

Had general Howe followed up his successes at this period, he might, in all human probability, have brought the contest to a speedy and successful issue for Great Britain. But his negligent inactivity gave general Washington the opportunity he desired for strengthening his army and improving its discipline. Having allowed the spring to pass away without any spirited effort, the British general at length thought it prudent to advance against the enemy. It was now the month of June, and the American army was posted at Middlebrook in New-Jersey, behind a ridge of strong heights near the river Raritan. The army at this station, exclusive of a small body of cavalry, did not exceed eight thousand five hundred men, of whom more than one-half had never been in the field of battle. General, now sir William Howe, and knight of the bath, endeavoured to draw them from their post, by a feigned retreat. Washington fell into the snare; he detached a part of his force under general Green to harass the English, and he himself advanced from his camp at the head of his main body, while lord Stirling conducted another division. Howe, concluding that he now had an opportunity of bringing the enemy to action, recalled his troops, and sending lord Cornwallis to secure the heights, marched to attack the Americans at Quibbletown. But Washington, now sensible of his error, by rapid movements regained his camp; and lord Stirling only sustained a trifling check. Thus disappointed sir W. Howe retired to Staten island; from whence, after an unnecessary delay, he proceeded by sea to the capes of the Delaware; but finding that the Americans had obstructed the navigation of that river, he sailed to Chesapeake bay, and disembarked his army in Pennsylvania. General Washington had already arrived in that province; and having considerably augmented his army, he was not unwilling to risk an engagement for the protection of Philadelphia.

Having received information that the English army was advancing, on the 11th of September, to attack his right wing near the Brandywine, the American general made the necessary dispositions to receive them, and a smart action ensued. But the undisciplined troops of Washington were thrown into confusion, from which they only recovered to be again disordered by the vigour of the British arms. On this occasion, the Americans sustained a severe loss, while the sacrifice on the part of the English was very inconsiderable. Sir W. Howe then began his march towards Philadelphia, the enemy retreating as he advanced, and entered it on the 26th of September: congress having previously removed to Yorktown in Virginia.

## LETTER XII.

*History of the American War continued.—France and Spain take Part with the Colonies.—England declares War against both Countries.—Important naval Operations. A. D. 1778, 1779.*

WHILE these things were in progress in the middle states, affairs of some moment were transacting in the northern, to which we must now revert. A plan had been formed for penetrating, by the lakes of Canada, to the north of Hudson river, as far as Albany, in order to cut off the communication between the northern and southern colonies; and the execution of this enterprise was committed to general Burgoyne, in whose abilities much confidence was placed. The regular force intrusted to his command consisted of seven thousand two hundred men, British and German, with a train of artillery, besides a number of Canadians and several tribes of Indians, who were allured by presents and promises to take a part in the expedition. Burgoyne, who had passed the preceding winter in England, took the command of this force in the beginning of July, and advanced to the attack of Ticonderoga, which, on his approach, was deserted by the Americans, who, being pursued and overtaken in their retreat, were routed with great slaughter. They afterward abandoned fort Edward, and retired to Saratoga. The British

troops were at this time full of spirits, and elated with their success, while dejection and dismay prevailed among the provincials. The New-England states, however, exerted themselves greatly to collect troops for their defence, and general Arnold was sent to reinforce their army with a train of artillery. The American forces were increasing daily, from the very cause which was expected to operate in a contrary direction—namely, the cruelties committed by the Indian savages, which obliged every inhabitant to arm for his own protection. About this time, too, the British troops encamped before Saratoga began to suffer considerably from the want of provisions; and one of their detachments, being sent to gain possession of a depôt of stores collected at Bennington, was almost entirely cut off by the provincial militia. Another detachment, commanded by colonel St. Leger, was obliged to relinquish an attempt on fort Stanwix, leaving behind them most of their artillery and stores.

During these transactions, a large body of provincials had been collected under general Gates, an officer of English birth, but who had entered the American service, and on whom congress had placed much reliance. Burgoyne, having formed the project of crossing Hudson river, in order to join general Clinton at New-York, began his march about the middle of September; and on the 19th of that month, came in front of the American army at Stillwater. A severe but indecisive action took place, and each army intrenched itself in its position. The Americans were now continually receiving reinforcements, while the British were daily weakened by desertions among the Canadians; and the Indians, having no longer any expectation of plunder, abandoned the army at a moment when their services were most needed. The British troops had been under a short allowance of provisions some days previous to the 7th of October, the day on which general Burgoyne began his retreat towards Saratoga. Being under the necessity of dislodging the enemy, who nearly surrounded him, the general placed himself at the head of fifteen hundred men, and advanced to force a passage. The enemy, perceiving the lines weakened by this movement, fell upon the left and centre, which, being overpowered by numbers, were compelled to retire within the lines. The Americans closely pursued and stormed them in different parts; but general Arnold, who had the command, being wounded, and night coming on, they were obliged to retreat, though not before the German intrenchments had been carried sword in hand, which greatly endangered the whole camp.

During the night Burgoyne changed his ground, and occupied another strong post. The following day he offered to renew the battle, but the Americans declined it, having taken means to enclose the British army, and secure an easier victory. The British general again made a similar retreat, and arrived at Saratoga on the 10th, where he found all the passes secured by the enemy. No hope now remained but that of reaching fort Edward by a rapid night-march, and crossing the river: but he was informed that both the road and the fort, as well as the opposite bank of the river, were beset by the enemy. A council of war was then held, and the unanimous result was, that nothing remained for them but to open a treaty with general Gates. A convention was the consequence, by which it was agreed, that the British troops should march out with the honours of war, and then lay down their arms—to embark from the port of Boston for Europe, on condition of their not serving again in America during the present war. On this occasion the conduct of general Gates was characterized by the most honourable feeling: he would not permit any of his own soldiers to leave the lines to be spectators of the piling up of the British arms. The number of the British troops that surrendered on this occasion was stated at five thousand seven hundred and fifty-two men. Thus ended the Canadian expedition, in a result which not only raised the hopes of the Americans, but encouraged France and Spain to take part with them in the contest; thus verifying the prediction of lord Chatham, in those ever-memorable words, "France and Spain are watching the maturity of your errors."

General Burgoyne arriving from America, a court of inquiry into his conduct was appointed; but the general officers of which it was composed reported, that in his then situation of prisoner of war to the congress, no cognizance could be taken of it. The general demanded a court-martial, which was refused on the same grounds. He then brought his case before parliament, and motions were made in both houses for an inquiry into the causes and circumstances of his surrender; but they were defeated by the influence of the ministry. He was refused admittance to the royal presence, and was ordered to rejoin his troops, whom the congress refused to release until the convention of Saratoga had been formally ratified by Great Britain. The general refused a compliance with this, and was therefore deprived by the king of all his military commands.

The grand armies passed the winter near to each other, in a state of total inaction. The British troops had taken up their quarters at Philadelphia; the Americans were in huts at Valley Forge. Some predatory expeditions undertaken from Philadelphia in the spring, and others from Rhode Island, succeeded in the pillage and destruction of American property in the Jerseys, and on the banks of the Delaware, to a large amount. The Americans complained of some of these things with justice as being acts of cruelty and wanton aggression.

In the beginning of May, congress received copies of the treaties of alliance and commerce concluded between France and the United States: the intelligence occasioned great public rejoicings, and raised the spirits of the people to the highest pitch. Soon after, sir Henry Clinton arrived at Philadelphia to take the command of the English army, in the place of sir William Howe, who returned home.

In the month of June, the three commissioners appointed by lord North's conciliatory bills, namely, the earl of Carlisle, Mr. Eden, and governor Johnstone, arrived in the Delaware. The concessions which they were empowered to tender were so ample, that, at an earlier period, they could scarcely have failed of acceptance; but it was the misfortune of the English ministry to be always out of season with their measures of conciliation. However, they were submitted to the consideration of congress, among whom they produced considerable debates; and on the 17th of June, the president returned an answer. In this document it was remarked, that the acts of the British parliament, and other papers emanating from the ministry, were so framed as to imply that the people of the United States were subjects of the crown of Great Britain, which could not be admitted. It was farther said, that they would be ready to enter upon the consideration of a treaty of peace and commerce, not inconsistent with treaties already subsisting, when the king of Great Britain should demonstrate a sincere disposition to that purpose; the only proof of which, however, would be, the explicit acknowledgment of their independence, or the withdrawing of his fleets and armies.

A war with France being now considered as inevitable, it was deemed expedient to evacuate Philadelphia; and, accordingly, general Clinton retired in the month of June to New-York. The troops were transported across the Delaware without molestation; but in its march the army was harassed by American detachments, and by an advanced corps under general Lee, who had been exchanged and restored to his military station. The British were encumbered with such a quantity of baggage, including provisions which it was necessary to carry with them, that their line of march extended twelve miles, and the extreme heat of the weather rendered their advance still more slow and toilsome. Their course was directed to Sandy Hook; but when they had arrived at a place called Freehold, they were overtaken by some detachments of the American army, and brought to a partial action on the 28th of June. The valour and good conduct of the British troops, and the skill of their commanders, extricated them with a moderate loss from their perilous situation, after fatigues, the severity of which may be estimated from the extraordinary circumstance, that fifty-nine of the soldiers actually died without a wound, merely from the effects of toil and the heat of the climate.

They reached Sandy Hook on the last day of June, whither lord Howe, with his fleet from the Delaware, had arrived on the preceding day.

The attention of the British government was now directed to the maritime preparations of France; and intelligence was obtained that thirty-two sail of the line, with ten or twelve frigates, were lying in Brest harbour. Great efforts were consequently made to collect a naval force able to cope with that of the French. Admiral Keppel, who was destined to the command, found at Portsmouth only six sail of the line fit for immediate service. On the 13th of June, however, he was enabled to put to sea with a fleet of twenty ships, and the promise of a speedy addition. Proceeding to the bay of Biscay, two French frigates, with two smaller vessels, were descried taking a survey of the fleet. As war had not yet been declared between England and France, it became a matter of delicacy to determine how to act on the occasion: the British admiral, however, thought it his duty to stop the frigates. One of these, the *Licorne*, having been brought into our fleet, a shot was fired across her way as a signal to her to keep her course, which she returned by firing a whole broadside into a seventy-four gun ship, and then struck her colours. Notwithstanding this provocation, not a shot was returned. The other frigate, the *Belle Poule*, being overtaken by an English frigate, a desperate engagement ensued, in which the English ship was so much disabled in her masts and rigging, that she was unable to prevent her antagonist from escaping to the French coast. Another frigate was detained by admiral Keppel, though he allowed several French merchant ships to pass through the fleet unmolested. Having ascertained the decided superiority of the French fleet in point of numbers, the British admiral, wishing to avoid so unequal a contest, returned to Portsmouth. The seasonable arrival of the West India and Levant fleets produced a supply of seamen, which enabled the admiral to put to sea again, on the 9th of July, with twenty-four ships of the line, and on his way he was joined by six more. The French fleet, about the same time, sailed from Brest in three divisions, under the count d'Orville, commander-in-chief, the count Duchaffault, and the duke de Chartres, afterward duke of Orleans. The English fleet was also disposed in three divisions: the van commanded by sir Robert Harland, vice-admiral of the red; the rear by sir Hugh Palliser, vice-admiral of the blue; and the centre by admiral Keppel. The two fleets, the English of thirty, and the French of thirty-two ships of the line, and the latter much superior in the number of frigates, came in sight of each other on the 23d of July. After manœuvring several days, during which two of the French line-of-battle ships had been separated from the fleet, an action was brought on upon the 27th, which proved wholly undecisive, not a ship being taken on either side, though both fleets were much shattered; of men, the loss was the greatest on the part of the enemy. With so unproductive a result, it can hardly be expected that the country should be satisfied; it gave rise to considerable discussions both in and out of parliament, and the nation seemed not a little disappointed and dissatisfied. The French, on the contrary, considered it as a triumph that they came off on equal terms from a contest with the British navy. The latter, however, soon afterward displayed its usual superiority. Admiral Keppel, after refitting, put to sea again, and rode triumphant in the channel for the remainder of the season, effectually protecting the English commerce, while that of the French suffered much from captures by the British cruisers.

In the month of April, a French squadron had been fitted out at Toulon, consisting of twelve ships of the line and six frigates, under the command of the count d'Estaing, having on board a large body of land-fores. Its destination was known to be America, and sanguine hopes were entertained by the court of Versailles, that he would find the British fleet in the Delaware and the army in Philadelphia. A long continuance of adverse winds, however, protracted the voyage of this fleet across the Atlantic to eighty-seven days—a circumstance most propitious to the English, since, in all human probability, it saved both their fleet and their army. A passage of two months would have brought d'Estaing to the Delaware, while lord Howe was yet in

the river; and such was the superiority of the French force, that the British fleet must have been captured or destroyed; an event which would certainly have been followed by the destruction of the army. On his arrival at the capes of the Delaware, the French admiral, finding his plan disconcerted, sailed to Rhode Island, with the intention of attacking the English fleet as soon as it should appear off the coast; but though lord Howe followed him there, having reinforced his squadron, and though he endeavoured to gain the weather-gage, in order to bring him to action, a violent tempest which came on separated and damaged the two fleets so severely that an engagement was rendered impracticable. The French, who were the greatest sufferers, bore away for Boston to refit. Lord Howe, having repaired his damages, followed them, and entered the bay of Boston; but he found the French admiral so advantageously anchored under the protection of land batteries, that he saw no prospect of a successful attack. General Sullivan had landed on Rhode Island, on the day the French had sailed from Newport harbour, and had begun to break ground against the British works; but the appearance of lord Howe, and the departure of the French fleet, so much diminished his chance of success, that he was deserted by the volunteers, of whom half his force was composed, and he found it necessary to retreat. Thus a scheme was frustrated on which the Americans founded sanguine hopes; and they were led to complain loudly of the conduct of their new allies. Lord Howe, who returned from Boston to Rhode Island, finding the danger there at an end, proceeded to New-York, where he resigned his commission, and sailed for England.

The season for prosecuting hostilities was now drawing towards a close, but military transactions were still carrying on with considerable activity. On the 7th of September, the island of Dominica, in the West Indies, was compelled to surrender to a French force under the command of the marquis de Bouillé. It appears that at this time the intelligence from England to the West Indies was so defective, that admiral Barrington, who was stationed at Barbadoes with a naval force, was first informed of hostilities between the two nations by a document from Paris, published at Martinico in the middle of August.

In the northern states of America, a strong party of the American loyalists, called Tories, with some Indians, under the command of one colonel Butler, appeared on the river Susquehannah about the month of July, and proceeded to attack Wyoming, an extremely beautiful and prosperous settlement, consisting of eight townships, situated on that river. They defeated in the field the garrison of the principal fort, slaughtered all the rest, with the women and children, and carried fire and sword throughout the settlement, committing the most shocking cruelties. On the other hand, an expedition was undertaken by some Americans from the back of Virginia, against the Canadian settlements on the Mississippi, which they reduced, exacting from the inhabitants an oath of allegiance to the United States, while other parties of them retaliated upon the Indians the barbarities they had exercised at Wyoming.

The province of Georgia was so remote from the scene of action, that, for a considerable time past, it had partaken but sparingly of the ravages of war. It was, however, towards the close of this year, invaded with some success by the British troops. Sir Henry Clinton detached colonel Campbell with a force of British and Hessians, escorted by a small squadron of ships of war commanded by commodore Hyde Parker, to that quarter. The expedition sailed from Sandy Hook, November 27th, and arrived at the mouth of the river Savannah, December 23d. The troops on landing proceeded with little opposition to the town of Savannah, the capital of the colony; and having completely defeated the American force under Robert Howe, they obtained possession of the fort, with its garrison, the town, and the shipping of the river, without farther resistance. The American general withdrew the remains of his army to South Carolina, and in a short time the whole province was reduced to submit to the British government, with the exception of the

town of Sunbury, which afterward yielded to a body of troops brought against it by general Prevost, governor of East Florida.

The occurrences of the war in 1799 were not so important as to require any particular detail. The commander of the British forces in North America did not undertake any memorable expedition; but he prevented general Washington from profiting by the inactivity of the British army. He despatched a small force to Virginia, which succeeded in capturing or destroying many of the American vessels, and considerable military stores; he dispossessed them of some forts on the river Hudson; and the province of Connecticut was furiously ravaged, without bringing Washington to its relief. To punish the savages for the cruelty which they had perpetrated either by the direction or with the connivance of the English, Washington despatched general Sullivan towards the Susquehannah, and eighteen villages were destroyed in this incursion. In the north, the American marine suffered considerably. A British detachment from Halifax having established a post on the river Penobscot, the Americans equipped a force, consisting of ninety-seven armed vessels, which sailed from Boston, and arriving in the river on the 25th of July, began to batter the fort. The attacks were continued for a fortnight, when sir George Collier, with a squadron from New-York, coming in sight, the Americans instantly left their works, and their vessels ran up the river. They were, however, pursued, and finding escape impracticable, they set fire to their vessels, all of which were destroyed, except one of twenty guns and another of eighteen, both of which were captured by the English.

The arrival of the French on the coast of Georgia was an event which infused fresh courage into the Americans. The count d'Estaing had sent four thousand men against the island of St. Vincent, which the governor soon surrendered, as many of the inhabitants were disaffected, and the soldiers not sufficiently numerous for a vigorous defence. The French next attacked Grenada, which also surrendered. Count d'Estaing afterward sailed for Georgia, having under his command twenty-six line-of-battle ships, with about nine thousand troops. He made a descent near Savannah, and commenced the siege of that capital; and after the formality of regular approaches, he had recourse to the vigour of an assault. Each division of the besiegers planted a standard on the walls; but being at length driven from the fortifications with great loss, they abandoned the siege. D'Estaing retired to his fleet, and quitting the American coast, proceeded with part of his ships to France, sending the rest to the West Indies. During these transactions, the British troops were withdrawn from Rhode Island, of which the Americans again took possession.

The session of parliament was near its close, when lord North apprized the house of the intended hostilities of Spain. This was an event that had for some time been expected, and consequently it excited little surprise. His Catholic majesty, affecting a desire of peace, had persuaded the courts of London and Paris to send to Madrid their respective propositions, that he might communicate to each court the sentiments and offers of the other. But as the French insisted on the confirmation of American independence, these mediatory efforts, of which the sincerity is very questionable, were ineffectual and nugatory. An aggressive manifesto was then issued by Spain, which was ably answered by Great Britain, and both parties prepared for vigorous hostilities.

The confederated powers of France and Spain immediately after this formed a grand plan for an expedition to the coast of England, but with what specific object in view does not appear. The French fleet, commanded by the count d'Orvilliers, sailed from Brest on the 4th of June, and, forming a junction with that of Spain off Cadiz, they shaped their course northwards, and entered the channel with the formidable display of more than sixty sail of the line, attended by a great number of frigates and sloops of war. The combined fleets appeared for two or three days before Plymouth, where they excited great alarm; but no attempt against that important place was made.

and the enemy ranged for some time about the Land's End and the Scilly islands. On the 31st of August, sir Charles Hardy entering the channel with near forty sail of the line, was pursued by the combined fleets as far as Plymouth; but many of their ships being out of condition, and the men in a very sickly state, they returned to Brest, having performed nothing worthy of one of the most powerful armaments ever seen in those seas. The celebrated siege of Gibraltar was also commenced during this summer, and it is probable that the reduction of that important fortress was a principal object of the court of Madrid in entering into the war.

While Great Britain was thus beset with perils from a foreign confederacy, the spirit of discontent became prevalent in the empire itself, which considerably enhanced her difficulties, and embarrassed her rulers. The passing of a bill in favour of the English Roman Catholics, induced some gentlemen in Scotland to propose its extension to that country at the ensuing session of parliament. The populace caught the alarm, and the subject was taken up, first in some of their provincial synods, and then among the lower orders of the people in Edinburgh and Glasgow. In the former of these cities a mob assembled in the night of February 2d, which committed the most horrible excesses, pillaging and burning the Catholic chapels, and several houses belonging to persons of that persuasion. Similar disturbances also took place at Glasgow, and these tumultuous proceedings prevented the bill that had been projected from being brought forward.

In Ireland, the state of affairs was far from being peaceable and settled. It is but too true that the sister realm had been long treated more like an alien or a stranger than a friend. Her interests had been neglected, her commerce fettered and restricted, her people impoverished and oppressed. A free parliament, it was thought, would more studiously promote the prosperity of that country than a legislature dependent on that of Great Britain; and a free trade was also wished, its beneficial effects being so conspicuous in England. To promote the attainment of these great objects, the patriots of Ireland encouraged a popular union. Amid the dread of foreign invasion, the government allowed the lieutenants of counties to give out arms to active and able-bodied men. Hoping to intimidate the court by a display of their strength, the gentry stimulated the people to form associations and learn the military exercise; and the volunteers soon became so numerous, that the public stores could not supply the extraordinary demand for arms. The purses of individuals were opened to make up the deficiency; and a great national force was imbodyed—"an army unauthorized by the laws, and uncontrolled by the government of the country." Ministers could not fail of looking with some apprehension on such a state of things; but they deemed it most prudent to concur in a scheme which it was now out of their power to defeat. The Irish nation, feeling its strength, now began to consider of its rights, and a free and unrestricted commerce was the object which it resolved to pursue.

The ill success of the war, the alarming situation in which the nation was placed, and the loud complaints against the ministry, frequently refuted by votes rather than by reasonings, had, at this time, widely diffused a spirit of discontent, which at the opening of this year manifested itself by numerous county meetings, for the purpose of framing petitions to parliament for the redress of grievances. In these the county of York took the lead, and a petition, signed by persons of the first consequence, both clergy and laity, stated in strong terms the evils arising from the war, the wastefulness of expenditure, the unconstitutional influence acquired by the crown in consequence of the increase of places and pensions, and the urgent necessity of correcting these abuses before new burdens were imposed on the people. The county of Middlesex followed the example of York; and it was succeeded by a number of other counties and towns, some with greater, others with less unanimity. After the Christmas recess, these petitions were presented to the house of commons, sir George Saville leading the way with that of Yorkshire.

## LETTER XIII.

*Disgraceful Riots in London—Lord George Gordon committed to the Tower, A. D. 1780—Progress of the War in America—Naval Transactions—Dreadful Hurricane in the West Indies—Declaration of War against Holland, 1780, 1781—Siege of Gibraltar, &c.*

You have already been apprized of the tumultuous proceedings that took place in Scotland, A. D. 1780, in consequence of the intimation that had been given of a repeal of the penal laws against the Catholics. An association was formed in that country, having for its object to guard against any relaxation of the penal statutes against the adherents to the church of Rome, at the head of which was lord George Gordon, brother to the duke of Gordon, a man of singular character, compounded of enthusiasm, artifice, and folly. Mainly through his exertions a spirit was excited in the British metropolis, as hostile to the repeal of those laws as that which had appeared in the mobs of Edinburgh and Glasgow. As early as January 4th, a deputation from a body calling itself the Protestant association, of which lord George was the patron or president, waited on lord North, to request him to present a petition to parliament against the law which had passed in favour of the English Catholics; but with that request his lordship absolutely refused to comply. During the subsequent session of parliament, lord George Gordon, who was a member of the house of commons, frequently interrupted its business by the introduction of topics relative to religion and the danger from popery, and by dividing the house on questions in which he stood entirely or almost alone. His dress and manner were equally singular with his language; but he was regarded by the house rather as an object of amusement than of any serious apprehension. The association in London, however, appears to have been secretly increasing in numbers; and on May 29th, a meeting called by public advertisement having been held at Coachmaker's-hall, lord George Gordon took the chair, and made a vehement and inflammatory harangue, in which he endeavoured to persuade his auditors of the alarming progress of popery in the kingdom; and concluded by moving a resolution, that the whole body of the Protestant association should, on the following Friday, accompany him to the house of commons for the delivery of their petition. He declared that he would not present it if attended by fewer than twenty thousand men; and moved that they should be arranged in four divisions, one of them composed of the Scotch residents in London, and all distinguished by wearing blue cockades. These motions were all carried with great applause; and in addition to this public procedure, lord George gave notice to the house of commons of his intention to deliver the petition, with the day and manner in which it would be done.

On the 2d of June, the associated body, amounting to several thousands, assembled in St. George's fields, and marshalling themselves as directed, they proceeded in great order to the house of commons. Although their demeanour was at first peaceable, their passions soon became inflamed, and they began to commit violent outrages on the persons of such members of both houses as came in their way, especially such as were connected with the government, or were regarded as promoters of the obnoxious bill. Within the house of commons, lord George Gordon, having brought up the petition, moved that it be taken into immediate consideration. This occasioned some debate, during which his lordship often went out to inform the mob what was passing, as well as who were the principal opponents of their cause. His motion was negatived by one hundred and ninety-two votes to six. After a considerable time spent in much confusion and alarm, a party of horse and foot-guards arrived, headed by one of the magistrates, who assured the mob that the soldiers should be ordered away if they would disperse. They accordingly did so from the environs of the houses of parliament, but it was for the purpose of demolishing two Romish chapels, one in Lincoln's Inn fields,

It may be proper for us here to suspend the narrative of American affairs, in order to glance at the proceedings of the British parliament, which now assumed a considerable portion of interest.

The British parliament resumed its sittings in the month of November, when the debates turned chiefly on American affairs. The unfortunate result of the Canadian expedition, the plan of which is said to have originated with the officer to whom its execution was intrusted, had not then reached England, or at least was not generally known on this side the Atlantic; but it could not long be concealed, and the developement of it subjected the ministry to the most bitter sarcasms and taunting invectives. The lofty style of the British manifesto issued by general Burgoyne on his taking the command of the army, became a fit subject for ridicule. It warned the colonists of the dangers impending over them should they resist his majesty's arms, and rhetorically amplified the terrors of a savage foe let loose upon them. Lord North was styled the political Sangrado, who prescribed bleeding for ills of every description; and who, if mortal symptoms appeared to attend his practice, would still persist in drawing more blood, because his reputation was staked on this effectual remedy. The ministry deprecated the pelting of this merciless storm, and endeavoured to allay it by apparent dejection, and an acknowledgment that they had been unfortunate. This, however, afforded no reparation for the disgrace which the British arms had sustained; and as the means of investigating whether it ought to be attributed to the ignorance or incapacity of the ministry, lord Chatham moved, that there be laid before the house copies of all orders and instructions given to general Burgoyne relating to the expedition: the motion, however, was negatived.

During the recess of parliament, the spirits of the ministry, which had evidently been at a low ebb, began to recover their buoyancy, in consequence of the numerous voluntary tenders that were made by private individuals and public bodies, for raising new regiments to supply the loss of general Burgoyne's army; and it was now determined to prosecute the war with redoubled vigour.

On the 17th of February, 1778, lord North, who appears always to have kept the object of conciliation in view, brought two bills into the commons; one for the purpose of declaring the intentions of parliament concerning the exercise of the right of imposing taxes on the colonies; the other to enable his majesty to appoint commissioners, with powers to treat upon the means for quieting the disorders now subsisting in America. In his preliminary speech he declared, that it had always been his opinion that American taxation could never produce a beneficial revenue, and that he had never proposed any taxes on the colonies; it was his misfortune to have found them taxed when he came into office. He justified the coercive acts, on the ground that they appeared to be necessary at the time, though they had produced effects which he never intended. With respect to the proposed commission, his lordship said, that it was proposed to treat with the congress by name, as if it were a legal body; to order a suspension of arms; to suspend all restrictive laws, and grant all sorts of pardons and immunities; to restore to any of the colonies their ancient form of constitution; and where the king nominated governors, council, &c. to nominate others till his pleasure were known.

This motion of the minister excited expressions of strong disapprobation from the tory part of the house, and some of the country gentlemen loudly complained of the deception practised on them relative to American taxation. On the other hand, the propositions were in general approved by the opposition, though accompanied with some severe remarks on the fruitlessness of a war, the objects of which appeared never to have been understood, and were now entirely renounced. The bills, however, passed with some amendments, one of which was a clause for the express repeal of the duty on tea.

In the debates which these bills gave rise to, the members of opposition inveighed strenuously on their inefficiency at the present moment. They contended, that they were substantially the same that were proposed by the

duke of Grafton in 1776, and which, had they been suffered to pass at that time, might have put a stop to farther hostilities; but matters were since that time greatly altered, and much to our disadvantage. There was, however, something like a chance, and they would not impede the execution of a plan which had conciliation for its object. Mr. Fox, in particular, was very severe upon the minister, whose arguments, said he, "might be collected into one point, his excuses comprised in one apology, in one word—ignorance; a palpable and total ignorance of America. He had expected much, and had been disappointed in every thing. Necessity alone had compelled him now to speak out." Mr. Fox then assured the house he had it from unquestionable authority, that a treaty had been signed at Paris, ten days before, between France and the American colonies, whereby the former acknowledged and entered into an alliance with the latter, as an independent state; and he called upon the minister to give the house satisfaction on that interesting point. Lord North reluctantly acknowledged that it was too probable such a treaty was in agitation, though he had no authority to pronounce absolutely that it was concluded. The duke of Grafton, in the house of peers, put the same question to ministers, when lord Weymouth, the secretary of state, answered, "that he knew nothing of any such treaty, nor had he received any authentic information of its being either in existence or in contemplation." Yet, a few days afterward, lord North delivered a message from his sovereign to the commons, and lord Weymouth to the upper house, informing them that "a rescript had been delivered by the ambassador of his most Christian majesty, containing a direct avowal of a treaty of amity, commerce, and alliance recently concluded with America; in consequence of which offensive communication, his majesty had sent orders to his ambassador to withdraw from that court; and relying on the zealous support of his people, he was prepared to exert all the force and resources of his kingdom to repel so unprovoked and so unjust an aggression." Addresses were carried through both houses, containing the strongest assurances of support.

On the 7th of April, the duke of Richmond, in supporting an address to the throne on the state of the nation, declared his conviction of the necessity of an immediate recognition of American independence. As the discussion was expected to take place that day, lord Chatham appeared in the upper house, tottering under corporeal infirmities, and supported by his son, Mr. William Pitt, and his son-in-law, lord Mahon. When the duke of Richmond had concluded his motion, lord Chatham rose, and, after lamenting that his bodily infirmities should have prevented his attending to his duty at so important a crisis, he declared that he made an effort beyond his strength to appear there that day, perhaps for the last time, to express his indignation at the idea of yielding up the sovereignty of America. He then proceeded to address their lordships in the following striking language:—"I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me, that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and noble monarchy. Pressed down as I am by the load of infirmity, I am little able to assist my country in this most perilous conjuncture; but, my lords, while I have sense and memory, I will never consent to tarnish the lustre of this nation, by an ignominious surrender of its rights and fairest possessions. Shall a people, so lately the terror of the world, now fall prostrate before the house of Bourbon? Is it possible? I am not, I confess, well informed of the resources of this kingdom; but I trust it has still sufficient to maintain its just rights, though I know them not. Any state, my lords, is better than despair. Let us, at least, make one effort, and, if we must fall, let us fall like men." The duke of Richmond requested his lordship to point out the mode of making the Americans renounce their independence, adding, that if he could not do it, no man could. Lord Chatham rose to reply, but pressing his hand to his heart, he sunk to the floor in a convulsive fit, and the house was cleared. On the 11th of May he expired, in the 70th year of his age. His remains were honoured with a public funeral, his debts paid by the nation, and an annuity of four thousand pounds, out of the civil list, was settled upon the earldom of Chatham.