

CHAPTER V.

AT this juncture, the most important measures upon which the insurgent colonists had yet ventured was consummated. It was the Declaration of Independence. On the 7th of June Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, arose in Congress, and read aloud the resolution: "That these United Colonies are, and of right, ought to be free and Independent States; and that all political union between us and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved." John Adams, of Massachusetts, seconded the resolution. It remained without further notice until the 10th, when it was agreed to postpone all further consideration of it until the first day of July, but, that no time should be lost, a committee was appointed the next day to draw up a declaration consonant with the resolution. It was brought up on the 1st of July, passed on the 2d, and on the 4th the Declaration was adopted. Yet it attracted very little attention at first, for the immense importance of the measure was not felt by those who were in the midst of the excitements of the war. It was but a passing item in the march of great events. Schuyler only incidentally alluded to it in a letter to Washington, by saying: "I shall immediately transmit the Declaration of Congress to General Gates, and desire him to proclaim it throughout the army." And in his letter to Gates the next day, inclosing the printed Declaration, he only said: "General Washington has enclosed me the Declaration of

Congress of the 4th instant, declaring the United American Colonies free and independent States, and directed that it should be proclaimed throughout the Northern Army, for which I do myself the honor to inclose it to you."

At this time the country was alarmed by the appearance on our shores of a portion of the army which the British Government had dispatched to America, independent of those already arrived in Canada under Burgoyne. These were under the command of General Howe, who, when he evacuated Boston, in March, went to Halifax, and now came with a recruited army to retrieve what he then lost. He appeared at Sandy Hook in well-convoyed transports on the 29th of June, and on the 8th of July he landed nine thousand men upon Staten Island, and there awaited the arrival of his brother, Admiral Howe, with a strong fleet, bearing British regulars and German hirelings. These arrived in the course of a few days, and Sir Henry Clinton and Sir Peter Parker, with their broken forces, arrived from Charleston at about the same time, and joined them. So at the middle of July full thirty thousand soldiers stood upon the heights of Staten Island, ready to fall upon Washington's little army at Brooklyn. Burgoyne, at the same time, was making some threatening demonstrations on the North, but Schuyler assured Washington and Congress that he did not believe he would be able to penetrate the country from Canada.

Schuyler was now pressed on all sides with the most important and arduous duties, which demanded ubiquity in the performer. That condition he fulfilled in a remarkable degree, for he was here and there, at places widely apart, at short intervals. Three days after he was directed to hold a conference with the Six Nations at Fort Stan-

wix, he was ordered to take measures for clearing Wood Creek, at Skenesborough (now Whitehall), constructing a lock there, and taking the level of the waters falling into the Hudson River at Fort Edward, and into Wood Creek. This was in accordance with a scheme for connecting the waters of the Hudson and Lake Champlain, which he had long contemplated, and which, as we have seen, he communicated to the commissioners in the Spring.* He was also charged with holding the waters of Lake Champlain against a threatened invasion from Canada by Burgoyne, to judge of the expediency of establishing a fortified camp on the heights opposite Ticonderoga, and to assist in obstructing the navigation of the Hudson River at the Highlands. To these duties he applied himself with amazing assiduity and skill.

Having set in motion the construction of gondolas and batteaux for war service on the lakes under the direct control of General Arnold, he completed his surveys for the projected canal, and established a fortified camp on what was named Mount Independence after the news of the passage of the great declaration reached the northern army.

Schuyler hastened to the German Flatts on the upper Mohawk, where he arrived on the evening of the 16th of July, in company with Messrs. Dow and Edwards (associate Indian Commissioners). There was Colonel Dayton erecting a fortification which he had ordered a fortnight before, and there he met Peter Ryckman, an Albany trader, who had been confined at Fort Niagara for about a year, under the just suspicion that he was favorable to the Republican cause, and might influence the Indians, with

* See page 40.

whom he was extensively acquainted, against the British. He gave Schuyler much and valuable information. He had brought with him twenty-one Seneca warriors who confirmed his statements. They alleged that Colonel John Butler, a crown agent, one of the most active and malignant of the Tories in Tryon County, had frequently attempted to entice the Indians from their attitude of neutrality, but in vain, and that the chiefs had as frequently reprimanded him for such attempts; for they had determined to let "the Father and Son," as they expressed it, "settle their difficulties between them." Such they represented were the inclinations of the sachems of all the Six Nations, and that the grand council at Onondago had sent a sachem of note express to Niagara, to bring away two sachems whom Butler, by dint of money and liquor, had kept about him all the Spring.

In a letter to General Washington, written on the 17th, Schuyler expressed his opinion that Burgoyne would attempt to penetrate the country from the north, but that it would be impossible for him to effect it, even if he should cross the lakes (George and Champlain), "which," he said, "I cannot conceive he will be able to do, as our naval strength greatly exceeds his own, and as we shall certainly build as fast as he can." On the same day he wrote to Governor Trumbull, saying: "As numerous and formidable as our enemies are, I cannot despair of success against them, provided we are unanimous. I mention this because of the unhappy dissensions in the Northern Army, where some unfriendly or unthinking people have set up colonial distinctions. I have always deprecated every attempt to divide us by that or any other means; and when I was last at Crown Point I convinced the commanding officers of every corps, and pointed out, in the most forcible manner

I was capable of, the danger of such distinctions, and how much and how justly the enemy would exult to learn it."

The sachems of the Six Nations were tardy in their assembling at the German Flatts. They were very anxious, however, to meet General Schuyler there, for delegates whom they had recently sent to New York and Philadelphia had returned with such marvellous accounts of the power and resources of the Republicans, that they had no doubt of being an overmatch for the British and their allies. They sent runners with excuses and apologies for their delay, such as the death of a sachem, or the severe illness of one. But these were not the only reasons for delays. The proverbial bad faith of the Indians was a hinderance. Schuyler was informed that the Senecas and Cayugas had received an invitation from Colonel Butler to attend a conference at Niagara, and were considering what reply to give him.

Schuyler was extremely impatient because of these delays, but the gravity of the occasion made him wait. He was assured that if he should leave, the Western sachems would not come. He chafed under the restraint, and on the first of August he wrote to General Gates, saying: "*Entre nous*, I do most solemnly declare that I would rather be the proprietor of a potato garden and literally live by the sweat of my brow, than be an Indian Commissioner at a time when you cannot prudently resent an insult given by these haughty princes of the wilderness."

But the case was too critical to be neglected. Rumors were thick that a force of British and Indians were landing at Oswego, with the intention of penetrating the country and destroying the settlements on the Mohawk River. At the same time rumors were as thick concern-

ing the movements of the enemy at St. John's, on the Sorel; and Schuyler was greatly annoyed by the action of a council of officers under Washington's command, who had practically censured him for removing the head-quarters of the army on Lake Champlain, from Crown Point to Ticonderoga, at which his enemies took heart and commenced anew their attacks upon him.

Schuyler waited, with impatience, until the 6th of August, when all the deputations were there, and the conference opened in form on the afternoon of that day. It began inauspiciously, for two of the sachems requested that the Commissioners should publicly condole the death of one of their sachems, who fell while fighting Major Sherburne at the Cedars. This insult—this open acknowledgment of their former bad faith on the part of the Indians—could not be borne, and the request was rejected with indignation. The point was waived and the business went on. The Commissioners opened the conference by reading the following speech which had been prepared by General Schuyler:

Brothers, Sachems and Warriors of the Six Nations :

With this String we open your ears that you may plainly hear what the independent States of America have to say to their Brethren of the Six Nations: with it we wipe away all mists that may interrupt your sight, and let it clear your Hearts from every obstruction and incline them to receive our Words with Brotherly Love.

Brothers :

We thank God that he has been pleased to suffer us to meet you in Health. May sickness never enter into your Country, but may Health and Happiness dwell in your Habitations, and may the Six Nations be a great and a happy people.

A String.

The Council Fire which is now burning at this place has been kindled by a spark taken from the great Council Fire at Albany. We have brought it here in our Bosoms—We have lighted it up here, because we were afraid that the small-pox might infect our Brethren of the Six Nations, if they went farther down the River, and

that some of them might go home with Heavy Hearts for the loss of their Relations, and we hope this Conduct of the Commissioners meets with your approbation.

A Belt.

Brothers, Sachems and Warriors of the Six Nations: The united Colonies have always been in Hopes that a Reconciliation would take place between us and the King.—To that end they have frequently petitioned the King for Redress of the Grievances they laboured under; but he would not listen to their petitions.—He was deaf and would not give Ear to their Complaints, and instigated by his evil Counsellors he forgot that we were his children, he wanted to make us his Slaves. To accomplish this unjust and cruel purpose he has sent his armies and his fleets to try to destroy and distress us, and therefore the united Colonies, when they found that he had become a cruel and an oppressive Father that hated them, and that he had not only given the Hatchet to the English on the other side of the Water, but had also sent it to the few Friends he had amongst us, ordering them to put it into the Hands of our Negroes and whoever would accept it to strike us, have unanimously left his House, and now no longer consider him as their Father and King, and have accordingly proclaimed to all the World that they will never hereafter acknowledge him or any of his Family to be their King, but that they will always be and remain a free and independant people, and therefore have called themselves the independant States of America, and solemnly agreed always to remain firmly united: we must therefore for the future be called the Commissioners of the United Independant States of America, and that you may remember this great Event we now deliver you this Belt.

A Belt.

Brothers, Sachems and Warriors of the Six Nations, now open your Ears and listen attentively to what the independant States of America have further to say to you, for in their Names we speak. Our Speech will be plain as it always has been, for, as we never have been, we scorn to be double Minded.—It will be the Speech of Freemen who will candidly tell you your Faults; you shall know all that is in our Hearts; we will hide Nothing from you, that you may know our Intentions clearly and fully.

Brothers :

You well remember that soon after the king's warriors had began to spill the Blood of the Inhabitants of this great Island, that the united Colonies called you together at Albany.—They there rekindled the antient Council Fire and brightened up the Covenant Chain that had bound your ancestors and ours together in Bonds of the purest Love and sincerest Friendship.—It was last Summer that we the Commissioners met you there on that pleasing Business.—We then gave you a full, a fair, and a candid account of the Cause of the Quarrel between us and the King; we did not do it in a dark Corner as those

that mean Evil, but in the presence of all that would come to see and hear, that they might witness the Truth of what we said.—When we had related this, we informed you, that as we were unhappily engaged in a Family Quarrel in which the Six Nations were not in the least concerned, either one way or the other, we desired and expected that you should not assist the one or the other, but remain quietly and peacefully at Home and mind your own Business.—We confirmed our words with a large belt.

Brothers : — The answer you made was delivered by Abraham the Mohawk Sachem, whom you had chosen your speaker.—These were his words, we shall repeat them exactly : “ Now therefore attend and “ apply your Ears closely.—We have fully considered this Matter ; “ the Resolutions of the Six Nations are not to be broken or altered.— “ When they resolve the Matter is fixed.—This then is the Determi- “ nation of the Six Nations—*Not to take any part, but as it is a “ Family Quarrel to sit still and see you fight it out.*—It is a long time “ since we came to this Resolution.—It is the Result of mature “ Deliberation.—It was our Declaration to Colonel Johnson.—We “ told him *we would take no part in the Quarrel, and hoped neither side “ would desire it; whoever applies first we shall think is in the wrong.*— “ The Resolutions of the Six Nations are not to be shaken.”

Brothers :

These Words and these Resolutions pleased us well, because what you declared was what we requested : That you should take no part in the Quarrel, but sit still and see us fight it out, and because we believed that you were sincere ; and that you said Nothing with your Tongues, but what you had in your Hearts.—Your Speech was delivered in full Council and in the presence of a Number of people.—We had therefore the highest Reason to expect that you would strictly abide by your Resolutions. But, Brothers, we now ask you, whether you have abode by these wise Words and adhered to these prudent Resolutions ? It grieves us to say that you have not. That you have acted directly contrary to your solemn Engagement and broken that Faith which you plighted and which we depended upon, as we shall now plainly make appear by repeating a Number of Facts which are known by you all, and which you cannot contradict or deny.

First.—When our Army went to St. John’s last year your people interfered in the Quarrel by joining with our Enemies in attacking our Warriors, and then the Resolutions of the Six Nations were broken and altered, altho’ you had said that they were not to be broken or altered.

Secondly.—When our great Council at Philadelphia was informed that Sir John Johnson was inlisting Men, and that he and the Highlanders who lived about Johnstown were preparing to murder our Friends, they sent some Warriors to disarm them, and then you again

interfered in the Quarrel.—You were very troublesome, and threatened us, altho' we had sent you Word that no Harm was intended you, for that we had no Quarrel with the Indians, and thus the Resolutions of the Six Nations were again broken and altered.

Thirdly.—When our great Council in the month of May last had received certain Intelligence that Sir John Johnson was inlisting Men and preparing to join the Enemy, they ordered up a Body of Warriors ; but least you should be alarmed, Mr. Douw went up to the East End of the House to inform you that no Evil was intended you.—Yet you nevertheless interfered in the Quarrel.—Mr. Douw was insulted with abusive Language, and Mr. Bleecker the Interpreter was threatened and seized by the Breast contrary to the Custom of all Nations.—For the person of an ambassador and a Messenger of peace is always held sacred, and thus the Resolutions of the Six Nations were a third Time broken and altered.

Fourthly.—Altho' you knew that Sir John Johnson was inlisting Men and preparing to go to the enemy, contrary to the most solemn agreement with us, yet you not only assisted him in going to the enemy ; but even threatened to kill our Warriors, and actually appeared in arms for that hostile purpose, and thus you again interfered in the Quarrel and a fourth time broke and altered your Resolutions.

Fifthly.—Contrary to your Resolutions you have opened your ears, and given ear to the voice of our Enemies, and complied with their Desires.—Butler has prevailed upon you to go into Canada and fight against us.—As we had no quarrel with any Indians ; as we had even released those that we had taken prisoners in Battle, we were surprised to find any Indians fighting against us ; but when we were told that some of the Six Nations were there and had joined our Enemies ; that they had struck the Ax in our Head and covered the Ground with the bones of our Warriors and defiled the earth with their blood, after having but a little Time before promised to remain neuter, we could hardly believe it at first ; but upon Enquiry we found it was true. Your ax still sticks in our Heads, and thus you again interfered in the Quarrel and a fifth Time broke and altered your Resolutions.

Sixthly.—You have also lately upon this River, in the midst of the Inhabitants, wickedly and wilfully fired on, attacked and destroyed a Batteau loaded with Flour, which was coming up here for the use of our Warriors and to feed you at this Treaty, and thereby you have again insulted us and interfered in the Quarrel, and a sixth time broken and altered the Resolutions of the Six Nations.

Thus, Brothers, we have mentioned six instances in which the Resolutions of the Six Nations have been contravened, altho' you told us in full Council at Albany that they were not to be broken or altered, and that when you resolved the Matter was fixed, and thus also, instead of sitting still and see us fight it out, as you also told us you would do,

you have actually assisted our Enemies and taken an active part in the Quarrel against us, thereby opening your Ears to and listening to the advice of our Enemies by complying with their Request, altho' you expressly said that *whoever applied first you should think was in the wrong.*

Now, Brothers, tell us, if you can, when we have asked you to interfere in the Quarrel? When and where have we desired your assistance? Have we given you a bloody belt? Have we offered you the ax? Have we roasted an Englishman and desired you to drink his Blood? You cannot say that we ever did any of these things, and yet our Enemies have done all this.—You have told us so yourselves, and you cannot deny it. We have always said that we were not afraid of our Enemies; we say so still; we have never asked you to fight for us, and yet some of you have fought for them.—Was this well done? God, who knows all things, knows that it was not.—You yourselves know it was not.—We know it was not, and thus you have unjustly taken up arms against us, and altho' we felt the Blows and altho' the ax still sticks in our Heads, yet we have forborne to take Revenge, because your Ancestors and ours always had a great affection and Friendship for each other and faithfully kept the Covenants they made with each other in such a manner that both were happy, both were pleased, and peace dwelt in their Habitations, and because we had resolved to make our Complaint in full Council and lay Grievances before the whole Six Nations, as we now do, expecting that you will speak as plain as we do and remove all Cause of Complaint for the future.

Brothers :—again attend to the voice of all the white people on this great Island.—They say, that they have not injured you, that they wish to live in Friendship with all Indians and in particular with the Six Nations, who are their near Neighbors, and with whom their Ancestors have always lived in peace and Friendship.—They say that you have unjustly injured and insulted them. They say, that as they are Freemen, as free as you are, and are now fighting to preserve that Freedom, that they will not suffer themselves to be affronted, injured and insulted with Impunity by you or any Men on Earth. They will do as you have formerly done; as you still do, and as you have a Right to do, that is, to guard themselves against any Enemy whatsoever by any just Means in their power.

Brothers :—We know that many of you are honest men; faithful to your Engagements; holding sacred the Faith you have plighted and bearing a Brotherly affection to the Inhabitants of this great Island.—These we love, respect and honor, and we call God to witness that we will do them every kindness in our power and never give them the least Cause of Complaint.—We also know who are our Enemies, altho' we do not know why.—We have given them no Cause to be such.

Brothers, Sachems and Warriors of the Six Nations :—We have spoken plain.—We will if possible speak more plain ; open therefore your Ears that you may clearly hear and understand the Declaration of the independent States of America.—It is this, that they mean to live in Friendship and cultivate a good Understanding, and maintain a friendly Intercourse with all Indians, and that in answer to this they do require that all Indians should declare their Intentions, and therefore ask the Six Nations now convened round this Council Fire of peace what their Intentions are ? If they mean to live in Friendship, to cultivate a good Understanding and maintain a friendly Intercourse with us, we require that they will take the Hatchet out of our Heads and that none of them will again assist our Enemies, in which case we do most solemnly promise that we will love and cherish them and treat them with the greatest kindness and affection, and that we will forever hereafter rather die than wrong them or suffer others to do it—but if any amongst you should so far forget their own Interest as now to become or continue our Enemies after all the Kindness and Forbearance we have shown, let them say so, that all the white people of this great Island may know what they have to depend upon.—No person shall molest them here or on the way, for it shall never be said that we injured or insulted people with whom we were in Treaty, altho' they intended to be our Enemies.

Brothers :—We have done our Duty ; we have spoke plainly—we request you will do the same.—We shall become open Enemies or warm and inviolable Friends.—We wish for your Friendship not out of Fear but out of Love, and that a good Understanding may prevail between the white Inhabitants of this great Island and the Six Nations until the Sun shall grow dim with age.—And it will be your Fault if we do not part as good Friends with the Six Nations, and remain so hereafter, as your Ancestors and ours were in the Time of Quedor, when they fought side by side against the common Enemy.

Brothers :—We have now spoken our Mind fully.—You cannot charge us with Deceit. Our conduct has been invariably the same from the Time that we first met at Albany to this Day. We have not said one thing and done another, as our Enemies have, and as you now know all that is in our Hearts, we desire you to think seriously of it and to speak your thoughts fairly and fully and not be double hearted. Do not say one thing and think another, for that is shameful in a private Man and in private affairs, but scandalous in public Bodies and public Business.

This Belt on which our Wishes are described, and which denotes what we hope will take place, that is, a firm Union between the Six Nations and the thirteen united States of America—This Belt we say confirms our Words.

The Large Belt.

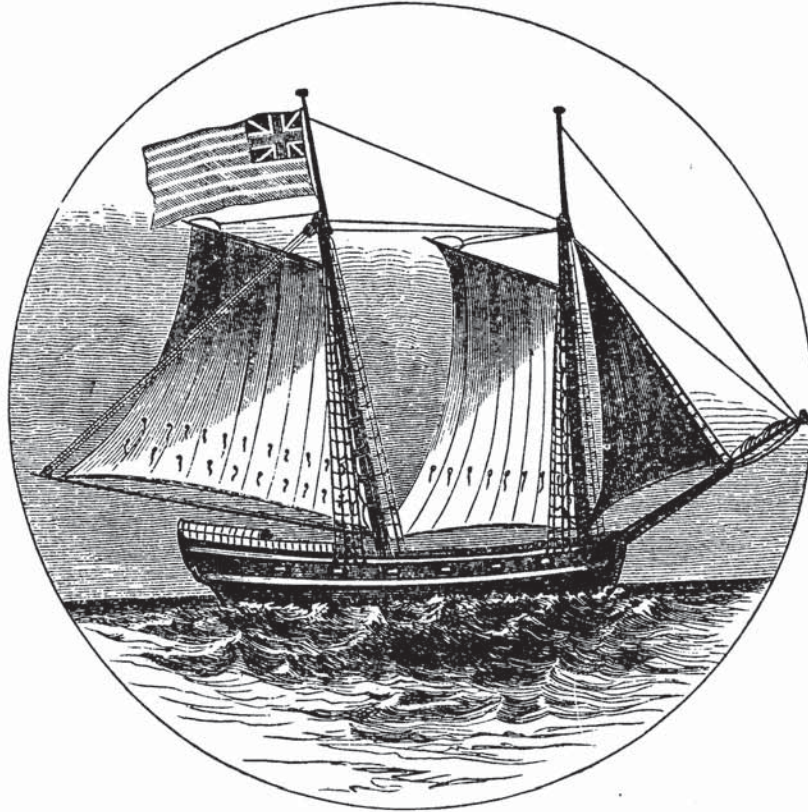
This is a fair specimen of scores of addresses to the Indians in council, written by General Schuyler during his long intercourse with the savages, as chairman of the Indian commission.

It will be seen that neutrality, not alliance, was the point urged in this speech. "We were unanimously of opinion," Schuyler wrote to the President of Congress, on the 18th of August, "founded upon all the information we could procure, that the attempt to induce the Indians to join us would have essentially injured us, as they might, and probably would, have concluded we were too weak for the enemy." To this conclusion Schuyler was glad to arrive, for he deprecated the employment of savages in the contest.

The conference was short. The Six Nations renewed their promises to remain neutral, and Schuyler returned to Albany on the evening of the 11th of July. Fort Stanwix was rebuilt or renewed by Colonel Dayton, and by him named Fort Schuyler.

On his return to Albany, Schuyler found many pressing duties awaiting his personal attention. That which had concerned him most was the building, fitting out and manning the war vessels on Lake Champlain. The difficulties had been great, and the tardiness alarming. At the beginning of August only seventy seamen had been drawn from the army, and almost the only vessel that appeared nearly ready for service was the *Royal Savage*,*

* Among General Schuyler's papers, I found a drawing of the *Royal Savage*, marked "Wynkoop's Schooner," neatly made in water-colors, of which a copy is given on the next page. It affords positive proof of the character of the "Union Flag" used at that time, about which so much has been written. On the 4th of January, 1776, Washington wrote from Cambridge to Colonel Joseph Reed:—"The speech [the King's] I send you. A volume of them was sent out by the Boston gentry, and, farcical enough, we gave great joy to them, without knowing or intending it; for on that day, the day which gave being



THE ROYAL SAVAGE.

a schooner commanded by Colonel Wynkoop, who expected to be the commodore of the fleet. But within a

to the new army, but before the proclamation came to hand, we had hoisted the union flag, in compliment to the united colonies. But, behold, it was received in Boston as a token of the deep impression the speech had made upon us, and as a signal of submission. So we hear by a person out of Boston last night. By this time I presume they begin to think it strange that we have not made a formal surrender of our lines."

The question has been, why did the "union flag" make such an impression upon the British in Boston? An answer has always been a conjecture; this drawing solves it. At the head of the main-mast of the *Royal Savage* is seen the union flag of thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, indicating the union of the thirteen colonies. In one corner is seen the British union, the combined crosses of St. George and St. Andrew. The colonies had not yet declared their independence. They professed loyalty to the crown, hence they signified that loyalty by placing the British union in the proper place in their new flag, and with it combined their own symbol of union.

fortnight a great change had occurred. Christopher Yates had established a saw-mill on Wood Creek, not far from Skenesborough, which turned out lumber abundantly; Robert Livingston, owner of iron works on Livingston's manor, and Colonel Joshua Porter, proprietor of the Salisbury (Connecticut) iron works, had furnished cannon and swivels; Captain Varick, Schuyler's Secretary, at Albany, to whom his chief had written: "Borrow all the money you can upon my credit," had procured ample supplies, and General Arnold, whom Gates had commissioned the chief commander of the flotilla,* had procured ship-carpenters and sailors from the seaboard. On the 18th of August Gates was able to send to Schuyler a list of vessels ready and nearly ready for service, bearing an aggregate

* Colonel Wynkoop, who had been appointed captain of the flotilla, by Congress, was disposed to resist the authority of Arnold when, on the 17th of August, the latter gave him orders to get the vessels under sail and proceed down the lake, on a reconnoitring expedition. In reply Wynkoop wrote: "I know no orders but what shall be given out by me, except sailing orders from the commander-in-chief. If an enemy is approaching, I am to be acquainted with it, and know how to act in my station." Arnold replied that he was surprised that Wynkoop should pretend to contradict his orders, and said: "You surely must be out of your senses to say no orders shall be obeyed but yours." He told Wynkoop that he must obey his orders instantly, or he would be under the disagreeable necessity of convincing him of his error, by immediately arresting him. Wynkoop appealed to General Gates, declaring that he had rather be dismissed the service than to obey Arnold, for "I am resolved," he said, "to go under command of no man." Arnold ordered him to be placed under arrest, and sent to Gates at Ticonderoga. In a letter to Gates he said: "I believe the commodore was really of opinion that neither of us had authority to command him. He now seems convinced to the contrary, and sorry for his disobedience of orders. If it can be done with propriety, I wish he may be permitted to return home without being cashiered." General Schuyler wrote to Gates: "A strange infatuation seems to prevail in people. How Wynkoop should imagine that he was not to obey General Arnold's orders, he being the oldest officer then on the spot, I cannot imagine." Wynkoop was allowed to leave the service without further difficulty.

armament of sixty-seven cannon, ninety-four mortars and four hundred and eighty-five men. Nothing now seemed wanting to make the flotilla a formidable fleet, but a good supply of expert commanders and seamen. These were soon furnished, and before there was opportunity for their use, early in October, Arnold found himself in command of three schooners, two sloops, three galleys, eight gondolas, and twenty-one gun-boats.

*List of Continental Arm'd Vessels, on Lake Champlain ;
August 18th, 1776.*

<i>Names of Vessels and Commanders.</i>	<i>No. of Guns.</i>	<i>Size of Ditto.</i>	<i>No. of Swivels.</i>	<i>No. of Men.</i>	
Sloop <i>Enterprize</i> —Dickson	12.	4 lbs.	10.	50.	} <i>Sailed.</i>
Schooner <i>Royal Savage</i> —Wynkoop	12.	4, 6 lbs. : 8, 4 lbs.	10.	50.	
Schooner <i>Revenge</i> —Seaman	8.	4, 4 lbs. : 4, 2 lbs.	10.	35.	
Schooner <i>Liberty</i> —Premier	8.	2, 4 lbs. : 6, 2 lbs.	8.	35.	
Gondola <i>N. Haven</i> —Mansfield	3.	1, 12 lb. : 2, 9 lbs.	8.	45.	
Gondola <i>Providence</i> —Simmonds	3.	Do.	8.	45.	
Gondola <i>Boston</i> —Sumner	3.	Do.	8.	45.	
Do. <i>Spitfire</i> —Ulmer	3.	Do.	8.	45.	
Do. <i>Philadelphia</i> —Orne	3.	Do.	8.	45.	
Gondola <i>Connecticut</i> —Grant	3.	Do.	8.	45.	
Gondola ————— <i>Graham</i>	3.	Do.	8.	45.	} <i>Not entirely rigged.</i>
Row Galley <i>Lee</i> —Spanish construction—Davis . . .	6.	1, 2 : 1, 9 : 4, 4 lbs.	—	—	
Total 12	67	94	485	. . .

Allusion has been made to the action of a council of general officers in Washington's army, whereby the abandonment of Crown Point in July, and the transfer of the head-quarters of the Northern Army on Lake Champlain,

was severely censured. That measure had been specially recommended by General Schuyler, in view of the wants and condition of that army, and had been cordially approved by General Gates and a council of general officers. The action of the council at New York had been taken without inquiry concerning those wants, or even a knowledge of the military situation on the lakes, and was induced by a remonstrance of the field-officers of the Northern Army, some of whom Schuyler believed were continually seeking an occasion to injure him. He had become exceedingly sensitive upon the subject of interference with his authority, and doubtless often magnified into almost crimes the respectful suggestions of the most zealous and patriotic men. Such appears to have been the case in this instance. The remonstrance which was also made in due form to General Schuyler himself, was couched in the most respectful terms, and made with evident concern for the good of the service; and it was signed by several officers who were afterwards greatly distinguished for their services in the cause.*

* *Crown Point, July 8th, 1776.*

To his Excellency GENERAL SCHUYLER :

May it please your Excellency,

Sir :

We, whose names are hereto subscribed, field-officers of the several regiments in the Continental service, now at this place, beg leave, with the utmost respect, to acquaint your Excellency,

That when we have been heretofore called upon in a council of war to give our opinion respecting the propriety of a retreat from Canada, we were informed by the then commanding officer-in-chief, that the positive orders of the Continental Congress were to "dispute every inch of the ground in Canada."

That order we have complied with, so long as we, or our General (in council), thought would be most conducive to the public weal; and at the last council of war to which we were called, it was almost (if not quite) unanimously resolved to retreat to this place, and here make a stand against the ministerial army.

Had not General Washington approved of the action of the council, no notice would have been taken of their impertinent and unwarrantable proceedings, but he, in

Since, on arrival at this place, we have been informed by your Excellency "that the Honorable Continental Congress have ordered and directed the superiority of the lakes to be maintained;" also that the army are to be removed to Ticonderoga. We would not pretend to dictate to you, sir, or to the other Generals, what orders you should issue. Neither will we ever decline obeying them; but at the same time beg leave to remonstrate to your Excellency that the order for our removal to Ticonderoga appears to us to militate with both the foregoing orders of Congress, in the spirit (if not in the letter) of them, for the reasons following, viz.:

First.—We cannot but judge from our own observation of the ground here, that we can maintain it against any forces our enemy can send against us.

Secondly.—That this post appears to us to be the only one where we can maintain a Naval Superiority upon the lakes.

Thirdly.—That whenever we quit this post, we give our enemy an opportunity of taking possession of it, with all the advantages already made by former works, which it will be impossible for us ever to retake from them without an amazing expense of blood and treasures.

Fourthly.—By admitting the enemy to get the possession of this place it not only entirely destroys the communication with the lower parts of the lake, but opens a plain and easy passage for them into the Heart of the four New England governments and Frontiers of New York.

Fifthly.—Our retreat from this place to Ticonderoga must occasion the retiring of hundreds of families from their farms, and quitting their crops of grain, which would be much more than sufficient to maintain themselves, and drive them upon other towns, which must occasion a consumption of whatever could be spared for the public service, if not a famine amongst them.

Sixthly.—That this place will afford an asylum for the Savages, from which they may much easier make excursions upon the frontier settlements and secure their retreat.

Seventhly.—That the place to which we are ordered to remove has ever proved extremely unhealthy, and will tend to increase the distresses our army have labored under by reason of sickness.

These, sir, are some (of the many) reasons which we beg leave to offer to your Excellency's consideration, why we are not entirely easy with the determination of the general officers respecting our removal, and hope our zeal for the public good, which induces us to make these observations, will be a sufficient apology for this interruption

letters to both Schuyler and Gates, expressed his concern at the abandonment of Crown Point, as "a relinquishment of the lakes," and assured them that nothing but the fear of "creating dissensions and encouraging a spirit of remonstrance against the conduct of superior officers by inferiors," had prevented him, by the advice of his general officers, from directing the post at Crown Point to be held till Congress should decide upon the propriety of its evacuation. "As the case stands," he said to Gates, "I can give no order in the matter, lest between two opinions neither of the places should be put in such a position of defense as to resist an advancing enemy. I must, however, express my sorrow at the resolution of your council, and wish that it had never happened, as everybody who speaks of it also does, and that the measure could yet be changed with propriety."

To this letter Gates wrote an instant and spirited reply, telling General Washington that "it would be to the last degree improper to order reinforcements to Crown Point, until obliged by the most pressing emergency, as that would be only heaping one hospital upon another. Everything about the army," he said, "is infested with the pestilence [small-pox]; the clothes, the blankets, the air, and the ground they walk upon. To put this evil from us a general hospital is established at Fort George,

upon your public business, and that your Excellency will pay such regards hereto as the importance of the affair demands.

We are (with great esteem) your Excellency's most obedient humble servants:

NATHAN FULLER,	ENOCH POOR,	ISRAEL SHREVE,
ABNER MORGAN,	WM. MAXWELL,	SETH REED,
CHARLES BURWALL,	ELISHA PORTER,	JOSEPH VOSE,
NATHAN HALE,	JAMES REED,	JOTHAM LORING,
ISRAEL GILMAN,	WILLIAM BOND,	THOS. POOR,
JOHN GREATON,	JOSEPH CILLEY,	JOHN MOOR,
JOHN STARK, Colo.,	JOHN MCDUPPER,	DAVID RHEA.

where there are now between two and three thousand sick." * * * * "I must now take the liberty," Gates continued, "to animadvert a little upon the unprecedented behavior of the members of your council to their compeers in this Department. They, sir, having very ample supplies at hand, make no allowance for the misfortunes and wants of this army, nor for the delay and difficulty that attend the procuring of everything here. Had we a healthy army, four times the number of the enemy, our magazines full, our artillery complete, stores of every kind in profuse abundance, with vast and populous towns and country close at hand to supply our wants, your Excellency would hear no complaints from this army; and the members of your council, our brethren and compeers, would have as little reason then, as they have now, to censure the conduct of those who are in nothing inferior to themselves." Gates wrote in a similar strain to Congress.

Schuyler took the matter more to heart, and with reason, for he knew it was the work of his enemies. In a letter to Gates, at the German Flatts, on the 3d of August, after speaking of the consciousness of his inability to perform the duties laid upon him, and his strong desire expressed at the beginning of the campaign to retire from the military service, but which neither Congress nor the Commander-in-chief would listen to, he said:

"The implications contained in General Washington's letter of the 19th ult. to you is so very disadvantageous to us, that I very sincerely repent having deviated from my resolution to retire, but the opinion of his council that we had acted reprehensibly, without being informed what were the reasons on which we had founded our opinion of the propriety of the measure in question, is so insulting that I cannot sit patiently under it, and I, therefore, not only reflect with pleasure on the spirited and proper manner in which you have resented it to Congress and General Washington, but shall give to both my sentiments on the impropriety and injustice of convening one council of officers to

determine on the measures of another at the distance of near three hundred miles without calling for such information as we could have given them. It is incumbent on us, my dear sir, to do justice to our injured reputations: as it is our duty to go hand in hand in opposing the enemies of the public, so we ought heartily to join in defeating the insidious foes who basely aim at the destruction of our characters. We shall discover who he or they are, and I trust will be able to cover them with confusion."

To General Washington Schuyler wrote on the 6th of August:

"I am informed that a council of officers convened at New York, whether of their own accord, or by your Excellency's order, I am not advised, had decided that the council of general officers lately held at Crown Point had acted reprehensibly. In justice to myself and the other general officers who composed that council, I cannot pass by the extraordinary mode of proceeding without animadverting on it; for altho' I should grant that every officer that composed the council at New York had the most perfect knowledge of the country; that they were separately endowed with abilities vastly superior to those of the generals in this quarter taken in the aggregate, yet to assume a power of censuring us, even if we were their inferiors in rank, if convened in a Court Martial for the purpose of trying us, without hearing what we could say in support of our decision, is so injurious, so unjust, so extrajudicial that I have not the least doubt but that every man of candour will join us in deprecating the outrage; for altho' every individual in the community has a right to give his opinion on the conduct of the servants of the public, and altho' a superior officer has a right, nay ought to direct a change of measures, when he believes those adopted will be attended with dangerous consequences, and altho' a council may give their opinion on the propriety or impropriety of a measure referred to them for consideration, yet the superior officer in directing a change of measures, or a council in deciding that a measure was improper, ought not to convey an idea which supposes guilt until guilt is proved, and not even then, unless they had been constituted a tribunal for the purpose of deciding on the guilt or innocence of the party to be tried, and that the party supposed guilty had had an opportunity given him of being heard in his own defence; this we have not had, and yet our conduct is said to be reprehensible. I feel myself so deeply chagrined at this conduct that if my information is true, which your Excellency can determine, and which I entreat you to do as soon as possible, I cannot, consistent with my honor, remain in the army, unless the council at New York are censured for the assertion, by Congress or your Excellency, or unless, conscious of the impropriety of their conduct towards us, they make a candid and full acknowledgement thereof. And permit me to beg you to lay copy of

this letter with copy of mine of the 24th ult. before Congress, that they may see on what I founded my opinion for the removal of the army to Ticonderoga,* and what idea I have of the injury the general officers who composed the council at Crown Point have sustained."

* Washington had already written to Schuyler, saying that he thought the situation of Crown Point was "of the utmost importance, especially if we mean to keep the superiority and mastery of the lake," and that "if it is abandoned by us, it is natural to suppose that the enemy will possess it, and if they do that, then our vessels will be in their rear, and it will not be in our power to bring them to Ticonderoga or the post opposite it." Upon these remarks Schuyler observed that Crown Point lies about forty-three miles from the extreme south part of Lake Champlain, which is at Skenesborough, and about one hundred from the northern extreme, which is at St. John's. The part of the Lake south of Crown Point is seldom in any place above two miles wide. From Crown Point to about eighteen miles north of it, it may be at a medium about three and half miles, three and four being the extremes, beyond that for about fifty-six miles it is seldom less than six or more than fourteen or fifteen, but a chain of Islands, running nearly parallel to the sides of the Lake, lie in the broadest part and nearly in the middle, so that the width on each side is about six miles.

Let us now suppose our Navy to be in any part of the Lake to the northward of and out of the reach of the cannon that may be at Crown Point, and these attacked by the enemy, what assistance can it receive from any fortification at the point? None, surely, and if worsted it must fly to the south side of Crown Point for shelter, and the enemy have the entire mastery of the Lake. If Crown Point was totally abandoned, and if the Navy was attacked and worsted in any part to the northward of Ticonderoga, whether in sight of that place or towards the north end of the Lake, the consequences are exactly the same. It must retire to the south of where the army is.

If we abandon Crown Point, that the enemy will possess themselves of it is certain, *if they can do it*, but if we suppose they can, we must not only suppose that they can and will pass our fleet, altho' theirs should be inferior, or that they must have a naval superiority. If they can pass our fleet anywhere beyond Crown Point; their army can attack ours at Crown Point, if it is there, or at Ticonderoga if there; in either case our ships will be in the rear.

But supposing they could and would, by some means or other, frustrate our intentions in having a Navy in the Lake (which intention appears to be to prevent any boats coming up), and pass by it, altho' superior to theirs. Is it probable they will do it? Will they risk the danger they may run if a fair wind should enable our ships to get up with them? Will they risk an interception of their sup-

To Congress Schuyler again wrote on the 7th of August:

“That an ignorant multitude, instigated not only by my own enemies, but by those of the country, should have been instigated to traduce my character is not very surprising, and I had already made myself easy on that score, but a late transaction of a council of officers held at New York is so injurious that I have found it necessary to resent it in a letter to General Washington, copy of which I have requested his Excellency to lay before Congress.”

On the 16th he again wrote to Congress:

“If my character has been so barbarously traduced, and the miscarriages in Canada so generally attributed to malconduct in me, it somewhat alleviates the chagrin I feel, that Congress has appointed a committee to “inquire into the causes of the miscarriage in Canada.” But as I am confident the misfortunes in Canada are to be imputed to more causes than those mentioned in the Resolutions of the 30th ult.,* and as I wish that my conduct should undergo the strictest scrutiny, Congress will therefore permit me to entreat them to charge the committee above mentioned, or to appoint another minutely to inquire how far, if at all, any of the miscarriages in Canada are to be imputed to me. If I am the cause of them let me meet with the detestation of my fellow citizens; if not, and others are, let the public resentment be transferred to the proper object; for my part, I am amply furnished with materials to exculpate myself. I shall court the most ordeal trial; nay, altho’ conscious of the mediocrity of my talents and that I am vastly inadequate to the important command I am honored with, yet on this occasion, I may be allowed to say, that I do not believe that I shall be even convicted of an error in judgment. Permit me to add, with all due submission to Congress, that I conceive

plies and a prevention of retreat in case of a repulse? I think not; but if their Navy is superior, the keeping possession of the Lake is impossible, and then the question recurs, where is the best place to make a stand, with the greatest prospect of advantage to us. I think that place to be Ticonderoga and the grounds opposite to it. I may be mistaken; the only view I had in giving my opinion for removing the army to these places was that I thought it would there most advance the interests of the cause we are engaged in. Altho’ I do not recollect that in the resolution of the general officers to move the army from Crown Point that is observed that a small post was to be kept there, from whence our vessels might be supplied more readily than from Ticonderoga, yet that was determined on.

* The committee reported it as their opinion that the short enlistments of Continental troops, the want of hard money and the prevalence of the small-pox had been the chief causes for the miscarriages in Canada.

they too are wounded thro' my side; for, if I am not misinformed, many already wonder why an officer so generally charged with misconduct is continued in so important a post. This also makes it necessary that an inquiry should be made into my conduct. It is also of the first importance to the public service whilst I continue to command an army; for the event of the inquiry will be a conviction or acquittal; if the former I shall be dismissed at least, if the latter that confidence will be re-established which it is so indispensably necessary that an army should have in its general, and which I know is in a great measure now destroyed by insidious insinuations industriously propagated by a set of miscreants."

To General Arnold he wrote on the 17th of August:

"General Gates will show you an extract of my letters to General Washington, on the subject of evacuating Crown Point, and on the decision of the council of officers at New York.

"We have been treated in the most cavalier manner by that council, and unless satisfaction is given, I shall most certainly retire from the army. I can no longer put up with a series of abuses, and bear undeserved odium, and as I find that my character has been most infamously aspersed in every part of the country, and all the misfortunes in Canada attributed to me, I have entreated Congress for a more minute inquiry into my conduct."

To General Washington he wrote on the 18th:

"I have entreated Congress to cause a minute inquiry to be made into my conduct, and I trust, if it is done, that I shall not only be honorably acquitted, but that judicious men will discover in me the honest man and the faithful American; but as envy, even in that case, will not cease, or malevolence withhold its slander, I am determined to quit the army as soon as my conduct has been enquired into, and evince myself in private life, what I have strove to do in public, the friend of my injured country."

Schuyler continued to urge Congress to appoint a committee to investigate the charges against him, which he now heard repeated on every side. That body postponed the duty, until, on the 14th of September, the vilified commander, in accordance with his already expressed determination, formally offered his resignation as "major-general in the army of the American States, and all and every other office or appointment which he had been honored with by the Honorable Continental Congress." He

declared that he did not, by that step, mean to decline or elude any inquiry into his conduct which Congress might thereafter be pleased to make. "On the contrary," he said, "it is a duty I owe to myself, to my family and to the respectable Congress of this State, by whose recommendation, unsolicited by me, Congress, I believe, was induced to honor me with a command, that I should exculpate myself from the many odious charges with which the country resounds to my prejudice. I trust I shall be able fully to do it, to the confusion of my enemies and their abettors, but, aggrieved as I am, my countrymen will find that I shall not be influenced by any unbecoming resentment, but that I will readily persevere to fulfil the duties of a good citizen, and try to promote the weal of my native country by every effort in my power."

Schuyler's friends, and the true friends of the country, were alarmed and distressed by the possibility of his being driven to a resignation of his offices, for they knew how much depended upon him. The Convention of the State of New York had taken action in the matter; and so early as the 26th of September, Philip Livingston wrote to the convention from Philadelphia that its letter and resolves concerning General Schuyler's resignation had been committed to the consideration of Messrs. Rutledge, Hooper and McKean. "Yesterday," Leonard Gansevoort, a member of the New York Convention, wrote to Schuyler on the 3d of October, "Mr. Robert R. Livingston reported to the convention the causes which induced your resignation, at which, I can declare to you, many of the members were startled, having never been informed of any of them; and I am extremely happy that I can assure you that I do not know of a member in our convention,

attending at present, possessed of a prejudice against you.
* * * * Mr. Cuyler, in Hartford, makes very free
with your character.”

Robert R. Livingston wrote at the same time :

“ Before I got here I received letters from Philadelphia, one of which, from Rutledge, expresses much resentment at your treatment, approves the step you have taken, and most ardently wishes to see you at Congress. He presses me in the following terms to come down : ‘ That you or Jay, or both of you, will immediately on the receipt of this set out for this place ; little less than the salvation of your State will depend on your presence.’ In another place he adds : ‘ I repeat it, you cannot render your country as much service in any other way whatever as by coming to us immediately, and bringing with you Jay and Schuyler.’

“ What he alludes to I cannot say positively, tho’ I can in part guess. I have not seen Jay, but have little hopes of his being prevailed on to go, as his wife is now here and very unwell. With respect to myself, I have such a variety both of public and private reasons to detain me that I cannot as yet leave this. If things are in such a state in the Northern Department as to admit of your absence, I could wish you to make a short visit to Philadelphia, not that I think you will be able long to remain there, as matters are now in such a train as will again, I hope, enable you, with honor, to act in a Department from which I cannot consent (either on your own account, or that of the public) to see you dismiss yourself.

“ Our resolutions, a copy of which I showed you, are committed by Congress to gentlemen that will do you justice ; for two of them at least I will answer. The Committee are Rutledge, Hooper and McKean.”

Congress took action at once ; and President Hancock—in a letter to Schuyler on the 27th of September, in which he mentioned the measures they had resolved upon for an increase and reorganization of the army, on the basis of engaging troops to serve during the continuance of the war, instead of by short enlistments as hitherto—assured him that his complaints and wishes would be at once attended to, and that the matter was then in the hands of a special committee. Hancock also informed Schuyler that a committee of Congress had been ap-

pointed to confer with him on the state of the army, and would set out on the morrow. A few days afterward (October 2d) Congress

Resolved, "That the President write to General Schuyler, and inform him that Congress cannot consent, during the present situation of their affairs, to accept of his resignation, but request that he continue the command which he now holds; that he be assured that the aspersions which his enemies have thrown out against his character have had no influence upon the minds of the members of this house, who are fully satisfied of his attachments to the cause of freedom, and are willing to bear their testimony of the many services which he has rendered to his country; and that, in order effectually to put calumny to silence, they will, at an early day, appoint a committee of their own body to inquire fully into his conduct, which they trust will establish his reputation in the opinion of all good men."

In his letter to Schuyler, transmitting this resolution, President Hancock said: "The unmerited reproaches of ignorance and mistaken zeal are infinitely overbalanced by the satisfaction arising from a conscious integrity. As long, therefore, as you can wrap yourself in your innocence, I flatter myself you will not pay so great a regard to the calumnies of your enemies as to deprive your country of any services which you may have it in your power to render her."

This action of Congress, accompanied as it was by the appointment of a committee to confer, not with General Schuyler, but with General Gates, upon what was proper to be done in that Department, highly exasperated the former, and he uttered his honest indignation in the ears of his friends, without choosing soft words as its vehicle of communication. To General Scott he wrote on the 13th of October:

"I have suffered such brutal outrage from Congress that every gentleman who has ever honored me with his friendship ought to blush for me if I did not resent it. The treatment I have experienced puts it out of my power to hold any office, the appointment to which

must be made by Congress. A late instance of their conduct towards me is equally replete with brutality and folly: they have sent up a committee to confer with my inferior officer upon what is proper to be done in this Department, and resolved that they will not consent to my resignation. If they could, by a resolve, annihilate all sensibility in me their conduct would not be exposed to public view, which I am resolved it shall be as soon as it can be done without prejudice to my dear country.

“I shall be extremely happy to pass a few days with you, and propose doing myself that pleasure as soon as I can get rid of my cockade, which I hope will be in a few days.”

To Robert R. Livingston he wrote:

“I am much obliged by your favor of the 7th inst., nor am I less so to Mr. Rutledge for his friendly intentions. The resolution is however extremely exceptionable after what has passed in Congress with regard to me. I wish you to add another obligation to the many I am already in your debt, and to thank Rutledge for his kindness, and to entreat him to take nothing personally that I shall say in my remarks on that resolution as soon as it is officially handed to me, for I am resolved severely to animadvert not only on that, but on the ungentlemanly conduct of Congress. Will you believe that Mr. Clymer and Mr. Stockton were ordered to repair to Ticonderoga to confer with General Gates? They arrived here on Friday evening, dined and supped with me yesterday, but have not opened their lips on any public business; that is to be transacted with my inferior officer under my very nose. A more brutal insult could not be offered, an insult which I will not bear with impunity from any body of men on earth. Altho' I am fired with the highest resentment at the ill usage, I must entreat you to not be alarmed, as I shall steadily make the good of my country my first object, and thus heap more coals on the head of my enemies.”

Meanwhile important events had occurred in other portions of the theatre of war. Early in June a fleet under Admiral Sir Peter Parker, who had been sent to operate with it against the seaport towns of the southern colonies, and had joined Sir Henry Clinton at Cape Fear, in May, appeared off Charleston bar. At the same time Clinton had landed several hundred men on Long Island; and on the 28th of that month an attack had been made by the fleet upon Fort Sullivan, on Sullivan's Island, commanded

by Colonel Moultrie. For ten hours the battle raged severely, and only ceased when night closed in. The British fleet, shattered almost into fragments, withdrew and abandoned the attempt. Taking Clinton's troops on board the vessels that could sail, the fleet bore away for New York, where the land forces joined those of General Howe then on Staten Island.

This was followed by the Declaration of Independence, and that by a severe battle on Long Island, opposite New York, at the close of August, between the British forces under Howe, assisted by Generals Clinton and Cornwallis, and Kynphausen of the German troops, and the Americans under Washington, assisted by Generals Putnam, Green, Mifflin, Stirling, Sullivan and others. The battle was fought chiefly upon ground now occupied by the city of Brooklyn and its immediate suburbs, and Greenwood Cemetery. That was on the 27th of August. The conflict was severe. The Americans were beaten, with a loss of about five hundred killed or wounded, and eleven hundred made prisoners. Among the latter were Generals Lord Stirling and Sullivan. Washington skilfully withdrew the remainder of his troops on the night of the 29th and morning of the 30th, under cover of a dense fog, and took post on Harlem Heights, at the northern part of York or Manhattan Island. They were followed by the British, who used every endeavor to get in the rear of the American forces, so as to penetrate the country by way of the Hudson River, and meet Burgoyne, who was to come down from Canada, and so complete the isolation of the New England States, according to the plan of the British ministry.*

* See page 16.

These attempts were fruitless. The battle at White Plains, about twenty-five miles north of New York, on the 28th of October, was the consequence, and the capture of Fort Washington, on Harlem Heights, on the 16th of November, was an incident. Washington was driven into East Jersey, pursued by Cornwallis to the banks of the Delaware, at Trenton, and the remainder of the British army, abandoning the idea of a winter campaign up the Hudson, remained quietly in New York during the cold season. Sir Peter Parker sailed with his broken squadron to Rhode Island, entered Narraganset Bay, and on the 8th of December blockaded the American flotilla under Commodore Hopkins, then lying near Providence. That officer had lately performed gallant service on the ocean, but having departed from his instructions, had been censured by the Congress. He ran his little squadron into Narraganset Bay, when he was dismissed from the service.