the taking of New-York, a petition, signed by a great number of the inhabitants, was presented to general Howe, declaring their acknowledgment of the supremacy of Great Britain, and requesting to be received into the king's peace and protection; and it was followed by another of a similar tendency from the people of Long island: several of the leading men in Pennsylvania and the Jerseys also went over to the commissioners at New-York. These proceedings induced general Washington to detach three regiments to the place, a measure which gave a check to the movements of the disaffected.

On the approach of winter, the British army went into cantonments, forming an extensive chain from Brunswick on the river Raritan to the Delaware. Among these posts, Trenton, which was situated on the Delaware, was occupied by colonel Rall, with three battalions of Hessians, and some British light horse and chasseurs. Washington formed the design of surprising them, and, with that object in view, pushed a corps across the Delaware on the 26th of December, which, making a sudden attack on their pickets, brought Rall to their assistance. The latter received a mortal wound; and the Hessians, finding themselves repulsed in their endeavours to retreat, surrendered prisoners of war, to the number of nine hundred and eighteen. This success revived the drooping spirits of the Americans, not only as it was a turn in the tide of their affairs, but especially as it was a triumph over those whose ferocity and rapacity they equally dreaded and detested. Another of its effects was the return to their colours of many of their own brethren in arms who had deserted them. (1) While the American cause was undergoing these difficulties, their situation attracted the attention of many of the powers of Europe, who beheld them with a favourable eye, actuated in all probability by a spirit of jealousy towards Great Britain on account of her naval superiority. The ports of France and Spain were opened to them, both for trade and for the disposal of their prizes. Artillery and military stores were sent to the colonies, and several French officers and engineers entered into their service. The great increase of American privateers, some of which, in the West Indies, were French ships having taken out American commissions, with few or no American seamen on board, together with the large armaments fitting out in the French and Spanish ports, occasioned the British ministry to put sixteen more men of war into commission, and to issue proclamations increasing the bounty for entering the navy, recalling seamen who were in foreign service, and laying an embargo on the exportation of provisions.

cannon, muskets, and military stores of considerable value. Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Chambly, St. John's, and Montreal, had fallen into their hands in rapid succession. The first two were surprised by a small party of enterprising young men, principally from Connecticut, conducted by Colonels Allen, Easton, and Arnold. The officers offered in exchange for Lee, however, were Hessians.—AM. ED.

(1) Another effect of Washington's success at Trenton, Mr. Jones passes over in silence; namely, the accession of such reinforcements as enabled him to achieve another brilliant affair at Princeton, on which occasion lord Cornwallis was completely out-generaled, and the British lost about five hundred men, in killed, wounded, and prisoners. It was now the enemy's turn to retreat, and he was soon afterward confined to the city of New-York.—AM. ED.

the existence of their country was at stake, the Americans now gave consistency to their cause, by adopting a regular form of constitution. The latter, however, was the work of years, and was destined to undergo various modifications, not merely arising from the action and reaction of parties, but because it was necessary, on one hand, to give an extremely popular form of government to a people which was summoned to face death in the cause of liberty: and, on the other, because it was impossible to submit such measures as appeared necessary, in a season of public danger, to the approbation of the multitude. With regard to the prominent features of the constitution, one principle was every where predominant; but the various republican states were distinguished by slight shades of difference with regard to form, but all endeavoured to excite the energies of the people by enthusiasm, and to direct their exertions by the mature deliberations of the congress.

Apprehending that the contest would require a greater force to be called into action than the country could conveniently supply, Great Britain concluded subsidiary treaties with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel, the duke of Brunswick, the princes of Anhalt and Waldeck, and the margrave of Anspach, for a certain number of their troops. Treaties of this kind were by no means unusual; but the present occasion rendered them remarkable from the circumstance of the remoteness of the contracting powers from the theatre of war; and still more from the natural love of freedom which interested the virtuous individuals of all countries in the cause of the Americans. Many awaited the result of the contest in anxious expectation, fearful lest these regular troops should be found to possess an overwhelming superiority over a mere militia. But America fought for her own children: and the result demonstrated that only the greatest commanders—men possessed of courage—accustomed to victory, and embarked in a popular warfare, are competent to avail themselves of the highest species of tactics. The American war was conducted in so extraordinary a manner, as to lead many to suppose that the commanders of the British forces were induced to protract the contest from selfish motives; others contended, that the spirit of party rendered them incapable of prosecuting the war with energy and vigour, affirming that it was rather a ministerial than a popular quarrel; while some attributed its continuance and protraction to the talents of Washington, who was vested with the command of the American forces, and to the aggregate power of the colonies, adducing instances from history to prove that every great nation had acquired its freedom, as soon as it despaired of attaining it by any other means.

The expedition of the English against Charlestown and the siege of Quebec were not productive of any beneficial results; and all the colonies of North America now united themselves in a general confederation for the preservation of their independence. The court of Versailles, ever vigilant of its own political interests, and conformably to its usual policy of supporting the weaker party in all their contests against the power of its rivals, on the news of this occurrence, resolved openly to adopt the cause of the Americans, which it had hitherto only favoured in secret; and to deliver the navigation of the seas and the commerce of the world from the preponderance, or rather the absolute control, of the British flag. But a still more extraordinary spectacle was exhibited in the conduct of the king of Spain, who, although the sovereign and oppressor of South America, united his arms to those of France in order to promote the establishment of a free state in the northern division of the continent. (1) But to do justice to the subject, it will be necessary to go

(1) A reader not already familiar with the history of the American revolution, might infer from the above observations, that France and Spain espoused the cause of the colonists at the commencement of the struggle; whereas, the fact is, the Americans sustained the conflict alone and single-handed, without foreign aid, for three years, as the treaty of France was not executed until February, 1778. The negotiations with Spain were still longer protracted. Though the talents and capacity of Mr. Jay, the American envoy to that court, were every way equal to the duties of such a mission—though he was well received, and his public character acknowledged, yet his negotiations were of little consequence to his country. Apprehending that the spirit of freedom and revolt might extend to her own colonies, Spain chose to withhold her assistance. The highest favour Jay could obtain was the trivial loan of four or five thousand pounds. A short time afterward, however, the cabinet of Spain declared war against England, and laid siege to Gibraltar. On the 16th of January, 1780, the Spanish fleet was defeated by admiral Rodney, near Cape Vincent.—AM. ED.

a little into the detail of the military and political occurrences connected with this unfortunate war.

The American congress resumed its sittings at Philadelphia, May 10th, 1775; and measures were adopted for the issue of a paper currency for the support of the army, on the security of the United Colonies; a name now first adopted to designate the American states. They prohibited all supplies to the British fisheries in Newfoundland, with a view of retaliating upon Great Britain for the fishery bills; and so decisive was the blow they thereby directed against the trade, that the greater number of British ships were forced to return home unladen. Apprized of the approach to New-York of the British troops that were intended for the subjugation of the province of Massachusetts, it was recommended to the inhabitants not to oppose an ineffectual resistance, but by retiring from the place to expose the troops to every inconvenience; the consequence of which was, that the commercial town of Boston was almost entirely deserted.

Towards the end of May, three British generals, Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton, arrived at Boston, with a large reinforcement of troops, including several regiments from Ireland; and the harbour was likewise filled with British ships of war. The continental congress passed a resolution in June, declaring the compact dissolved between the crown and the people of Massachusetts, by the violation of the charter obtained from William and Mary; and they recommended it to them to proceed to the election of a governor, assistants, and house of assembly, conformable to the original terms of their charter. About the same time they passed resolutions with a view of obstructing supplies both of provisions and money to the British army; created a post-office, and appointed Benjamin Franklin its director; in all which they considered themselves to be fully justified by the undisguised hostility of the British government. One of the measures which congress at this moment adopted, and the wisdom of which was fully justified in the result, was the unanimous appointment of George Washington to the rank and station of commander-in-chief of the American forces. This illustrious patriot was then in his forty-fourth year, and well known to his countrymen, not less by his many private virtues, than by the military skill and diplomatic ability which he had evinced in the course of the seven years' war. Nobly declining pecuniary remuneration at this arduous crisis of his country's fate, he left it to his fellow-citizens afterward to appreciate the value of his services—a conduct which drew from congress an immediate resolution "that they would maintain, assist, and adhere to him with their lives and fortunes, in the cause of American liberty." Having modestly expressed a distrust of his talents, and of the little experience he had yet had in military affairs, entreating the utmost indulgence of his constituents, he proceeded to visit the different camps that had been formed throughout the country, and was every where received with joyous acclamations. Ward, Putnam, Schuyler, Montgomery, Lee, and Gates were about the same time invested with subordinate commands. Lee and Gates were Englishmen by birth.

About this time, general Gage issued a proclamation, offering, in the king's name, a pardon to all who should lay down their arms and immediately return to their occupations, with the exceptions of Samuel Adams and John Hancock; and declaring, that all who should not accept of this proffered mercy would be treated as traitors and rebels. It also proclaimed martial law, till the laws were restored to their due efficacy. But so little was this document regarded, that Mr. Hancock was chosen president of the continental congress.

On the morning of June 16th, the English were alarmed by a cannonade of the king's ships, and on examining its direction, were surprised by the appearance of a redoubt and other works thrown up in the night, on an eminence situated on a peninsula to the north of Boston, and within the distance of gunshot of it, called Bunker's Hill. A cannonade also commenced from the town; but the provincials had taken care to secure themselves from its effects. A detachment under general Howe was debarked on Charles river,

to drive them from their station. The British troops ascended the hill until they came within a short distance of the Americans; and as the troops approached the works, so hot a fire was opened upon them, that they were thrown into confusion, and for a short time general Howe was left almost alone. The troops, however, soon rallied, and rushing upon the American works with fixed bayonets they forced them in every quarter.⁽¹⁾ The Americans retreated to Cambridge without much loss; but in this affair, which is said to have been conducted with more spirit than military skill, the loss of the British was two hundred and twenty-six killed, and eight hundred and twenty-eight wounded, including nineteen commissioned officers among the killed, and seventy among the wounded. That of the Americans was returned at four hundred and fifty. In the conflict, Charlestown, situated at the foot of Bunker's Hill, and which had been occupied by a party of the Americans, was set on fire, and burned to the ground. Thus terminated this dear-bought, and, in the end, this fruitless victory.

In the beginning of July, general Washington arrived at the camp before Boston, which, notwithstanding its deficiency of every kind of stores, the English had made no attempt to molest; but Washington contented himself with continuing the blockade, and accustoming his undisciplined troops to the fatigues of a military life. The Americans threw up works on another hill on their own side of Charlestown-neck; and securing their posts with strong redoubts, while they extended their lines to the fortifications on Boston-neck, they held the British troops closely invested in the peninsula, and rendered their situation very uncomfortable. The troops suffered much from sickness and scarcity of provisions; which last could only be supplied from England, and that at a vast expense; for of the great quantities that were sent, only a small proportion arrived safe and fit for use. The blockade continued through the year, during which nothing more occurred in this quarter that is worthy of record. General Gage returned to England in the month of October, and the chief command of the army devolved on general Howe.

All the colonies now began to act with open hostility against the British government. Lord Dunmore, the governor of Virginia, found it necessary to abandon the province, and take refuge with his family on board a ship of war. Being afterward joined by a few loyalists, and some runaway negroes, he equipped a small marine force, with which, during the summer and autumn, he carried on a desultory warfare along the coast of Virginia.

On the 6th of July, the congress published a declaration of the causes which had induced the colonists to take up arms. They disclaimed every intention of calling in foreign aid, or of dissolving the union between Great Britain and America, and which they sincerely wished to see restored. This was followed by an address to the inhabitants of Great Britain; another to the people of Ireland; and a petition to the king. Had there been any disposition, at this time, on the part of the British government to concede to the

(1) It is a remarkable fact, that almost every British historian affects to treat the battle of Bunker's Hill as a trifling skirmish, scarcely worthy of record; and yet, at the same time, they appear to approach the subject with more timidity, than their brave countrymen evinced in ascending the hill in the face of the American fire. The present author, with evident reluctance, admits that the royalists were *once* "thrown into confusion;" but he wishes us to believe that it was merely a *momentary* one; for he adds, that "they soon rallied, and rushing upon the American works with fixed bayonets, they forced them in every quarter."

Now, it is a well-known fact, corroborated by hundreds of spectators, who could not be mistaken, that the British made *three* successive attempts to dislodge the Americans, and only succeeded when the ammunition of the latter was totally expended; leaving them no alternative but to retreat, or (as many actually did) desperately defend their ill-constructed redoubt with the butt-ends of their muskets!

"In obedience to the orders of their commanding officer, the Americans had the precaution to reserve their fire till their enemies had approached within ten or twelve rods of their works. They then began a well-directed and furious discharge of small arms, which mowed down their enemies in ranks, and occasioned a disorderly and precipitate retreat. Their officers rallied them with difficulty, and pushed them forward, with the points of their swords, to a second attack. They were in the same manner put to flight the second time. With still greater difficulty they were forced by general Howe to a third attack. By this time the powder of the Americans began to fail, and their redoubt was attacked on two sides. Under these circumstances a retreat was ordered: the left wing of the Americans, north-east of the redoubt, still continuing their fire, ignorant of what had taken place on the right, till the British had nearly surrounded them." See *Morse's Revolution*.—Am. Ed.

wishes of the colonists, a reconciliation might have been readily effected; but the opportunity was lost, and unhappily it never returned.

The first military manœuvre of Washington, in the spring campaign of 1776, strongly evinced his abilities. As soon as his army was recruited, he made a movement as if intending to attack Boston. The attempt, however, was merely a feint; and the garrison of that town discovered, to their great astonishment, that in one night he had fortified the whole chain of Dorchester heights. To frustrate every attempt at regaining them on the part of the British, he had chained together hogsheads filled with stones, to roll down upon the heads of the assailants.⁽¹⁾ In consequence of this masterly stroke of the enemy, Boston and its harbour became untenable and Washington entered the town in triumph, where he found immense quantities of valuable stores, the barracks uninjured, and cannon fit for service. In fact, he found the place, upon the whole, improved rather than injured by the possession of the royal army. The hopes and efforts of congress, and of the colonists in general, were encouraged by this event, even in Canada, where they had most declined. General Arnold erected batteries on the shores of the St. Lawrence, and set fire to a number of houses in the neighbourhood. During five months the blockade of Quebec was kept up without intermission, until a daring sally of general Carleton drove the besiegers back in great confusion.

About the month of April, large reinforcements of troops arrived from both England and Ireland; and a detachment from general Howe, and another of foreign troops, having augmented the army of Canada to thirteen thousand men, general Carleton pursued the route of the Americans to Trois Rivieres, a village about half-way between Montreal and Quebec. Here a body of Americans, having attacked the advanced division of the British troops under the command of general Burgoyne, was repulsed with great loss. The provincials now found themselves under the necessity of evacuating Montreal and fort St. John, and, crossing lake Champlain, stationed themselves at Crown Point, where the British commander allowed them to occupy their post, for the present, unmolested.

While the campaign opened thus auspiciously for Britain in the north, an attempt was made to re-establish her authority in the south. The governors of the several colonies had represented, that in the middle and southern provinces there was a considerable spirit of loyalty, but that the friends of Britain were afraid to discover their sentiments; and that if a powerful force were sent from the mother-country to co-operate with them, they would immediately attach themselves to her cause. In consequence of this information, an armament was provided, and placed under the command of sir Henry Clinton and sir Peter Parker, with instructions to proceed to North Carolina, from the loyalists of which the most sanguine expectations were entertained.

The fleet anchored off cape Fear on the twenty-third of May; but finding that nothing could be attempted upon Virginia, general Clinton determined to attack the city of Charleston, and the fleet again anchored off the bar of that town. On the twenty-eighth of June, the Bristol and Experiment, each of fifty guns, advanced across the bar, to attack the fort on Sullivan's island. A most furious cannonade now commenced from the shipping, and was returned with equal warmth from the fort. The ships, after keeping up the

(1) The phraseology of this sentence is calculated to mislead the reader. The hill on which the works were erected is not so precipitate as to admit of *rolling* missiles on the *heads* of those who are ascending; and instead of hogsheads of stones, the reader should substitute barrels of stones and sand. Dr. Thacher, who was a surgeon in one of the regiments detailed on this important and hazardous service, has given the most minute and interesting description of this event that has yet been recorded. The limits of a note will not admit of a copious extract, but his "Journal" is familiar to most readers in the United States.—Among other particulars, it is stated, that numerous bundles of hay had been previously prepared, screwed tightly into a compact form, and arranged along the road which led to the heights, forming a cover to the troops as they marched to the spot, or they would otherwise have been exposed to a raking fire from the enemy, as soon as daylight had exposed their movements. "On reaching the spot," says the Doctor, who writes on the spot, "we found two forts in considerable forwardness, and sufficient for a defence against small arms and grape-shot. The amount of labour performed during the night, considering the earth is frozen eighteen inches deep, is almost incredible." "Among the means of defence are a great number of *barrels*, filled with stones and sand, arranged in front of our works, which are to be put in motion and made to roll down the hill, to break the ranks and *legs* of the assailants as they advance." He says nothing of hogsheads being chained together.—Am. Ed.