

gallant citizen had indeed died for them. And when the ancient inhabitants of this city thus gathered in throngs to bear the soldier's mangled corpse to its place of rest, it was committed to the ground with the sacred service which bade them look to the promised day when "the earth and the sea shall give up their dead." The grave thus solemnly closed has been unsealed—affectionately, reverently, piously.—But yet upon the solemnities of this day, the reproach of a vain and profane pageant may fasten, if the mouldering remains of the dead can be placed in the midst of the living without stirring every heart to its very centre.*

* Reed's eulogy. Delivered at Philadelphia November 26th, 1840, when the remains of Mercer were disinterred and again buried at Laurel Hill.

ETHAN ALLEN,

BRIGADIER-GENERAL IN THE AMERICAN ARMY.

GENERAL ALLEN was born in Salisbury, Connecticut, from whence, while he was yet young, his parents emigrated to Vermont. By this circumstance he was deprived of the advantages of an early education. But, although he never felt its genial influence, nature had endowed him with strong powers of mind; and when called to take the field, he showed himself an able leader, and an intrepid soldier.

At the commencement of the disturbances in Vermont, about the year 1770, he took a most active part in favour of the Green Mountain Boys, as the first settlers were then called, in opposition to the government of New York. Bold, enterprising, and ambitious, he undertook to direct the proceedings of the inhabitants, and wrote several pamphlets to display the supposed injustice and oppressive designs of the New York proceedings. The uncultivated roughness of his own temper and manners seems to have assisted him in giving a just description of the views and proceedings of speculating land-

jobbers. His writings produced effects so hostile to the views of the state of New York, that an act of outlawry was passed against him, and five hundred guineas were offered for his apprehension. But his party was too numerous and faithful to permit him to be disturbed by any apprehensions for his safety. In all the struggles of the day he was successful, and proved a valuable friend to those whose cause he had espoused.

The news of the battle of Lexington determined Allen to engage on the side of his country, and inspired him with the desire of demonstrating his attachment to liberty by some bold exploit. While in this state of mind, a plan for taking Ticonderoga and Crown-Point by surprise, which was formed by several gentlemen in Connecticut, was communicated to him, and he readily engaged in the project. Receiving directions from the General Assembly of Connecticut, to raise the Green Mountain Boys and conduct the enterprise, he collected two hundred and thirty of the hardy settlers, and proceeded to Castleton. Here he was unexpectedly joined by Col. Arnold, who had been commissioned by the Massachusetts committee to raise four hundred men, and effect

the same object which was now about to be accomplished. They reached the lake opposite Ticonderoga on the evening of the 9th of May, 1775. With the utmost difficulty boats were procured, and eighty-three men were landed near the garrison. Arnold now wished to assume the command, to lead on the men, and swore that he would go in himself the first. Allen swore that he should not. The dispute beginning to run high, some of the gentlemen present interposed, and it was agreed that both should go in together, Allen on the right hand, and Arnold on the left. The following is Allen's own account of the affair:—

“The first systematical and bloody attempt at Lexington, to enslave America, thoroughly electrified my mind, and fully determined me to take a part with my country. And while I was wishing for an opportunity to signalize myself in its behalf, directions were privately sent to me from the then colony, now state of Connecticut, to raise the Green Mountain Boys, and, if possible, with them to surprise and take the fortress of Ticonderoga. This enterprise I cheerfully undertook: and after first guarding all the several passes that led thither, to cut off all intelligence between the garrison and the

country, made a forced march from Bennington, and arrived at the lake opposite Ticonderoga on the evening of the 9th day of May, 1775, with two hundred and thirty valiant Green-mountain Boys; and it was with the utmost difficulty that I procured boats to cross the lake. However, I landed eighty-three men near the garrison, and sent the boats back for the rear-guard, commanded by Col. Seth Warner; but the day began to dawn, and I found myself necessitated to attack the fort before the rear could cross the lake; and as it was viewed hazardous, I harangued the officers and soldiers in the manner following:—‘Friends and fellow-soldiers, you have, for a number of years past, been a scourge and terror to arbitrary powers. Your valour has been famed abroad, and acknowledged, as appears by the advice and orders to me from the General Assembly of Connecticut, to surprise and take the garrison now before us. I now propose to advance before you, and in person conduct you through the wicket-gate; for we must this morning either quit our pretensions to valour, or possess ourselves of this fortress in a few minutes; and inasmuch as it is a desperate attempt, which none but the bravest of men

dare undertake, I do not urge it on any contrary to his will. You that will undertake voluntarily, poise your firelock.’

“The men being at this time drawn up in three ranks, each poised his firelock. I ordered them to face to the right, and at the head of the centre file, marched them immediately to the wicket-gate aforesaid, where I found a sentry posted, who instantly snapped his fusee at me. I ran immediately towards him, and he retreated through the covered way into the parade within the garrison, gave a halloo, and ran under a bomb-proof. My party, who followed me into the fort, I formed on the parade in such a manner as to face the barracks, which faced each other. The garrison being asleep, except the sentries, we gave three huzzas, which greatly surprised them. One of the sentries made a pass at one of my officers with a charged bayonet, and slightly wounded him. My first thought was to kill him with my sword, but in an instant I altered the design and fury of the blow to a slight cut on the side of the head; upon which he dropped his gun and asked quarters, which I readily granted him; and demanded the place were the commanding officer kept. He showed me a pair of

stairs in the front of the garrison, which led up to a second story in said barracks, to which I immediately repaired, and ordered the commander, Captain Delaplace, to come forth instantly, or I would sacrifice the whole garrison; at which time the captain came immediately to the door with his breeches in his hand, when I ordered him to deliver to me the fort instantly; he asked me by what authority I demanded it. I answered him, 'In the name of the great Jehovah, and the Continental Congress.' The authority of Congress being very little known at that time, he began to speak again; but I interrupted him, and with my drawn sword near his head, again demanded an immediate surrender of the garrison; with which he then complied, and ordered his men to be forthwith paraded without arms, as he had given up the garrison. In the meantime, some of my officers had given orders, and in consequence thereof, sundry of the barrack doors were beat down, and about one third of the garrison imprisoned, which consisted of said commander, a Lieutenant Feltham, a conductor of artillery, a gunner, two sergeants, and forty-four rank and file, about one hundred pieces of cannon, one

thirteen inch mortar, and a number of swivels. This surprise was carried into execution in the gray of the morning of the 10th of May, 1775. The sun seemed to rise that morning with a superior lustre; and Ticonderoga and its dependencies smiled on its conquerors, who tossed about the flowing bowl, and wished success to Congress, and the liberty and freedom of America. Happy it was for me, at that time, that the future pages of the book of fate, which afterwards unfolded a miserable scene of two years and eight months' imprisonment, were hid from my view."

This brilliant exploit secured to Allen a high reputation for intrepid valour throughout the country. In the fall of 1775, he was sent twice into Canada to observe the dispositions of the people, and attach them, if possible, to the American cause. During one of these excursions, he made a rash and romantic attempt upon Montreal. He had been sent by General Montgomery, with a guard of eighty men, on a tour into the villages in the neighbourhood. On his return he was met by a Major Brown, who had been on the same business. It was agreed between them to make a descent upon the island of Montreal. Allen

was to cross the river, and land with his party a little north of the city; while Brown was to pass over a little to the south, with near two hundred men. Allen crossed the river in the night, as had been proposed; but, by some means, Brown and his party failed. Instead of returning, Allen, with great rashness, concluded to maintain his ground. General Carlton soon received intelligence of Allen's situation and the smallness of his numbers, and marched out against him with about forty regulars, and a considerable number of English, Canadians, and Indians, amounting, in the whole, to some hundreds. Allen attempted to defend himself, but it was to no purpose. Being deserted by several of his men, and having fifteen killed, he, with thirty-eight of his men, were taken prisoners.

He was now kept for some time in irons, and was treated with the most rigorous and unsparing cruelty. From his narrative, it appears that the irons placed on him were uncommonly heavy, and so fastened, that he could not lie down otherwise than on his back. A chest was his seat by day and his bed by night. Soon after his capture, still loaded with irons, he was sent to England, being assured

that the halter would be the reward of his rebellion when he arrived there. Finding that threats and menaces had no effect upon him, high command and a large tract of the conquered country, were afterward offered him, on condition that he would join the British. To the last he replied, "that he viewed their offer of conquered United States land to be similar to that which the devil offered to Jesus Christ: to give him all the kingdoms of the world, if he would fall down and worship him, when, at the same time, the poor devil had not one foot of land upon earth."

After his arrival, about the middle of December, he was lodged, for a short time, in Pendennis Castle, near Falmouth. On the 8th of January, 1776, he was put on board a frigate, and by a circuitous route again carried to Halifax. Here he remained closely confined in the jail from June to October, when he was removed to New-York. During the passage to this place, Captain Burke, a daring prisoner, proposed to kill the British captain, and seize the frigate; but Allen refused to engage in the plot, and was probably the means of saving the life of Captain Smith, who had treated him with kindness. He was kept at New-York

about a year and a half, sometimes imprisoned, and sometimes permitted to be on parole. While here, he had an opportunity to observe the inhuman manner in which the American prisoners were treated. In one of the churches in which they were crowded, he saw seven lying dead at one time, and others biting pieces of chips from hunger. He calculated, that of the prisoners taken on Long-Island and at Fort-Washington, near two thousand perished by hunger and cold, or in consequence of diseases occasioned by the impurity of their prisons.

Colonel Allen was exchanged for a Colonel Campbell, May 6th, 1778, and after having repaired to head quarters, and offered his services to General Washington, in case his health should be restored, he returned to Vermont. His arrival on the evening of the last day of May gave his friends great joy, and it was announced by the discharge of cannon. As an expression of confidence in his patriotism and military talents, he was very soon appointed to the command of the state militia. His intrepidity, however, was never again brought to the test, though his patriotism was tried by an unsuccessful attempt of the British

to bribe him to attempt a union of Vermont with Canada. He died suddenly on his estate, February 13th, 1789.

General Allen was brave, humane, and generous; yet his conduct does not seem to have been much influenced by considerations respecting that holy and merciful Being, whose character and whose commands are disclosed to us in the Scriptures. His notions with regard to religion were loose and absurd. He believed with Pythagoras, the heathen philosopher, that man, after death, would transmigrate into beasts, birds, fishes, reptiles, &c. and often informed his friends that he himself expected to live again in the form of a large white horse.