

CHAPTER XV.

THE assembly, prorogued until the 7th of July, did not meet until the 21st of November. There was a second prorogation until September, but at that time Governor Moore was seriously ill. His daughter, as we have seen, had left her home with her husband, Capt. Dickinson, and in June his wife sailed for England to meet that daughter in London and to visit her own friends. Sir Henry's illness was brief and fatal. He died on the 11th of September, and the reins of government passed into the hands of Lieutenant Governor Colden for the third time. Sir Henry was beloved by many, and thoroughly respected by all parties; and when Gaine's *New York Mercury* eulogized him for his liberal views, a correspondent, jealous of the deceased governor's character as a churchman, felt it necessary to deny that he ever attended any other than the Episcopal Church.

During the recess Colonel Schuyler was frequently in New York. These visits, and his attentive correspondent and legal adviser, William Smith, kept him fully acquainted with current political measures, which the gazettes did not always reveal. Smith was especially vigilant in watching the movement for establishing episcopacy in the colonies. "The ministerial rebuff to the bishop scheme," he wrote in August, "animates the non-episcopal patriots, and has brought the tories to reason. The two archbishops are

commanded to cease their solicitations, for that it was his Majesty's aim rather to heal than foment the distractions of the empire. Will you believe it! all the sons of ambition begin openly to disavow the project for an episcopate."*

On the 1st of November the leading Sons of Liberty in New York, the most active of whom were Isaac Sears, Alexander McDougal, John Lamb, John Morin Scott, Caspar Wistar, and Samuel Broome, celebrated the anniversary of the day on which the Stamp Act was to go into effect, but which witnessed its utter failure. Colonel Schuyler, who had gone to New York earlier than the opening of the assembly, to transact private business, was present at the dinner, and participated in the proceedings. The toasts drank on the occasion, as given in the published records of the celebration in the newspapers of the day, evince the spirit of those assembled. They drank to the King—his honest counselors—the great and general court of Massachusetts Bay, as first to promote the congress of 1765—the majority in that congress—the patriotic House of Burgesses of Virginia, and all the Houses of Assembly on the continent who had nobly opposed arbitrary power. They also proposed, as a sentiment, that the last resolutions of Massachusetts Bay, and the Commons House of Assembly of South Carolina, in not granting supplies to his Majesty's troops, should be examples to be universally followed in the colonies. With a studied disrespect they made no allusion to Governor Colden, who, politically, was very obnoxious to the great majority of the people.

The assembly convened on the 21st of November. In his speech, Lieutenant Governor Colden intimated that the obnoxious acts of Parliament concerning duties would be

* Autograph letter.

repealed ; asked for temperate action on the part of the Legislature, and informed them that in future the regulations of the Indian trade were to be left with the colonists. He then told them that the sum they had voted for the support of the troops was exhausted, and asked for further supplies. To the latter request the House, in an address a few days afterward, replied : " In the present impoverished state of the colony, every requisition for a fresh supply will demand our most serious consideration."

At this juncture an extraordinary coalition between Colden and the powerful De Lancey family appeared, and excited much suspicion among the patriots. Opposite political elements seemed suddenly to strangely assimilate, and the leaven of aristocracy, working with the loyalty excited by the lieutenant governor's assurances of the probable repeal of obnoxious acts, began to work in the assembly. It was evident to sagacious minds that a scheme involving the liberties of the province, perhaps of America, was maturing, and there was general alarm among the people. Suddenly a resolution for the emission of bills of credit—a measure which the true friends of the colony had earnestly desired—found favor with the coalition, notwithstanding it was in contradiction with acts of Parliament. It was supported with the plea that there was a great lack of specie, caused by the interdiction of traffic with the West Indies and the total absence of a paper currency, reducing values, preventing remittances to England, and obstructing provisions for the public service.

An act was finally presented which provided for the issuing of bills of credit, on the security of the province, to the amount of one hundred and twenty thousand pounds sterling, to be loaned to the people, the interest to be applied to the defraying of the expenses of the colonial gov-

ernment. It was simply a project for a monster bank, without checks, and was doubtless intended by the lieutenant governor, and the Tories acting with him, to cheat the people into a compliance with the Mutiny Act, by the indirect method of applying the profits to that purpose, the support of the troops being a part of the "expenses of the colonial government." To still further cover this obscure intention, there was connected with the emission act a provision for granting one thousand pounds from the colonial treasury, and one thousand more to be issued under the act, to be applied to the support of the troops. The resolutions connected with the incipient steps in this measure passed the House, in committee of the whole, by only one majority.

The leaders of the popular party raised a cry of alarm while this measure was pending. On Sunday, the 16th of December, a hand-bill was found distributed over the town, headed, "*To the betrayed inhabitants of the City and Colony of New York;*" and signed "A SON OF LIBERTY." It denounced the proposal to issue bills of credit as a deceptive covering to some wicked design not likely to be acceptable to the King. It declared that the proposition to grant supplies to the troops unqualifiedly was an acknowledgment of the right to exact such subsidies, and a virtual approval of all the revenue acts; and that the scheme was intended to divide and distract the colonies. It pointed the assembly to the firm stand taken by other colonies, and exhorted them to imitate their examples. It hinted at a corrupt combination, the effect of the acting governor's cupidity and the ambitious designs of a powerful family; called upon the assembly to repudiate the act concocted by the coalition; and closed with a summons for the people to assemble in "the fields" (City Hall Park), to express their

opinions and insist upon their representatives in the assembly joining the minority, and in the event of their refusal, to send tidings thereof to every assembly on the continent, and publish them to the world.

This hand-bill appeared, as we have observed, on Sunday, and on Monday not less than fourteen hundred people gathered around the Liberty Pole, where they were harangued by John Lamb, a native of the city, an active Son of Liberty, and then thirty-four years of age. By a vote they unanimously condemned the action of the assembly. A committee of seven, appointed for that purpose, bore their sentiments to that body, who, after receiving them respectfully, set about ferreting out the author or authors of the hand-bill. The Speaker laid the offensive document before the assembly, and Mr. De Lancey moved that the sense of the House should be taken "whether the said paper was not an infamous and scandalous libel." When the vote was taken, twenty of the pliant assembly voted that it was so, and only one member voted No. That member was PHILIP SCHUYLER. He boldly faced the gathering storm, and by his vote rebuked, in a most emphatic manner, the cringing cowardice of those of his compeers who had stood shoulder to shoulder with him in former trials; and proclaimed to the world his belief in the truth of the allegations which the assembly pronounced "a false, seditious, and infamous libel." The assembly then resolved that the lieutenant governor should offer a reward of £100 for the discovery of the author or authors of the handbill.

This action of the assembly was denounced in another handbill, signed "*Legion*," in which the "base, inglorious conduct of the assembly," in abandoning the interests of the people, was spoken of in very strong terms. This, also,

was voted to be libellous, and the lieutenant governor was authorized to offer £50 for the discovery of the author. After this, further provision for the support of the troops, to the amount of £2,000 per annum, was voted.

On the same day Colonel Schuyler nominated Edmund Burke as agent in England for the colony of New York, but the appointment was not made until December, 1770. Colonel Schuyler also asked leave to bring in a bill to provide for the election of representatives by secret ballot instead of open vote. It was granted, but the ultra royalists defeated the measure. From that time Colonel Schuyler was the acknowledged leader of the opposition in the assembly, and the special favorite of the more conservative patriots, while the common people, regarding him at a distance, contemplated him with reverence.

.Mr. Lamb, who harangued the people, at the Liberty Pole, was suspected of being the author of the offensive handbill; and was cited to appear before the assembly. He was soon discharged, for the guilt was fixed by the frightened printer upon Captain Alexander M'Dougall, an energetic Scotchman, from "the lone Hebrides," a sailor, and who afterward became an active general in the Revolution. He was arrested on a charge of contempt, and refusing to make any acknowledgment, or to give bail, was cast into prison, where he remained about fourteen weeks, when he was arraigned for trial. With the true martyr spirit, he said, "I rejoice that I am the first to suffer for liberty since the commencement of our glorious struggles."

"The imprisoned sailor," says Hamilton, "was deemed the true type of an imprisoned commerce. To soften the rigors of his confinement, to evince a detestation of its authors, and in his person to plead the public wrongs, became a duty of patriotism. On the anniversary of the repeal of

the Stamp Act, his health was drunk with honors, and the meeting, in procession, visited him in prison. Ladies of distinction daily thronged there. Popular songs were written and sung under prison bars, and emblematic swords were worn. His name was upon every lip. The character of each individual conspicuous in the great controversy became a subject of comment, and the applause which followed the name of Schuyler gave a new value to the popularity his firmness had acquired.”*

After M'Dougall had suffered an imprisonment of more than three months, a grand jury was packed by the government. De Lancey, the leader of the loyalists, was present at their sitting, and they found a bill of indictment.

“They have indicted M'Dougall,” William Smith wrote to Schuyler, on the 29th of April, 1770, “and mean to ruin him if they dare disoblige the people. He made a grand show yesterday when he was brought down to plead—an immense multitude. He spoke with vast propriety, and awed and astonished many who wish him ill, and added, I believe, to the number of his friends. The attorney will not try him till October, though he pressed hard for a determination in July. I doubt whether it will ever happen, unless the spirits of the people flag, of which at present there is no sign.”†

M'Dougall gave bail at this time, and on the 13th of December following he was again arraigned before the House. To the question whether he was the author of the handbill signed “A Son of Liberty,” he replied, “That as the grand jury and the assembly had declared the paper a libel he could not answer; that as he was under prosecution in the supreme court, he conceived it would be an infraction of justice to punish twice for one offense; but

* *History of the Republic of the United States, as traced in the Writings of Alexander Hamilton*, i. 35. By John C. Hamilton.

† Autograph letter

that he would not deny the authority of the House to punish for a breach of privilege when no cognizance was taken of it in another court." His enemies were highly offended by this answer, and it was declared a contempt. He was ably defended by George Clinton, an active member of the House, but he was again cast into prison, where he remained until near the close of the session, in February, 1771, when he was released, and was never afterward molested. The indictment for libel was never tried.

The loyalist party gradually gained the ascendancy in the Legislature in 1770 and 1771; and the soldiery, regarding the voting of supplies for their support as a triumph of the crown, became exceedingly insolent. They resolved to cut down the Liberty Pole, and on the night of the 16th of January, 1770, at about midnight, a band of them issued from the barracks, prostrated the mast, sawed it into pieces, and piled it in front of Montagnie's door, where the Sons of Liberty usually assembled. The perpetrators were discovered before their work was finished. The bell of St. George's chapel, in Beekman street, was rung, and at dawn full three thousand indignant people stood around the stump of the Liberty Pole. There, in the grey of early morning, the Sons of Liberty, by resolution, declared their rights, and their determination to maintain them.

For three days the most intense excitement prevailed in the city. In frequent affrays with the citizens the soldiers were generally the losers; and in a sharp conflict on Golden Hill (Cliff street between Fulton street and Maiden Lane,) several of the troops were disarmed and severely beaten. Few persons were wounded, none were killed. Quiet was restored. The people erected another Liberty Pole upon private ground purchased for the purpose. This was well defended by iron bands and rivets full one half its

length, and successfully resisted another attempt of the soldiers to cut it down, in March. Early in May the troops went off to Boston, and the greatest cause for public irritation was thus removed. The Liberty Pole remained undisturbed until the British army took possession of the city in the autumn of 1776, when it was cut down by order of Cunningham, the infamous provost marshal, who, it was said, had once been severely whipped at its foot.

In Boston the troops and the people were at variance continually; and finally, on the evening of the 5th of March, there was an open collision. A sentinel was assaulted with ice and other missiles, and the commander of the military guard went with a file of soldiers to defend him. The mob dared the soldiers to fire, while they hurled missiles at them. One soldier, who received a severe blow, fired, and six of his companions followed his example. Three persons were killed, and five were dangerously wounded. The bells rang out an alarm, and in less than one hour several thousands of people were in the streets. A terrible scene of blood would have ensued had not Governor Hutchinson assured the people that right and justice should be vindicated in the morning. The troops were removed to Castle William, and the "Boston massacre," as it was called, became a theme of thrilling interest to the patriots throughout the land.

On the day of the "massacre," Lord North, then the prime minister, proposed to Parliament a repeal of all duties imposed by the act of 1767, except that upon tea. In April an act to that effect was passed, and as tea was a luxury, the ministry supposed that the Americans would not object to the small duty laid upon that article. That duty was retained merely as an assertion of the right to tax the colonies. That, as we have said, was the bone of

contention. The principle involved was the topic of dispute.

The non-importation agreements were now brought to bear upon this one excepted article alone, and the people were as strenuous in the defense of their principles, with only this item for complaint, as when they had a dozen.

The merchants of New York, up to this time, had been faithful to the non-importation league, and would have continued so but for a blow received from a quarter least suspected. The Sons of Liberty had formed a general committee of one hundred, and a vigilance committee of fifty, who were to have a special care of the public movements of the patriots, and particularly to see that the requirements of the non-importation league were observed. The former committee, like the assembly, became leavened with Toryism, and when, on the 3d of May, 1770, at a meeting of the citizens of New York, a manifesto against alleged violations of the league in Newport, Rhode Island, was adopted, the Committee of One Hundred disavowed it. This was the first open evidence of defection. Some of the more eminent of the Sons of Liberty immediately withdrew from the committee. The Vigilance Committee denounced their faltering compeers, and the patriots of New England uttered indignant protests. All was in vain. The disaffection of the committee had spread among the merchants at large, and on the 9th of July, 1770, the Committee of One Hundred resolved upon the resumption of importations of every thing but tea, and issued a circular letter, justifying their course. It was received with scorn, and publicly torn and scattered to the winds, in the New England capital; and the sturdier patriots of Philadelphia said, "The old Liberty Pole of New York ought to be transferred to this

city, as it is no longer a rallying point for the votaries of freedom at home."

Toward the close of August the leaden statue of the King arrived, and was set up in the Bowling Green with a great parade of loyalty. The marble statue of Pitt was also erected, but with far less enthusiasm than it was voted; and every day there were new manifestations of a lukewarmness in the republican feelings of the colony, as seen upon the surface.

Toward the close of October, John Murray, Lord Dunmore, arrived as the successor of Sir Henry Moore, and was received with great cordiality. He brought the assent of the King to the bill authorizing the emission of a colonial paper currency; also intelligence of a kindling war between Great Britain and Spain. In his inaugural message he alluded to the latter, and expressed his confidence that the assembly would "please his Majesty by their loyalty during the anticipated contest." His lordship closed his speech with the oft-repeated admonition of the royal governors, that supplies for the troops would be wanting. The assembly was exceedingly complaisant, and Dunmore had the gratification of seeing evidence of a pliant and loyal Legislature, by which he would be saved the perplexities that had afflicted his predecessors for almost half a century.

Dunmore remained at New York only about nine months, when he was succeeded by Sir William Tryon, an Irish baronet, who for a few years had exercised the most annoying petty tyranny as the governor of North Carolina. The assembly was now thoroughly purged of the radical features of republicanism. They complimented the retiring governor, who had been transferred to Virginia; and in a most cringing address, written by Captain Oliver De Lancey, in reply to Tryon's message at the opening of the

assembly, on the 7th of January, 1772, welcomed the new chief magistrate. This address appears the more abject when we reflect that the base character of Tryon, whose outrageous conduct had stirred up the people of North Carolina to actual rebellion, was well known, and every true friend of the province despised him and deplored his advent.

“Our most gracious sovereign,” said the address, “having been pleased to confer the command of his dominion of Virginia on our late worthy governor, the Earl of Dunmore, who so justly merited our affection and applause, we are all filled with the warmest sentiments of gratitude for his Majesty’s paternal goodness, in appointing to represent his royal person a gentleman universally esteemed for his amiable character, distinguished for his attachment to the principles of our happy constitution, and from his long residence in America, acquainted with the true interests of the colonies.

“The respectable light in which your excellency was held among the people who lately experienced the solid advantages of your protection affords us a pleasing presage of being equally happy under your administration. Preferring the calls of duty and the public good to your own ease, health, and every other consideration, you generously exposed your person to fatigue and the most imminent dangers, and by your gallant behavior and prudent conduct rescued a distracted country from anarchy and confusion, and restored to it the blessings of peace and tranquility, by suppressing an insurrection, which, by its pernicious example, might have caused the like disorders in other parts of his Majesty’s American dominions, to the destruction of all law and government. This important service, while it gives luster to your character, recommends you to the favor of our most gracious sovereign, and entitles you to public gratitude and approbation, has unavoidably prevented your excellency from paying an earlier obedience to the King’s commands and the dictates of your own wishes in repairing to this colony.”

During the years 1770 and 1771, Colonel Schuyler was almost continually afflicted with the gout, and he seldom appeared in the assembly. Yet it did not prevent the exercise of his hospitality in his houses at Albany and Saratoga—the former his place of residence in the winter, the latter his better loved dwelling place nearly nine of the

other months of the year. Numerous letters of that period show how freely his friends gave notes of introduction to him, commending sometimes utter strangers to his courtesy and hospitality.

During these two years the dispute between the authorities of New York and the inhabitants of the New Hampshire Grants waxed hotter than at any other period. A crisis approached. Officers of the law in behalf of New York and the determined people of the Grants met face to face. A resident of the Grants was taken to Albany for trial in a suit of ejection. The decision in his case was to effect all others, and Ethan Allen was employed, as the agent of the people, to attend the court and defend their claims. The whole affair seemed to have been prejudged, and presented a solemn farce, for some of the New York judges and many of the lawyers were connected with the speculators. The verdict was, of course, in favor of the New York complainants.

Allen was exceedingly indignant. The sun went down upon his wrath, and in the morning it was not abated. The attorney general at first tried to flatter the sturdy pioneer. He then advised him to go home and persuade his friends to make the best terms possible with their New York landlords; and concluded his exhortation by suggesting that New York had *might* on her side. That suggestion thoroughly aroused the sleeping lion of Allen's nature, and in his accustomed enigmatical way he thundered out, "The gods of the valleys are not the gods of the hills!" "What do you mean?" exclaimed the startled attorney general. "Come to Bennington," said Allen, with a frown, and in a deep undertone, "and you shall understand it."

From that time reconciliation without ample justice was out of the question. The people of the Grants resolved

to defend their rights "by *force*," they said, "as *law* and *justice* were denied them." They assembled in convention and made Allen colonel commandant of the district. He became the leader of an organized armed resistance, and was a marked man. The authorities of New York regarded him as a traitor, and offered a reward for his apprehension. The people of the Grants regarded him as a patriot, and kept him safely in the arms of their protection. The New York authorities declared him an outlaw, while his own people leaned upon him as their noblest champion. So matters went on, the dangers of civil war becoming more and more imminent. The quarrel had reached the point of bloody encounters, when the kindling flame of the great Revolution called the attention of the contestants to a broader and more significant field of conflict, in which the people of New York and of the Grants stood shoulder to shoulder as brethren.

In the progress of these disputes Colonel Schuyler still took a great interest. His sense of justice made him discriminate between right and wrong, notwithstanding his indignation against the people of the Grants, who had taken law into their own hands; and, as in the case of the refractory tenants of Van Rensselaer, in after years, he recommended moderation, at the same time he counseled firmness.

The boundary line between New York and Massachusetts was still an unsettled question, and in the autumn of 1771, Colonel Schuyler, accompanied by his wife, went to Boston in a semi-official capacity to confer with the authorities there upon the subject. He found matters in such a disturbed state that it was difficult to ascertain where real authority might be found. However, as Hutchinson was governor, with him he had a long and friendly

interview, and came back with a proposition to Governor Tryon which seemed to promise a salutary result. Soon afterward William Smith, who was the leading member of Tryon's council, wrote to Colonel Schuyler, saying: "Mr. Tryon has taken strong hold on the Boston controversy on your motion. I have drawn up a letter for him to Hutchinson, and proposed to divide the stakes between the two ultimate proposals at New Haven."

In the same letter Mr. Smith introduces the Reverend Mr. Drummond as Schuyler's "spiritual guide at Sarahtogue," who, he said, bore ample testimonials of worth. "I think it a good circumstance," says Smith, "that he was ordained in Scotland, for you know that national establishment is closely connected with that of the Netherlands." With an eye to temporal benefits, Smith continues, "Mr. Drummond is said to be a good scholar, and may be useful to your boys. I think he will be so to the public, as he can promote emigration from divers parts of North Britain." He concludes by saying, "If you think him good enough for the illuminated tenants of Sarahtogue, you'll find him liberal in his sentiments and yet orthodox in his life, which is the best sort of orthodoxy."*

Colonel Schuyler was present at the opening of the session, on the 7th of January, 1772, and on the 16th he moved for leave to bring in a bill to vacate the seat of any member unless he had resided six months previous to the election within the district which he represented. This subject had been introduced in the spring of 1769, when, by resolution, Philip Livingston was "dismissed from further attendance upon the House" as representative of Livingston's Manor, because he resided in the city of New York. A petition of the freeholders of the Manor set

* Autograph letter.

forth that non-residents represented boroughs in England ; that twenty-one cases like the present might be found recorded in the colonial journals ; and that the manor of Livingston had been thus represented for fifty-three years. It also appeared that three dismissals of the kind had occurred, under the management of party tactics, namely, of William Nicoll and Dirck Wessels, in 1701, and of Edward Holland, in 1745. The resolution was passed by a large majority, and Livingston was deprived of his seat. Schuyler voted against it. He approved of the principle of the resolution, but disliked partial legislation. Now he introduced a general bill for accomplishing the same effect.

The assembly, at the session of 1772, were as pliant as ever, and supplies for the troops were freely voted. In February the governor, in a brief message, refused to receive a salary from the colonial treasury. This was pursuant to instructions received from ministers, Parliament, by a special act, having made the governors and judges in the colonies independent of the people in this respect. The Massachusetts assembly at once denounced the act as a bribe to the governors to oppose the people whenever ordered to do so by the crown. In other colonial assemblies, also, the act was denounced, but there being a majority of loyalists in that of New York, no action was taken in the matter. On the contrary, a special mark of affection was shown to Tryon. A division of Albany county being made at that time, the new territory, taken from its western frontier, was called Tryon county, in honor of the governor. The first representatives in the assembly from the new county were Guy Johnson (son of Sir William), and Colonel Hendrick Frey.

On the 24th of March the assembly was prorogued by the governor until the 4th of May following. By procla-

mations it was prorogued from time to time, and did not meet again until the 5th of January, 1773. The governor's speech on that occasion related chiefly to the territorial boundaries; and the response drawn up by De Lancey was only an echo to it, except an assurance that in the colony there was an increasing attachment to the governor's person and family.

Among Colonel Schuyler's most intimate friends in early life was Henry Van Schaack, who had served with him in the campaign of 1755 as his lieutenant. When the war of the Revolution broke out, Mr. Van Schaack was a Loyalist. For several years he and Colonel Schuyler had differed in their political opinions. Their personal friendship appears to have been undisturbed, however, until in 1772, when a misunderstanding came very nearly causing a duel between the two friends. It seems that Colonel Schuyler had reported to Colonel Guy Johnson (upon erroneous information,) that Major Van Schaack had attempted to influence the action of officers who had been appointed to summon a jury in an important land trial before the supreme court, in which controversy the two gentlemen were probably interested. Van Schaack and Schuyler were of about the same age, and much alike in disposition. They were men of high spirit and marked energy of character, entertaining exalted perceptions of personal honor, and each jealous of his reputation. The former was somewhat impetuous in temper, and the latter was described as "hot, violent, and indiscreet," when his reputation was assailed or his honor impugned.

On being informed of Schuyler's report to Johnson, Van Schaack, conscious of his integrity, indignantly demanded of his accuser his authority for the aspersions, and a personal explanation. Schuyler, with his usual frank-

ness, generosity, and sense of justice, sent him a letter from Saratoga, in which he explained the matter and asked Van Schaack's pardon. He concluded by saying, "Be assured, sir, that I shall never decline a personal explanation (in whatever sense you may use the word) that you may think proper to call on me for. You know where to find me, and I shall be at Albany about the 25th of next month."

Although the friendship of these gentlemen was interrupted for several years by conflicting interests in regard to land patents, and the difference in their political sentiments during the Revolution, it was renewed immediately after the war, and continued through life.*

So gentlemanly and dignified were the manners of Schuyler in public and private, that, notwithstanding his firm hostility to the anti-republican measures with which he was called from time to time to combat, he was on terms of the most intimate personal friendship with his political adversaries. In May, 1772, we find Governor Tryon, writing to him from Fort George, in New York, saying :

"Mrs. Tryon desires me to present her compliments to you, and to inform you that she accepts the invitation of becoming your guest while at Albany. As you are well acquainted with the passage of vessels to Albany, and know in which I can be best accommodated, I must give you the trouble to employ one for me, and to be here time enough to land me at Albany toward the end of June."†

The chief object of Governor Tryon's visit northward was to hold a council with some of the Mohawk Indians, who had made complaints of the conduct of white people, who, it was alleged, had defrauded them of their lands. The conference was held at Johnson Hall, on the 28th of

* MS. "*Memoirs of the Life of Henry Van Schaak, an officer in the war which subjected the Canadas to the British crown; a Loyalist in the American Revolution, and a Gentleman of the Old School,*" by H. C. Van Schaack.

† Autograph letter.

July, and the savages in attendance were mostly Canajoharies. Tryon was accompanied by his secretary, Colonel Edmund Fanning, (who had made himself very obnoxious in North Carolina,) and Oliver De Lancey.

Whatever professions the governor may have made to the Indians, he seemed perfectly willing to sanction all purchases of land, by fair or foul means, we may imagine, and did not appear less "The Great Wolf" to them, if they understood him, than he did to their red brethren of Western Carolina, who gave him that name because he appeared so voracious. In a familiar letter to William Duer, in September following, Colonel Schuyler said :

"Vast Indian purchases have been made. Governor Tryon's fees, alone, will exceed £22,000; a good summer's work that. A large premium is offered by the land jobbers at New York to any ingenious artist who shall contrive a machine to waft them to the moon, should Ferguson, Martin, or any eminent astronomer assert that they had discovered large vales of fine land in that luminary. I would apply to be a commissioner for granting the land, if I knew to whom to apply for it."*

Governor Tryon was absent in the Indian country about a month, and during that time his wife, who was a relative of the Earl of Hillsborough, was the guest of Colonel Schuyler and his family at Albany and Saratoga. In a letter to the Earl after his return, Tryon spoke of the contentedness of the settlers at Johnstown, Burnet's Field, and the German Flats, who were "not less seemingly pleased with the presence of their governor than he was with them," and said, "I heartily wish the eastern parts of the province [referring to the New Hampshire Grants,] were as peaceably settled."†

Colonel Schuyler was in good health during the session of 1773, and was very active in his official duties. In

* Autograph letter, September 21, 1773.

† Autograph letter.

January we find him one of the committee to examine into the condition of the colonial treasury accounts. Early in February he presented a bill in relation to the commission for settling the boundary line between New York and New Jersey, then in dispute. On the day of its passage (February 5,) he offered a bill, as a substitute for another drawn by a committee "to remedy the evils to which the colony was exposed from the quantities of counterfeit money introduced into it." He proposed to have plates for the paper currency of the colony engraved in a manner that should be difficult to counterfeit. He suggested as a device "an eye in a cloud—a cart and coffins—three felons on a gallows—a weeping father and mother, with several small children—a burning pit—human figures poured into it by fiends, and a label with these words: '*Let the name of the counterfeiter rot,*'" etc., and such other additions as they might think proper: 44,000 to be struck off on thin paper, "to be pasted, glued, or affixed to each of the bills emitted by the act" for the purpose. He proposed that the engraver and printer should make oaths that the plates had not been out of their hands; the plates, when the printing should be done, to be sealed up and given to the treasurer of the colony; the treasurer to give the commissioners a receipt for the paper copies struck off; no bill to be considered genuine without such paper upon its back; commissioners to take oath of fidelity; and a reward to be given for the detection of counterfeiters. This bill became a law, and was effectual in restraining rogues from committing a crime whose penalty was death.

Later in February the subject of the dispute between New York and the New Hampshire Grants was brought before the House, in considering a petition from a resident of the latter territory. A committee was appointed, with

Colonel Schuyler as chairman, to prepare a full statement of "the just rights of New York in the matter." Schuyler's associates were Mr. De Noyelles and Crean Bush, both warm loyalists. The task of preparing the statement was laid upon Colonel Schuyler, and three weeks afterward they made a report which excited a great deal of attention because of its fullness and remarkable perspicuity. It first examined the whole matter historically, citing authorities, etc. The claims of Connecticut and Massachusetts were next examined, and having, as the report averred, "established the right of New York to the disputed territory west of the Connecticut river," they examined "the extraordinary claim of New Hampshire." This statement occupies no less than twenty-six printed pages of the published journal of the House. It was sent to Edmund Burke, the agent of the colony in England, and a few months later Governor Tryon was cited to appear before the King and his council, to give information respecting the boundary troubles.

This statement was the production, chiefly, of James Duane, but Colonel Schuyler being the chairman of the committee, it was attributed to him. It was this, more than anything else, that excited bitter feelings toward him among the New England people, which, as we have already observed, was made so manifest in the war for independence.