

ADDRESS TO THE TROOPS

instantly to the business and employments of civilized life. Let it be a truth deeply impressed on the minds of everyone of us who bear arms, and let us evince to the world that, in contending for liberty, we abhor licentiousness; that, in resisting the misrule of tyrants, we shall support government honestly administered. All unnecessary violence to the persons or property of his Majesty's subjects must, therefore, most strictly be forbidden and avoided. Let us act as becomes the virtuous citizen, who seeks for the aid of righteous heaven and the just applause of an impartial world. Liberty, Safety, and Peace are our objects—the establishment of the Constitution and not the lust of dominion. . . . These are principles I wish deeply implanted in the heart of every soldier I have the honor to command. They will lead us to glory—they will merit for us the esteem of our countrymen.”

While public sentiment in New York was yet inclined to a policy of waiting and trusting to an accommodation with the mother country, in New England the bloodshed at Lexington had aroused an aggressive feeling and a desire to strike some defiant blow at British power. In the old wars in America between England and France, it was well remembered that Ticonderoga had been the great military prize. The mountain fortress between Lakes George and Champlain which controlled the passage to Canada—there had been fought the bloodiest and the most decisive battles. Hence had come the suggestion of the bold

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expedition of Benedict Arnold and Ethan Allen, which, on the night of the 10th of May, had surprised the garrison of Ticonderoga and had placed the fort and its military supplies in the power of the Continental forces.

This striking feat seemed to open the door to Canada. Congress, hitherto reluctant, now resolved upon an invasion and confided its conduct to Schuyler. He left New York on the fourth of July in a sloop, stopped at Albany for a few days to take measures for the protection of the western frontier against the Johnson family and their Indian allies, and arrived at Ticonderoga on the eighteenth.

Then ensued six weeks of military preparations under great difficulties. Schuyler's letter books are filled with correspondence with the Congress at Philadelphia, with the Provincial Congress at New York, with Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, relating to the accumulation of men, money, arms, clothing, lead, powder, and materials for boat-building at Ticonderoga. His own ingenuity and credit were strained to the utmost. When he first arrived the situation seemed almost hopeless. "I have neither boats sufficient," he wrote to Congress, "nor any materials for building them. The stores I ordered from New York are not yet arrived. I have, therefore, not a nail, no pitch, no oakum, and want a variety of articles indispensably necessary, which I estimated and delivered into the New York Congress on the 3d instant. An

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almost equal scarcity of ammunition exists, no powder having yet come to hand; not a gun carriage for the few proper guns we have, and as yet very little provision. There are now two hundred less troops than by my last return. These are badly, very badly armed, indeed, and only one poor armorer to repair their guns." The Provincial Congress wrote: "Our troops can be of no service to you. They have no arms, clothes, blankets, or ammunition; the officers no commissions, our treasury no money, ourselves in debt. It is in vain to complain. We will remove difficulties as fast as we can, and send you soldiers whenever the men we have raised are entitled to that name." With these obstacles, great as they were, Schuyler was fitted to contend. He struggled hard, and by the end of August had fifteen hundred men fairly armed and equipped, and boats ready to convey them up the lake.

But there were other difficulties more serious to Schuyler, and which his character and education were less adapted to meet successfully. In the preparation for this expedition it was understood that Connecticut should provide men and that New York should provide money and supplies. It turned out to be an unfortunate arrangement. The jealousy and enmity between the inhabitants of New York and of Connecticut were strong. The New England troops were extremely averse to placing themselves under the command of a general from New York, especially

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when that officer was "a Dutchman" who had maintained the right of his colony to the Hampshire Grants. Schuyler naturally placed all provisions from whatever source at the disposal of the troops as a whole. But Connecticut officers objected to Connecticut flour being supplied to New York men, and claimed that they should have sole control over all provisions sent by their colony. Such an idea as continental union for the general good of all was too new yet for acceptance.

Schuyler had requested the appointment of his nephew, Walter Livingston, as deputy commissary-general, and Congress had appointed him. When his commission arrived, Livingston happened to be in company with Elisha Phelps and Zebediah Strong, who had been sent as commissaries in charge of Connecticut supplies. Livingston's commission as commissary-general, issued by the Continental Congress, took precedence of those of Phelps and Strong. The result was a quarrel and an appeal to Schuyler. He explained the matter to Phelps, who yielded gracefully, but Strong could not control his feeling at becoming subordinate to a New York officer. "God forbid," he wrote to Schuyler, "that any *overgrown colony* or *overbearing* man should at this critical juncture use such pernicious partiality as to attempt to monopolize every emolument." He apologized later for this language, but the incident was one of many

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which kept up a disturbing friction and made organization difficult.

Connected with the intercolonial jealousies and still harder to deal with was the aversion to discipline and subordination on the part of the New England troops. These were composed of men accustomed to complete equality and individual liberty. Living isolated on their farms, with little distinction of wealth and none of social position, they had never known control or the habit of obedience. Their officers were chosen among themselves, and, while respected as leaders, were not regarded in any sense as superiors. They had little more thought of exercising authority than their soldiers had of acknowledging it. The dislike of discipline and subordination created difficulties enough in their own ranks, but when it met the military system of Schuyler, it developed into hatred of a supposed tyranny. Schuyler found the men crowded into barracks with entire disregard of sanitary precautions, and their health becoming so bad that one-third were incapacitated for duty. His attempts to introduce reforms in this particular were sullenly resisted. At home the men were accustomed to severe physical labor. Since arriving at Ticonderoga they had done nothing but clean their guns and turn out for parade. They were spoiling for their accustomed exercise. Schuyler set them to work, partly as a health measure and partly to forward the boat-building and other preparations for the expedition. This

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was regarded as a hardship, and made the subject of complaint. The commissary department was without regulation, the men helping themselves to what they wanted, and wasting ruinously. They considered that the provisions belonged to them and resented their control, especially by an officer from another colony. They were patriotic and brave, ready to fight, but wishing to do it in their own way, as partisans, not as a regular army. To introduce business order, to inculcate obedience on the part of officers and men, were tasks trying to a man of Schuyler's methodical habits and somewhat imperious temper. The difficulty was deeply seated, as Montgomery found when he was making his campaign in Canada. "They are the worst stuff imaginable for soldiers," he wrote home. "They are homesick; their regiments are melted away, and yet not a man dead of any distemper among them. There is such an equality among them that the officers have no authority. . . . The privates are all generals, but not soldiers." When experience in war had taught the New England men the necessity of unquestioning obedience, they made the very backbone of the American army. But meanwhile they were difficult to command.

Schuyler lacked the patience and conciliatory disposition which such work required. Habituated to order and system, he was irritated by the indifference to these qualities which he saw about him. Accustomed to the exercise of authority, and to the respect

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which a man in his position received in the province of New York, he could not understand the familiarity and independence of the New England men. He described the situation to Washington, who thus replied from Cambridge: "I can easily judge of your difficulties in introducing order and discipline into troops who have from their infancy imbibed ideas of the most contrary kind. It would be far beyond the compass of a letter for me to describe the situation of things here on my arrival. Perhaps you will only be able to judge of it from my assuring you that mine must be a portraiture at full length of what you have had in miniature. Confusion and discord reigned in every department, which, in a little time, must have ended either in the separation of the army or fatal contests with one another. . . . However, we mend every day, and I flatter myself that in a little time we shall work up these raw materials into a good manufacture. I must recommend to you, what I endeavor to practise myself—patience and perseverance." "I can easily conceive," answered Schuyler, "that my difficulties are only a faint semblance of yours. Yes, my general, I will strive to copy your bright example, and patiently and steadily persevere in that line which alone can promise the wished-for reformation."

The New England opposition to Schuyler was destined to bear bitter fruit for him. A strong prejudice existed against him before he assumed command.

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His efforts to introduce military order into the army at Ticonderoga, his regulation of supplies, his sanitary measures, his requirement of labor on the part of the soldiers, induced a feeling of animosity which took form in suspicions of his loyalty to the patriot cause. The situation is described in a curious contemporary letter written from the camp in July, 1775. Accompanying Colonel Hinman's regiment, as chaplain, was the Rev. Cotton Mather Smith, of Sharon, well known through western Connecticut as "Parson Smith." He wrote to his wife: "You wish to know if the rumors about General Schuyler are true, if he is secretly a Tory? Saying that you are requested to ask me. My dear wife, they are *not* true. Say this (to any who ask you) on my authority, for I speak whereof I do *know*. Gen'l Schuyler is as earnest a patriot as any in our land, and he has few superiors in any respect. I do grieve that so many of our New England men should so fail to do him justice. Yet are they not quite without excuse, not for their suspicions, but for their dislike. The Gen'l is somewhat haughty and overbearing. He has never been accustomed to seeing men that are reasonably well taught, and able to give a clear opinion, and to state their grounds for it, who were not also persons of some wealth and rank; and when our blacksmith C—— came up to the Gen'l without any preliminaries to offer him some information and advice, but withal not disrespectfully, the Gen'l, albeit the information

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was of importance and should have speedy attention—spake very sharply to the poor man and bade him begone. He could easily have seen that the man meant no harm and was far more intelligent than the most of his 'stupid Dutchmen' (as I grieve to say that our N. E. men are too apt to call 'em) even when they are officers; but it was not until I had explained to him that the man was well descended and only a blacksmith by reason that his grandfather's English estates had been forfeited to the crown, that the Gen'l could be prevailed upon to listen to him. This is our commander's one weakness, and I would not have you repeat it to any one. On the other hand, our men are much too free with their strictures. Full one-third of my time is taken up in trying to make them see that we have no warrant for suspicions of him and every reason for the greatest confidence. I am in a position to form a good judgment, and I consider Gen'l Schuyler to be an honorable gentleman, a man of unusual probity, an excellent commanding officer, and *most devoted to our cause*. Tell all who talk to you about him just what I here do say, and bid 'em to pay no heed to aught the perverse faultfinders like E. N. and N. W. may choose to say."

Another contemporary letter, which throws much light on this subject so near to Schuyler, was written by James Lockwood to Silas Deane, from Fort George, in October, 1775, when the troops were on their way to Canada under Montgomery: "I am

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not unacquainted how apt soldiers are to report groundless ill-natured stories about officers, neither do I believe one-fiftieth part of the complaints against General Schuyler have any real foundation in truth. He has certainly had a most arduous, very disagreeable piece of business of it, and has done perhaps as much, if not more, than any other man could do; yet thus it is, neither the officers nor the soldiers of the army love him, and Montgomery, who has been the darling of the army, they now complain much of.

. . . In short, sir, it certainly ever was and ever will be of the greatest importance that every general officer is well acquainted with the genius, temper, and dispositions of the people that compose his army. Our New England people will not at once submit to the usages frequently practised among regular troops. It is my opinion that the greater part of the uneasiness has arisen from this quarter."

With Schuyler at Ticonderoga was Richard Montgomery, the brigadier-general appointed from New York, one of the heroic figures of the Revolution. He was born December 2, 1738, at Conway House, near Raphoe, in the North of Ireland, the third son of an Irish baronet. His eldest brother was an officer in the English army, the second was a merchant at Lisbon, and a sister was married to Lord Ranelagh. He studied at Dublin College, and at eighteen entered the English army as an ensign. During the Seven Years' War his regiment was ordered to Halifax, and in 1758

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he was with Wolfe at the capture of Louisburg, the French fortress which guarded the entrance to the St. Lawrence River. Here he was promoted to a lieutenancy. During the remainder of the war he served under Amherst and at its conclusion went to the West Indies, where, in 1762, he became captain. In 1772 he resigned his commission and sailed from England for New York with the design of settling there. He married Janet, eldest child of Judge Robert R. Livingston, of Clermont, and began farming at Rhinebeck. In 1775 he was chosen a delegate from Dutchess County to the first Provincial Congress. There he felt himself to be of little use, as he had no facility in public speaking. But the scanty written records of him show that he could express himself in private in language both noble and much to the point. On receipt of his commission he wrote: "The Congress, having done me the honor of electing me a brigadier-general in their service, is an event which must put an end for a while, perhaps forever, to the quiet scheme of life I had prescribed for myself; for though entirely unexpected and undesired by me, the will of an oppressed people, compelled to choose between liberty and slavery, must be obeyed." It is related by L. L. Hunt, in notes on Montgomery, that, "he came into his wife's room and asked her to make up for him the ribbon cockade which was to be placed on his hat. He saw her emotion and marked the starting tear. With persuasive gentleness, he said

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to her: Our country is in danger. Unsolicited in two instances, I have been distinguished by two honorable appointments. As a politician I could not serve them. As a soldier, I think I can. Shall I then accept the one and shrink from the other in dread of danger? My honor is engaged." On his departure for the army, Judge Livingston said to him: "Take care of your life." To which he replied, "Of my honor, you would say, sir." To his wife, his last words were, "You shall never blush for your Montgomery."

By the middle of August, Schuyler had made great progress with the preparations for the expedition. Enough boats had been built to convey the troops down the lake and sufficient ammunition and food were at hand for immediate needs. Meanwhile great alarm was felt at Albany concerning the hostile attitude of the Indians in the Mohawk Valley, and Schuyler went south to attend a council with the savages. Before he could finish this business he received news from Montgomery that the activity of the enemy at St. John's necessitated the immediate movement of the troops and that he was about to start for the north.

Schuyler was ill, but he made his way back to Ticonderoga as fast as he could; and notwithstanding increasing illness, embarked in a small boat on which a bed was improvised and had himself taken to the Isle aux Noix, twelve miles south of St. John's, where, in a condition of great weakness, he joined Montgomery

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on the 5th of September. "Poor Schuyler," Montgomery wrote to his wife, "is in so miserable a state of health as to make him an object of compassion." Schuyler wrote and forwarded into Canada an address to the population intended to win their adhesion to the American cause, and considered with Montgomery the plans of the coming campaign; but his illness increased in the swampy country where the army was encamped, he felt himself to be useless and unable to endure the hardships of the campaign and returned to Ticonderoga on the 18th. On the 20th he wrote to Washington: "I find myself much better as the fever has left me, and hope soon to return where I ought and wish to be, unless a barbarous relapse should dash the cup of hope from my lips." But the combination of gout and bilious fever from which he suffered was not to leave him. The 25th of September he wrote to the Continental Congress: "The vexation of spirit under which I labor that a barbarous complication of disorders should prevent me from reaping those laurels for which I have so unweariedly wrought, since I was honored with this command, the anxiety of mind I have suffered since my arrival here lest the army should starve, occasioned by a scandalous want of subordination and inattention to my orders, in some of the officers that I left to command at the different posts; the vast variety of disagreeable and vexatious incidents that almost every hour arise in some department or other, not only retard my cure, but have put

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me considerably back for some days past. If Job had been a general in my situation, his memory had not been so famous for patience. But the glorious end which we have in view, and which I have a confident hope will be attained, will atone for all." To the Provincial Congress, he wrote in October: "My disorders have taken such deep root, that I now begin to have little hope of recovery so as to take an active part in the future operations of the campaign. I hope, however, that I shall not be obliged to leave this place, unhealthy and unfavorable to my recovery as it is, lest it should involve General Montgomery in irremediable inconveniences."

Notwithstanding his illness, Schuyler carried on all the business of collecting and forwarding supplies to the army in Canada. Montgomery wrote to his wife: "General Schuyler's return to Ticonderoga has been a most fortunate affair. We should most certainly have been obliged to return half starved, and to leave the unfortunate Canadians to take care of themselves." "Your residence at Ticonderoga," he wrote to Schuyler from St. John's, "has probably enabled us to keep our ground. How much do the public owe you for your attention and activity."

The invasion of Canada at this early period of the struggle was an illustration of the aggressive determination of the patriot party. Not content with resisting the armed attacks of the ministry, not content with the great fight which Washington was waging

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against the British army at Boston, the patriots undertook to carry the war into Africa and to wrest from England possessions which were not involved in the quarrel. It was an act of defiance, which emphasized the warlike feeling of the colonies and showed the mother country that a defensive war was not all she had to face. Moreover, an invasion of Canada seemed to be the best preventive of an invasion from Canada. For such reasons the expedition was well judged. But with the small force at the disposal of the colonies, with the extreme difficulty of obtaining and forwarding military supplies, success was hardly possible.

Montgomery started at the end of August, and reached St. John's, the fort which protected Montreal on the south, in the middle of September. A siege of fifty days ensued, the garrison surrendering November 3d. The long delay incurred at St. John's was very injurious to the prospects of the expedition, for winter, with its hardships, was brought so much the nearer. On the 12th, Montreal was taken, and Montgomery proclaimed the jurisdiction of the Continental Congress, to which he urged the inhabitants to send delegates. Although successful so far, the most difficult task, the capture of Quebec, yet lay before him. At about the same time that he had left Ticonderoga, Washington had sent Benedict Arnold with a detachment from his own army at Cambridge with orders to reach Quebec by way of the Merrimac River. Through great labor and suffering, which reduced his

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command by one half, Arnold had surmounted every obstacle. Through an intercepted letter, Montgomery learned that Arnold was before Quebec, and that "the King's friends" there expected to be besieged, "which," said the gallant general, "with the blessing of God, they shall be, if the severe season holds off and I can prevail on the troops to accompany me."

This last proviso indicated an impediment to Montgomery's success which so far had seemed to him more serious than any enemy. Among a considerable portion of his little army there existed a spirit of insubordination which frustrated his plans and depressed his spirit. The example was set by officers. Captain Baker, a leader of the Green Mountain Boys, contrary to express orders, went up into Canada with five companions to see what he could do on his own account. Meeting with a party of Indians in a canoe, he wantonly fired upon them, killing two. He got a bullet through his own head, which was well deserved, but the surviving savages paddled off with their tale of injury, and did much to frustrate the efforts of Schuyler and Montgomery to keep the Indians neutral. Ethan Allen, "the hero of Ticonderoga," was proceeding at the head of his company to join Montgomery at the siege of St. John's. On the way it occurred to him that he might steal a march on his commanding officer and win much glory for himself by making an independent attack on Montreal with

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his own force. This he did, sacrificing his whole company, which Montgomery much needed. He was himself taken prisoner, put into irons as a sort of pirate, and complained loudly of a punishment which was due entirely to his own folly and disobedience. In Montgomery's own camp there was a set of officers, some from New England, some from New York, who were constantly telling the general what they would do, what they would not do, and what he ought to do. All this was galling to the brave but not over-patient Montgomery. He was the leader of a guerrilla band, not the general of regular troops.

As to the men, they were not soldiers by education or habit and a great many soon concluded that they did not want to be. They were homesick; they had enlisted for a few months from patriotic feeling, but their time was up. A considerable number refused to proceed after the taking of St. John's, and Montgomery had got them as far as Montreal only by promising to discharge them there. Now they declined to face the hardships of a winter campaign in Canada. Some alleged the expiration of their terms of enlistment, others their health, others again were mutinous, making their presence undesirable. Montgomery had to discharge a great many. Schuyler wrote to Congress of the arrival of some of these men at Ticonderoga: "About three hundred of the troops raised in Connecticut passed here within a few days. An unhappy homesickness prevails. These all

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came down as invalids, not one willing to re-engage for the winter's service; and unable to get any work done by them, I discharged them *en groupe*. Of all the specifics ever invented for *any* there is none so efficacious as a discharge for *this* prevailing disorder. No sooner was it administered but it perfected the cure of nine out of ten; who, refusing to wait for boats to go by way of Lake George, slung their heavy packs, crossed the lake at this place, and undertook a march of two hundred miles with the greatest good will and alacrity."

When Montgomery had joined Arnold before Quebec their combined forces numbered but twelve hundred men. As General Carleton, the British commander, would not come out to fight, it was resolved to storm the works. On the last day of December, 1775, at two o'clock in the morning, amidst a driving snow storm, Arnold and Montgomery attacked, on opposite sides of the town. Arnold fell badly wounded; Montgomery dead, struck by three bullets, when near his goal. His body was found at daybreak by a detachment sent out by Carleton, who had been his fellow officer in Wolfe's army. It lay between the bodies of his two faithful aides, MacPherson and Cheeseman, nearly hidden by the drifting snow, and was given a soldier's grave within the wall. Forty-three years later, in July, 1818, his wife stood alone on the piazza of her house at Rhinebeck, while below, on the waters of the Hudson, paused for a while the

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barge which bore the remains of Montgomery from the heights of Quebec to their final resting place at St. Paul's Church in New York. The monument visible from the street by the thousands who daily pass before it, was designed by the French sculptor, Caffières, at the order of Congress, and bears an inscription composed by Benjamin Franklin.

The early successes of Montgomery and all that was known of him had created a strong feeling in his favor throughout the country. Proportionately great was the mourning when the news of his death was received. Thomas Lynch, attending Congress in Philadelphia, wrote to Schuyler: "Never was a city so universally struck with grief as this was on hearing of the loss of Montgomery. Every lady's eye was filled with tears. I happened to have company at dinner, but none had inclination for any other food but sorrow or resentment. Poor, gallant fellow! If a martyr's sufferings merit a martyr's reward, his claim is indisputable. I am sure that from the moment he left Ticonderoga to the moment of his release by death, his sufferings had no interval. He now rests from his labor, and his works can't but follow him."

The blow to Schuyler was a severe and personal one. Between the two generals there had never been a misunderstanding nor any feeling but perfect confidence and regard. In his last letter to Montgomery, Schuyler had said: "Adieu, my dear sir; may I have

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the pleasure soon to announce another of your victories, and afterwards that of embracing you." It was but a few days later when he was obliged to write to Washington: "I wish I had no occasion to send my dear general the enclosed melancholy accounts. My amiable friend, the gallant Montgomery, is no more! The brave Arnold is wounded, and we have met with a very severe check in an unsuccessful attempt on Quebec. May Heaven be graciously pleased to terminate the misfortune here. I tremble for our people in Canada."

When the news of the death of Montgomery reached London, the opposition seized the occasion to sound his praises and to reprove the ministry. Chatham and Burke spoke feelingly, and Colonel Barre, a companion of Montgomery's in the French War, was deeply moved as he dwelt on the fine qualities of the dead. But Lord North declared: "I cannot join in lamenting the death of Montgomery as a public loss. He was undoubtedly brave, humane, and generous; but still he was only a brave, humane, and generous rebel. Curse on his virtues, they've undone his country." To which Fox pointedly replied: "The term rebel is no certain mark of disgrace. All the great assertors of liberty, the saviors of their country, the benefactors of mankind in all ages, have been called rebels. We owe the constitution which enables us to sit in this house to a rebellion."

During the progress of the expedition into Canada,

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Montgomery had written to Schuyler several times regarding the insubordination of his troops and his desire to resign. On the 13th of October, at St. John's, he said: "When I mentioned my intentions regarding the campaign, I did not consider that I was at the head of troops who carry the spirit of freedom into the field and think for themselves. Upon considering the fatal consequences which might flow from the want of subordination and discipline, should this ill humor continue, my unstable authority over troops of different colonies, the insufficiency of the military law, and my own want of powers to enforce it, weak as it is, I thought it expedient to call the field officers together. Enclosed I send you the result of our deliberations, which has deprived me of all hope of success." Again on the 31st of October: "I am exceedingly well pleased to see General Wooster here, both for the advantage of the service and upon my own account. For I must earnestly request to be suffered to retire, should matters stand on such a footing this winter as to permit me to go off with honor. I have not talents nor temper for such a command. I am under the disagreeable necessity of acting eternally out of character, to wheedle, flatter, and lie. I stand in a constrained attitude. I will bear with it for a short time, but I cannot support it long." And on November 24th: "An affair happened here yesterday which had very near sent me home. A number

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of officers presumed to remonstrate against the indulgence I had given some of the officers of the King's troops. Such an insult I could not bear, and immediately resigned. However, they have to-day qualified it by such an apology as puts it in my power to resume the command with some propriety, and I have promised to bury it in oblivion. Captain Lamb, who is a restless genius and of a bad temper, was at the head of it. He has been used to haranguing his fellow-citizens in York, and cannot restrain his talents here. He is brave, active, and intelligent, but very turbulent and troublesome, and not to be satisfied."

Schuyler informed Congress of Montgomery's intentions, adding: "My sentiments exactly coincide with his. I shall, with him, do everything in my power to put a finishing stroke to the campaign. This done I must beg leave to retire." Washington had the same difficulties to contend with which beset Montgomery and Schuyler. His correspondence during this year affords ample evidence that a spirit of disorder and unmilitary independence pervaded the camp about Boston as well the army in New York. He wrote to that effect to Schuyler urging him to bear with everything for the sake of the cause. Schuyler agreed that such was the patriotic course, which he would wish to follow, but he added, "I think that I should prejudice my country by continuing any longer in this command. The favorable opinion you are

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pleased to entertain of me, obliges me to an explanation which I shall give you in confidence. I have already informed you of the disagreeable situation I have been in during the campaign, but I would waive that, were it not that it has arisen chiefly from prejudice and jealousy. For I could point out particular persons of rank in the army who have frequently declared that the general commanding in this quarter ought to be of the colony whence the majority of the troops come. But it is not from the opinion or principles of individuals that I have drawn the following conclusion: *That troops from the Colony of Connecticut will not bear with a general from another colony.* It is from the daily and common conversation of all ranks of people from that colony, both in and out of the army; and I assure you, that I sincerely lament that a people of so much public virtue should be actuated by such an unbecoming jealousy, founded on such a narrow principle—a principle extremely unfriendly to our righteous cause—as it tends to alienate the affections of numbers in this colony, in spite of the most favorable constructions that prudent men and real Americans among us attempt to put upon it. And although I frankly avow that I feel a resentment, yet I shall continue to sacrifice it to a nobler object—the welfare of that country in which I have drawn the breath of life.”

During the winter of 1775-76, much of Schuyler's

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attention was occupied by the attitude of the Johnson family, their Scotch dependents and the Indian tribes in the Mohawk Valley. Disaffections and hostility there were extremely dangerous. When the city of New York and the lower Hudson fell into the possession of the British, the State of New York, for all purposes of the war, consisted only of the upper Hudson and the Mohawk valleys.

The remarkable life of Sir William Johnson was suddenly terminated at Johnson Hall in July, 1774, by an attack of apoplexy, probably brought on by anxiety over the political situation. His title, his wealth, his office of Indian agent were derived from the Crown. The principles at issue between the colonies and the ministry interested him little in the isolation of his forest domain. His death occurred before he was obliged to declare for either side; but the inclination of his sympathy was shown by the attitude of his successors. His son John inherited the baronetcy and Johnson Hall. His nephew and son-in-law Guy became Indian agent, and lived at his place, called Guy Park, on the Mohawk River, a mile from the present village of Amsterdam. Both the Johnsons assumed a menacing attitude. Sir John fortified Johnson Hall, organized the Tryon County militia, and assumed its command. Guy held secret conferences with the Indians at Guy Park. After the news of Lexington and Concord had arrived, he became alarmed at the aspect of affairs, went up the Mohawk

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Valley with his family to Fort Stanwix, and then proceeded westward into the wilderness, stopping at all the Indian encampments and urging the chiefs to take sides with the British.

The Continental Congress, realizing the importance of keeping the Indians neutral, appointed a commission to meet them, consisting of Philip Schuyler, Joseph Hawley, Turbutt Francis, Oliver Wolcott, and Volckert P. Douw. They held a council in the summer, taking the ground: "This is a family quarrel between us and Old England. You Indians are not concerned in it. We do not wish you to take up the hatchet against the King's troops. We desire you to remain at home, and not join on either side, but keep the hatchet buried deep." In September, 1775, another council was held at Albany, which terminated peacefully and calmed the fears of immediate danger from the Indians. It was the last Indian council ever held in Albany, and Schuyler presided over it until called away by the departure of Montgomery's army.

During the early winter the Tories in Tryon County continued their hostile attitude and numerous acts of violence against the Whigs were committed by them. When the first Liberty pole was set up in the Mohawk Valley, the sheriff, named White, led a band of loyalists who cut it down; and White carried his aggressions so far that the Whigs organized against him and drove him away. He sought safety

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in Canada, was captured on the upper Hudson and sent by Schuyler as a prisoner to Albany. The Tryon County patriot committee, of which the famous Nicholas Herkimer was chairman, kept a watch over Sir John Johnson, but took no active measures against him as he committed no overt act.

Early in January, 1776, Schuyler decided that a blow must be struck at the Tories in Tryon County which would discourage the disaffection there. News was brought to him at Ticonderoga that Sir John had seven hundred armed Tories in the neighborhood of Johnson Hall. Schuyler collected several hundred men in Albany, and on the 16th of January marched through the valley, collecting Whigs as he went, until he had about three thousand men. He met Sir John at Guy Park, where the baronet had repaired in company with some chiefs of his Scotch Highlanders and Indians to show the support which he had at his back. Schuyler demanded Sir John's parole not to act inimically to the patriot cause, the surrender of all arms and ammunitions in the possession of the Tories and Indians at Johnson Hall, and the cessation of hostile acts against the Whigs. Johnson asked for a delay of a day in sending his reply. Schuyler assented, but meanwhile moved on to Johnstown. There Sir John referred to his influence over the Indians and suggested terms of his own. "I have given Sir John," replied Schuyler, "until twelve o'clock to-day to consider *my* terms, after which, if he shall not comply,

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I shall take such measures as will make him, and whoever assists him, feel the power in my hands." Johnson yielded at the appointed time, gave his parole to commit no hostile act and not to go westward of the German Flatts. The arms and ammunition were given up, three hundred Scotch Highlanders laying down their arms in the street of Johnstown. Schuyler returned to Albany with two cannon, several swivels, a quantity of guns and ammunition, six chiefs of the Highlanders, and a hundred Tory prisoners whom he held as hostages. Washington was much pleased by this action and Congress voted that Schuyler had performed "a meritorious service."

In the early spring, however, rumors arrived that Johnson was again inciting the Indians to war, and Schuyler summoned him to Albany. There he protested that he would observe his parole, and, there being no definite proofs against him, he was allowed to return. At the same time Schuyler sent Samuel Kirkland, the missionary, and James Deane, the interpreter, among the Indians to conciliate them and to spread the news of Washington's victory over the British at Boston. Their mission seemed to be successful, but in May it became evident to Schuyler that Johnson was not true to his word. He sent Colonel Dayton with three hundred picked men under a pretext to Johnstown. At the first opportunity they were to arrest Sir John and carry him with all his papers to Albany. But Tory friends warned the Baronet.

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When Dayton arrived, he had fled with some companions into the forest, and Lady Johnson observed defiantly that his enemies would soon know where he was. He made his way with great difficulty and suffering through the Adirondacks to the St. Lawrence River and Montreal. There he was commissioned a Colonel in the British army, and raised among his royalist followers a regiment of about a thousand men, which, under the name of the Royal Greens, was afterwards to carry fire and sword along the frontiers of New York. Schuyler, since boyhood, had had social relations with the Johnsons, father and son. He considered Sir John as a gentleman who would observe his parole, and before the occasion arose for sending the Dayton expedition there were no acts sufficiently definite to justify arrest. But the Baronet's escape was made the most of by Schuyler's enemies, and it was freely stated in New England that his Tory sympathies had induced him to connive at it.

CHAPTER V.

Failure of the Expedition Against Canada.—New England Hostility to Schuyler.—The Efforts of Gates to Supplant Him.

IN the spring of 1776, the expedition against Canada came to its disastrous and inevitable end. After the death of Montgomery, Arnold maintained the siege of Quebec through the winter, enduring, with his reduced and heroic band, extreme sufferings from exposure and hunger. Schuyler's correspondence contains constant references to his anxiety concerning the expedition and his efforts to assist it. During the winter, communication was difficult and rare through the intervening wilderness of snow-bound forest. In response to repeated prayers from Schuyler for men and money, the Congress at Philadelphia could only pass resolutions: "That General Schuyler be directed to take any further measures for supplying the army in Canada with provisions which his prudence may suggest, in which Congress placed the highest confidence;" and again, "That General Schuyler be desired to take care that the army in Canada be regularly and effectually supplied with necessaries." Such were the barren replies to his

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urgent requests at the time that he was writing to Washington: "Our military chest is exhausted and we are deeply involved in debt. Ten thousand pounds will hardly pay what I am personally bound for on the public account." To forward supplies to Quebec during the winter was a physical impossibility. Money was what Arnold wanted, that he might purchase necessaries where he was. Congress failed to furnish it, and Schuyler sent his own to the full extent of his resources. He realized more than any one what must be the wants and privations of the army, and suffered acutely from his inability to afford sufficient relief. In April, Arnold was succeeded in command by Wooster. He and Schuyler, between whom the New York and New England prejudices had caused a breach, were not then on good terms. But Schuyler wrote him: "Whatever my sentiments are with regard to our private disputes, I assure you that I very sincerely pity your situation."

At last the fresh troops and the money which Schuyler had long and urgently begged from Congress began to arrive in the north and were forwarded by him to Canada. They reached Quebec in May. But it was in vain. Fleets had arrived from England with an army of thirteen thousand men. General Carleton found himself at the head of an overwhelming force, and there was nothing left for the Americans but retreat. This was conducted with great skill by General Sullivan, and the army might have been brought

THE RETREAT FROM CANADA

home with small loss. But camp sickness attacked the troops with great virulence, and was soon followed by an outbreak of smallpox. By the time the army reached Crown Point in June many had died of disease, and half of the remainder were ill. The camp was a hospital, in which the able bodied were all needed to care for their unfortunate companions.

The failure of the expedition against Canada was due to the simple cause that the invaders were inferior in strength to the British. Montgomery, Arnold, Wooster, Sullivan and their troops had shown the greatest intrepidity and endurance. But the storming party which attacked the great fortress of Quebec on that winter night in 1775 was quite inadequate in numbers for such an enterprise. The small force of men which held General Carleton and his garrison as prisoners within their walls throughout the winter accomplished a great feat in doing so much. The American re-enforcements sent in May were outnumbered two to one by the new troops received by the enemy. The colonies were as yet too little united and organized to conduct effectively an aggressive foreign campaign. Men and money could be raised to repel invasion, but not to carry on war outside the country.

These circumstances were not understood at the time, and great disappointment followed the joy over Montgomery's early victories. The losses had fallen chiefly on western New England, whence had come most of the troops engaged. The soldiers who had

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resented Schuyler's military discipline at Ticonderoga, who had given Montgomery such trouble and had finally left him in the lurch at Montreal in the autumn of 1775, had returned home, justifying themselves by accusing their commanders of tyranny. When the sick arrived at their homes after the retreat in the spring, they had real sufferings enough to relate. But these were incident to a soldier's life, aggravated by the special difficulties of a campaign in the wilderness. But the prejudice already existing against Schuyler made it easy to fasten upon him responsibility for every evil. It was openly and widely stated that he was at heart a Tory and had neglected the expedition with the secret desire of seeing it fail. Of the vague reports which were spread to Schuyler's discredit a sample occurs in a letter of Walter Livingston written in May, 1776: "Last Saturday evening, arrived in town Captain Sheldon, from Salisbury, Connecticut, who advises that upon his return from Hartford on Friday evening, he found the people greatly alarmed by an account that a formidable conspiracy was carrying on by the Tories in this quarter; upon which he mounted his horse and proceeded toward Albany, till he came into Noble Town; where it was said that some person in King's District had pretended that he could make some important discoveries of the designs of the Tories, if the persons to whom he communicated it would inviolably keep his name a secret, which was done, as is said upon oath. Upon which

ENMITY OF NEW ENGLAND

he told them that General Schuyler, the committee of Albany and many others were in the Tory interest. That it was in the design of the general to draw all the provisions out of the country, up to the lakes, and there to betray them into the hands of the enemy . . . and that the people in that part of the country were greatly alarmed and had sent to General Washington and Governor Trumbull to acquaint them of the affair."

Meetings were held in western Massachusetts and Connecticut in which attacks were made upon the general of the northern department, and the Committee of Berkshire forwarded to Washington definite accusations against him of disloyalty. The commander-in-chief forwarded the papers to Schuyler with the words: "From these you will readily discover the insidious diabolical acts and schemes carrying on by the Tories and friends of Government to raise distrust, dissensions and divisions amongst us. Having the utmost confidence in your integrity, and the most incontestible proofs of your great attachment to our common country and its interests, I could not but look upon the charges against you with an eye of disbelief, and sentiments of detestation and abhorrence; nor should I have troubled you with the matter had I not been informed that copies were sent to different committees, and to Governor Trumbull, which I conceived would get abroad, and that you, should you hear of my being furnished with them,

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would consider my suppressing them as an evidence of my belief, or at best, my doubt of the charges." "While this was only report," replied Schuyler, "I treated it with contempt, without taking notice of it, but it is now become a duty I owe myself and my country to detect the scoundrels, and the only means of doing this is by requesting that an immediate inquiry be made into the matter, when I trust, it will evidently appear that it was a scheme more calculated to ruin me than to disunite and create jealousies in the friends of America. Your Excellency will, therefore, please to order a court of inquiry, the soonest possible, for I cannot sit easy under such an infamous imputation, as on this extensive continent numbers of the most respectable characters may not know what your Excellency and Congress do of my principles and exertions in the common cause." And to Congress he wrote: "I have requested my general for an inquiry to be made into my conduct. His soul is above the meanness of suspicion, for his feelings are the most delicate, and although his opinion does me the most ample justice, yet it is a most natural wish that my innocence should be made as public as the charge against me, which has been industriously propagated, and ere this has probably reached every quarter of that country to the preservation of which my all is devoted." But Washington declined to order the court of inquiry because, as he said, "the charges appeared so uncertain, vague and incredible

HIS CHARACTER ATTACKED

that there is nothing to found proceedings on, were there the most distant necessity, for the scrutiny." But these accusations, unjustifiable as they were, spread far, and were very injurious to Schuyler. Even such a man as Robert Morris could write from Philadelphia to Gates: "Is it possible that a man who writes so well and expresses such anxiety for the cause of his country as General S——r does, I say is it possible that he can be sacrificing the interest of that country to his ambition or avarice? I sincerely hope it is not so. But such insinuations are dropped."

Not only was Schuyler accused of neglecting the troops in Canada with the secret object of insuring their defeat, but his enemies went so far as to spread the calumny that he had embezzled the moneys sent to his care for the army. In May, Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., thus referred to these accusations: "You have doubtless been informed of the Tory designs and reports spreading in the country respecting the *combination* which is *said* to have extended so far as to include many respectable characters, not excluding *yours*. I have this day heard from Connecticut, and am happy to find these reports have not had their designed effect there. If once our confidence in each other is destroyed, we are fatally wounded." In June, General Israel Putnam wrote to Schuyler: "I have lately received letters from several Committees in which they say they are now confident of your great

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zeal and attachment to your country, and are convinced that the late reports were raised by people notoriously inimical to this country, and that it was done with a view of dividing us." It is not difficult to imagine the feelings of Schuyler on being the object of such accusations. He made many efforts to discover the identity of his accusers, and having traced, as he thought, some guilt to one Mr. Blackden of Salisbury, Connecticut, he complained to the Committee of that town, and received from Joshua Porter, its chairman, the following curious though hardly satisfactory answer: "If Mr. Blackden really believes you have detained the hard money which was sent to you to forward to Canada, and if he has publicly charged you with detaining the same, in this case we think, as you intimate, it is his duty to support the charge; and if it cannot be supported, the reproach must recoil upon himself, or those who have led him to believe the calumny . . . although (as you confess to believe of us) we should be equally willing to assist in the detection of a public robber, and of a calumniator, yet permit us to say it would give us the greatest uneasiness to think, that an officer of your honor's rank and elevated station should lose the confidence of the public, who have so long relied upon your great abilities and inclination to serve them. And though surmises to the prejudice of your honor's character have been as common, as we hope they were groundless; yet we cannot cease to wish that your

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good services may continue to merit the just applause and respect of your country; as conscious rectitude should never be dismayed, or discouraged, with the poet's assertion that

‘ On eagles’ wings, immortal scandals fly,
While virtuous actions are but born to die.’ ”

The difficulties in the northern department would have been adjusted and time would have given the New England men a better appreciation of Schuyler's character had not the selfish intrigues of General Gates kept up a campaign of suspicion and dislike, in which Gates played the same part toward Schuyler that Lee played toward Washington. Gates had been an officer in the British army during the French and Indian War, attaining the rank of major, and after that war had settled on a plantation in Virginia. In 1775, he offered his services to Congress, and was appointed adjutant-general, with the rank of brigadier. Of small military capacity, vain and unscrupulous, he had been seeking advancement in Philadelphia through the favor of delegates in Congress. In the displacement of Schuyler he saw a chance to obtain an independent command in the north; and he was untiring in his efforts to convince Congress that a change should be made there. The objection of the New England men to serve under a Dutch general from New York, and the unpopularity among them of Schuyler's military discipline had been

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known to the New England delegates in Congress. They were active and powerful at Philadelphia, and their chief, John Adams, was chairman of the board of war and in a position to carry out their designs. That they should have wished for a change of commanders in the northern department is not to be placed to their discredit. It was a question of judgment. But that they should have chosen Gates as their candidate and should have allowed themselves to become the tools of his intrigue, was a mistake which time was to disclose very fully.

Schuyler stood too high and his influence in the province of New York was too great for an immediate or complete displacement. If a new commander of the northern department were needed, the recommendation of Washington would naturally have been sought. But his known regard for Schuyler made it necessary to act in another way. Without consulting the Commander-in-Chief, the New England delegates procured the appointment of Gates as a major-general, and a little later his nomination as commander of the army "in Canada." This was to be the entering wedge which would lead to the higher and coveted command.

At this time Sullivan was at the head of the Canadian army, the retreat of which he had conducted with great credit. He did not deserve to be superseded; and when he heard that Gates, who had

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hitherto been a brigadier-general, was placed in command over him, he justly considered it an aspersion on his conduct. "I should not have the least objection," he wrote to Schuyler, "to being commanded by General Gates—I have no personal objection to him—and would willingly have served under him had he in the first instance held a commission superior to the one Congress was pleased to honor me with. But this not being the case, and the procedure so strong an implication against my conduct, I must beg leave to quit this department with my family and baggage, as I cannot with honor act in future, and shall, as soon as possible, repair to Congress and petition for leave to resign my commission." When Sullivan took formal leave of his officers they presented him with an address expressive of their admiration for his services, to which were attached the valued names of Hazen, Stark, Poor, Antill and St. Clair. Thus the party in Congress opposed to Schuyler began their campaign against him by the injury of a deserving officer who had nothing to do with the quarrel.

On the 25th of June, Schuyler heard of the appointment of Gates to the command of the army in Canada and, unsuspecting of the intrigue which was proceeding, wrote him cordially to hasten up to Albany, "that we may advise together on the most eligible methods to be pursued to prevent an increase of our misfortunes in this unlucky quarter. Be so good as to take a bed with me, that whilst you remain here

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we may be together as much as possible." Gates arrived, much pleased with his instructions, which gave him full and independent powers, but all qualified by the words which limited their operation to the army "in Canada." He was much crestfallen, therefore, when, at Albany, he found that his army was no longer "in Canada," but in New York and consequently under the command of Schuyler.

Mindful, however, of the party in Congress at his back, he soon recovered his equanimity and proceeded to assert himself. Among other proceedings, he introduced to Schuyler a Mr. Avery, of Massachusetts; and Avery immediately made a formal demand upon Schuyler for money to conduct the commissary-general's department in Albany. Schuyler, much surprised, informed him that Walter Livingston was commissary of the northern department, and that, while in Albany, Avery must consider himself subordinate to Livingston. The latter's "great family connections in this country," added Schuyler, "have enabled him to carry on the service when others could not." And of this he gave instances. Gates could find no reply to make and left the room with Avery. But hardly outside he declared to Avery that as soon as they reached the army he would make him commissary. This remark was overheard and repeated to Schuyler, who saw that an issue was made which should be settled at once. For Gates to make such an appointment was to declare himself independent

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of Schuyler in New York. Schuyler recalled Gates, and the whole matter of the latter's powers was gone over between them. Schuyler made a complete statement of the issue in a letter to Washington, which, being shown to Gates, was accepted by him as accurate. "If Congress," wrote Schuyler, "intended that General Gates should command the northern army, wherever it may be, as he assures me they did, it ought to have been signified to me, and I should then have immediately resigned the command to him; but until such intention is properly conveyed to me, I never can. I must therefore entreat your Excellency to lay this letter before Congress, that they may clearly and explicitly signify their intentions, to avert the dangers and evils that may arise from a disputed command; for after what General Gates has said, the line must be clearly drawn." When this letter was received from Washington by Congress, that body speedily declared "that Major-General Gates be informed that it was the intention of Congress to give him the command of the troops while in Canada, but that they had no design to invest him with a command superior to General Schuyler while the troops should be on this side of Canada."

This decision and the apparent acquiescence in it by Gates set at rest the suspicions of Schuyler, and he wrote to the President of Congress on the 17th of July: "When gentlemen act with candor to each other, a difference in opinion will seldom be attended

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with any disagreeable consequences. I am happy, sir, that I can assure you that the most perfect good understanding exists between General Gates and me, insomuch that it gives him pain that I was under the necessity of quitting the army to repair here at this critical juncture. You will please to assure Congress that I am deeply impressed with the necessity of mutual confidence among all its officers, and that I shall never neglect any measure that may have a tendency to so desirable an end. I have seen, with the deepest affliction, the unhappy jealousy which reigned in the Northern Army occasioned by colonial distinctions both injurious to the cause of America and disgraceful to the authors of them." And to Washington he wrote: "It gives me a very sincere and a heartfelt pleasure that I can declare that difference in opinion between General Gates and me has been simply such, unattended with that little jealousy which would have reflected disgrace upon both. Be assured, sir, that the most perfect harmony subsists between us, and that I shall, by every attention to General Gates, strictly cultivate it, as well to increase my own felicity as to promote the public service."

How different was the attitude of Gates is shown by his correspondence, which discloses a definite scheme to supplant his superior officer. And the party which he had formed on his behalf continued their campaign of misrepresentation and abuse. Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, writing to Williams,

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said: "It is justly to be expected that General Gates is discontented with his situation, finding himself limited and removed from the command, to be a wretched spectator of the ruin of the army, without power of attempting to save them." And the Governor's son Joseph wrote to Gates: "I find you are in a cursed situation; your authority at an end; and commanded by a person who will be willing to have you knocked in the head, as General Montgomery was, if he can have the money chest in his power." Elbridge Gerry, of the New England delegation in Congress, wrote him: "We want very much to see you with the sole command of the northern department, but hope you will not relinquish your exertions until a favorable opportunity shall effect it." Some members of Congress, knowing what was going on, tried to dissuade Gates from his course. Among these were Charles Carroll and Samuel Chase, both of whom had visited the northern department in the spring, and as Commissioners of Congress had examined personally into all its affairs. Carroll wrote to Gates urging him to put away his prejudice against Schuyler, as he knew him to be "an active and deserving officer;" and Chase recommended him to place "the most unreserved and unlimited confidence in Schuyler." The latter was still in ignorance of Gates's character and wrote to him in August: "I find the jealousies with respect to me have not yet subsided in the country. I am informed that some committees

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at the eastward, in this and the adjacent States, are trying me. I wish Congress may at last comply with my entreaties, and order an inquiry on the many charges made against me, that I may not any longer be insulted. I assure you that I am sincerely tired of abuse, that I will let my enemies arrive at the completion of their wishes, by retiring as soon as I shall have been tried, and attempt to serve my injured country in some other way, where envy and detraction have no temptation to follow me."

In July, while the disputed question of command was still unsettled, Schuyler preserved a friendly relation with Gates, and the two generals journeyed northward together to visit the army just returning from Canada. John Trumbull, afterwards the distinguished artist, was an officer in the suite of Gates, and has left a graphic account of what he saw. General Gates, he says, landed at Albany in the evening, and "proceeded immediately to visit General Schuyler, whom we found with his family, just seated at supper. I was very much struck with the elegant style of everything I saw. We here learned the news of fresh disasters in Canada, and the next morning, accompanied by General Schuyler, we departed on horseback for Skeensborough. The road as far as Saratoga was good; thence to Fort Edward tolerable; but from that to the head of Lake Champlain, bad as possible, and not a bridge over any of the small streams and

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brooks which fall into Wood Creek. From Skeensborough we proceeded with all diligence by water to Ticonderoga, where we learned that the troops driven from Canada were beginning to arrive at Crown Point. The two generals went forward to that place without delay, leaving me with orders to examine the ground on the east side of the lake. . . . The next morning I went forward to Crown Point, where I rejoined my general, and there saw, in all its horrors, the calamities of unsuccessful war.

“Early in May, re-enforcements from England had reached Quebec, and our troops were of course obliged to retire. They were constantly harassed in their retreat and, in addition, the smallpox, in its most virulent and deadly form, had made its appearance among them. General Thomas died of this loathsome disease at Chambly, and the command devolved on General Sullivan, who conducted this calamitous retreat in an admirable manner, but was driven from post to post until he reached St. John’s, at the northern extremity of Lake Champlain. At that time no road existed on either side of the lake, and the only communication with Albany and the southern country was by its waters. General Sullivan having secured all the vessels and boats at St. John’s and destroyed all which were not necessary for the conveyance of his troops, by this means effectually prevented the immediate advance and pursuit of the enemy. Thus the wretched remnant of the army reached Crown Point in safety,

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but it is difficult to conceive a state of much deeper misery. The boats were leaky and without awnings; the sick, being laid upon their bottoms without straw, were soon drenched in the filthy water of that peculiarly stagnant muddy lake, exposed to the burning sun of the month of July, with no sustenance but raw salt pork, which was often rancid, and hard biscuit or unbaked flour; no drink but the vile water of the lake, modified perhaps, but not corrected by bad rum, and scarcely any medicine.

“My first duty, upon my arrival at Crown Point, was to procure a return of the number and condition of the troops. I found them dispersed, some few in tents, some in sheds, and more under the shelter of miserable bush huts, so totally disorganized by the death or sickness of officers that the distinction of regiments and corps was in a great degree lost; so that I was driven to the necessity of great personal examination, and I can truly say that I did not look into a tent or hut in which I did not find either a dead or a dying man. I can scarcely imagine any more disastrous scene, except the retreat of Bonaparte from Moscow—that probably was the very acme of human misery. I found the whole number of officers and men to be five thousand two hundred, and the sick who required the attentions of a hospital were two thousand eight hundred, so that when they were sent off with the number of men necessary to row them to the hospital, which had been established at

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the south end of Lake George, a distance of fifty miles, there would remain but the shadow of an army. Crown Point was not tenable by such a wreck, and we were ordered to fall back upon Ticonderoga immediately."

In face of the situation which Schuyler found at Crown Point, he had to consider, first of all, the means of caring for and saving the sick, and of preventing the spread of disease in the army already present and among the troops which were on their way to join and re-enforce that army. He called a council of all the higher officers, and with their approval ordered that those ill with contagious diseases should be sent to Fort George, where a hospital was immediately established; and that the army with the rest of the sick should abandon Crown Point and take post at Ticonderoga at the head of the lake. Crown Point was a low and insalubrious situation without buildings to protect the troops either sick or well, and now so tainted by disease that to bring re-enforcements there was, in the words of Gates, only to add one hospital to another. It was also a place far inferior to Ticonderoga in strength. The latter fortress was on high ground with barracks, accessible for supplies and the strongest natural position in the country. The course pursued by Schuyler appeared then, and was proved by its results to be, the wisest under the circumstances.

But some of the lesser officers at Crown Point, all

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New England men, held a council of their own in which they passed resolutions declaring that the abandonment of the post left the lake open to the enemy, was dangerous to the New England colonies and contrary to the orders of Congress. They ignored entirely the infected condition of the place and the other reasons which had governed the decision of their superior officers in the previous council. This remonstrance was sent by its signers to officers in Washington's army; was by them considered without any hearing of the real reasons which caused the abandonment of Crown Point, and resulted in a vote of censure of that action. Washington was led by this one-sided presentation of the case to express his disapproval of the removal of the troops to Ticonderoga. Schuyler was naturally indignant at this treatment. He, Gates, Arnold and the other general officers of the northern army, being on the spot and knowing all the facts, had agreed upon a course of action as in their opinion the best. Now councils of inferior officers were allowed to sit in judgment upon their superiors and to pass votes of censure upon them. In any regularly organized army such conduct would subject the offenders to court martial and punishment. It was destructive of every notion of discipline and order. Schuyler wrote to Congress several times, urgently requesting a court of inquiry into his own conduct. Congress not granting his request, on the 14th of September he sent in a formal resignation,

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at the same time stating that it was not to elude any inquiry Congress might 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 steadily 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 resignation and request for a court of inquiry were answered on the 2d of October by the following resolution: "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 that 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 attachment 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

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silence, they will, at any 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."

A complimentary resolution was not what Schuyler wanted. He felt that a court of inquiry to review and pass upon his official acts was due to him after his own repeated requests and the publicity of the attacks against him. He felt the mortification of an honorable man accused of ill-conduct who is denied the opportunity to vindicate himself. But worse was to follow. The party in Congress opposed to him succeeded in getting a committee appointed to investigate the affairs of the northern department, which was directed to confer, not with Schuyler, but with Gates, his inferior in command. Schuyler must indeed have been possessed of more than ordinary patience to endure without anger treatment so unprecedented. "I have suffered such brutal outrage from Congress," he wrote to General Scott, "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

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not consent to my resignation." To Robert R. Livingston he wrote: "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."

Resolved to bring about the inquiry which he desired to clear his character, Schuyler requested permission of Congress to repair to Philadelphia, and received from the President in November an answer saying: "The situation of the northern army being at this juncture extremely critical, and your services in that department of the highest use and importance, the Congress wish for a continuance of your influence and abilities on behalf of your country. They have, however, agreeably to your request, consented that you should repair to this city whenever, in your opinion, the service will admit of your absence."

Earnestly as Schuyler wished to make the journey to Philadelphia and to set himself right there, the projected visit was postponed from month to month by public business. He wrote to Congress in December: "Much as I wish to do myself the honor to pay my respects to Congress, yet so much is to be done here, and no other general officer in the department,

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that it would not be prudent for me to quit it in this conjuncture." "I am closely engaged," he wrote to George Clinton in January, "in preparation for the next campaign, and shall hope that if we can be furnished with men, cannon and ammunition, that the enemy will not be able to penetrate by the north."

Washington conducting his great campaign in New Jersey, needed re-enforcements, and Schuyler sent Gates to him with a large portion of the northern army. Gates joined Washington in the dark days before the famous crossing of the Delaware. Not liking the outlook, inconsiderate of the great commander who then needed the assistance of every man in his little army, he got permission to repair to Philadelphia. Washington's army, with the regiments Gates had brought from Ticonderoga, endured the hardships and reaped the laurels of Trenton and Princeton. But Gates meanwhile was pursuing a campaign of another sort amidst the ease and comfort of Philadelphia. February and March were spent in strengthening his position with the New England delegation, in working upon their prejudice against Schuyler, in ingratiating himself with whomsoever might prove useful. He had been in command at Ticonderoga at the time of Arnold's gallant fight against Carleton on the lakes, which so intimidated the British commander that he had retired without attacking the fort. The merit which belonged to Arnold, Gates boastfully claimed for himself. When

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Congress earnestly requested him to resume the office of adjutant-general in the newly organized army, he replied with scorn and not without insolence to President Hancock: "I had last year the honor to command in the second post in America, and had the good fortune to prevent the enemy from making their so much wished for junction with General Howe. After this, to be expected to dwindle again to the adjutant-general requires more philosophy on my part and something more than words on yours."

With the assistance of the active New England delegation, which controlled the Board of War, Gates made a strong party determined to procure his appointment to independent command in the northern department. The difficulty was to set aside General Schuyler. They had already done all they could to make his post unpleasant, and had succeeded in disgusting him with public employment. But they were only a party. The Congress as a whole had always sustained Schuyler when a clear issue was brought before it. He had offered to resign in the autumn of 1775, and had been requested urgently not to do so. It was but a few months ago that his written resignation was in the hands of Congress who had refused to accept it with assurances of respect and appreciation. Something must be done to make him resign again, and this time the resignation must be accepted. The occasion for a concerted attack was found in a letter written to Congress by Schuyler on the 4th of

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February. At the time of its reception it attracted no notice; but on the 15th of March it was brought before Congress as important business, and the Gates party was present in force to obtain the desired action upon it. Schuyler's letter had been on general subjects concerning his department, but it referred also to two special matters: the dismissal of a medical director in the northern department, and the conduct of Joseph Trumbull of Connecticut, a Commissary-General, toward himself.

When Schuyler first took command at Ticonderoga there was a great deal of sickness among the men, and no provision for physicians or medicines. At his request, Dr. Samuel Stringer of Albany volunteered for the service and supplied a quantity of medicines at his own risk. His patriotic services were beyond question. Schuyler secured his reimbursement for his outlay and caused his appointment as medical director. Stringer continued to render faithful service and was particularly valuable among the sick at Crown Point and Fort George after the disastrous return from Canada. Schuyler had seen his work and believed that he deserved every recognition that his country could bestow. He was, therefore, much surprised and annoyed when a notice of dismissal from his post, without any given reasons, was received from Philadelphia by Dr. Stringer. The physician appealed to him in vain. Who procured the dismissal and the grounds for it do not appear. Schuyler felt

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sincere sympathy for the man who seemed to be treated with undeserved harshness; and under the circumstances his reference to this matter in the letter to Congress does not seem very reprehensible. His words were: "As Dr. Stringer had my recommendation to the office he has sustained, perhaps it was a compliment due to me that I should have been advised of the reasons for his dismissal."

The second sentence in the letter which seemed to the Gates party so offensive related to a New England man, Colonel John Trumbull, whose description of the camp at Crown Point has been quoted. He was on the best terms with Schuyler, and Schuyler had the kindest feelings toward him. But his brother Joseph, Commissary-General, was an outspoken and well-known enemy. The enmity could be borne, but lately it had taken a form particularly galling to a man of Schuyler's sense of honor. On the first of January he had written to Congress: "Last evening I was informed that amongst the letters lately intercepted by the enemy was one from Colonel Trumbull, the Commissary-General, in which he insinuated that I had secreted his brother Colonel John Trumbull's commission as Adjutant-General. If it be true that he has asserted such a thing I shall expect from Congress that justice which is due to me. The commission was never sent; at least never received by me, and if it had been, is there the least probability that I would secrete it, after having recommended Colonel John

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Trumbull to the office as an active, discreet and sensible officer?"

That a Commissary-General in the army should accuse him of secreting a commission issued by Congress seemed to Schuyler to be a matter for Congress to investigate; moreover, the continual attacks of this sort were wearing out his patience. Congress would not assist him by appointing a court of inquiry which might silence the slanders which continually beset him. In this instance he looked to it for a vindication. Having received no reply on this subject for more than a month, he then, in his letter of February 4th, enclosed the accusing letter of Trumbull, and added the following words: "I perceived by some of the resolutions that my letter of the 30th December continued to the 1st of January was received by Congress. I was in hopes some notice would have been taken of the odious suspicion contained in Mr. Commissary Trumbull's intercepted letter to the Hon. W. Williams, Esq. I really feel myself deeply chagrined on the occasion. I am incapable of the meanness he suspects me of, and I confidently expected that Congress would have done me that justice which it was in their power to give and which, I humbly conceive, they ought to have done."

These remarks regarding Dr. Stringer and Commissary Trumbull afforded the substance of the charges which the Gates party made against Schuyler. In a loosely constructed body like the Congress, with

HOSTILE ACTION OF CONGRESS

seldom more than a bare quorum present, a small but determined minority may often carry through a preconcerted measure which a majority of the whole would never have approved. At this time the New York delegation was not present in Philadelphia, and the enemies of Schuyler succeeded in passing the following resolutions, which they felt sure would bring about the desired resignation:—

“RESOLVED, That as Congress proceeded to the dismissal of Doctor Stringer, upon reasons satisfactory to themselves, General Schuyler ought to have known it to be his duty to have acquiesced therein.

“That the suggestion in General Schuyler’s letter to Congress, that it was a compliment due to him to have advised him of the reasons of Dr. Stringer’s dismissal, is highly derogatory to the honor of Congress; and that the President be desired to acquaint General Schuyler that it is expected his letters, for the future, be written in a style more suitable to the dignity of the representative body of these free and independent states, and to his own character as their officer.

“RESOLVED, that it is altogether improper and inconsistent with the dignity of this Congress to interfere in disputes subsisting among the officers of the army; which ought to be settled, unless they can be otherwise accommodated, in a court martial, agreeably to the rules of the army, and that the expression in

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General Schuyler's letter of the 4th of February, "that he confidently expected Congress would have done him that justice, which it was in their power to give, and which he humbly conceives they ought to have done, were, to say the least, ill advised and highly indecent."

Soon after the passage of these resolutions, General Gates was directed to repair immediately to Ticonderoga to take the command there, and to employ under him such of the French officers, as he thought proper; and Major-General St. Clair was ordered to Ticonderoga, there to serve "under General Gates." Such orders virtually if not officially placed Gates at the head of the northern department. He left Philadelphia highly elated at the results of the winter's work.

Schuyler duly received the resolutions of reprimand and soon after heard of Gates's appointment. The resolutions, in their severity, seemed to him so entirely out of proportion to any indiscretion he might have committed in his letter to Congress, and the appointment of Gates to independent command within his own department so unjust and insulting a reflection upon him, that he felt that he must go to Philadelphia to face his accusers and to settle his own future in regard to public employment. If he deserved such treatment his resignation must be given and accepted. If he did not deserve it, the resolutions must be ex-

THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY

punged from the journals of Congress and he must be reinstated in undisputed command of his department. He proceeded at once to Kingston, where the New York convention was in session, and explained his situation to the members. They appointed him a delegate to the Continental Congress, with William Duer, and also directed their other delegates, Philip Livingston and James Duane to go to Philadelphia and take their seats.

When Schuyler arrived in Philadelphia, in April, he found it extremely difficult to ascertain the identity of his opponents. From the members in general he met with a very cordial reception, and those whom he believed to be against him alleged, as he wrote to his secretary, Colonel Varick, "that there were no complaints against me, and that they have never believed in any of the malicious reports propagated to my disadvantage. They have, however, gone too far, and all that stands on their journals injurious to me must be expunged or I quit the service."

A committee was appointed, consisting of one delegate from each State, Messrs. Thornton, Lovell, Ellery, Wolcott, Duer, Elmer, Clymer, Sykes, W. Smith, Page, Burke, Hayward and Brownson. Before this committee the whole story of Schuyler's military command from the beginning was threshed over. When the report was made to Congress on the 22d of May, it was

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“RESOLVED, That Albany, Ticonderoga, Fort Stanwix and their dependencies be henceforward considered as forming the northern department, and that Major-General Schuyler be directed forthwith to proceed to the northern department and to take command there.”

Then Congress withdrew its resolutions of censure by informing him officially that they “now entertain the same favorable sentiments concerning him that they had entertained before that letter (of February 4th) had been received.” At the same time his financial accounts with the Government were examined by the Board of Treasury, which discharged him “of all demands of the United States against him.” A more complete vindication of his official career, and a more mortifying defeat for the Gates party could hardly have been devised.

An honest attempt to replace Schuyler by a man against whom there was no sectional prejudice and who had greater military experience would have deserved respect even from Schuyler’s friends. But that Gates was a small man, an inferior military officer, and a self-seeking schemer, he was himself to show conclusively. He left Philadelphia under orders, which he had sought eagerly and which were perfectly distinct, to take command at Ticonderoga. Every one knew that an invasion from Canada might take place at any time, and consequently that the officer in command at Ticonderoga would have enough to do

GATES AT ALBANY

there in making preparations for it. But Gates arrived in Albany in the middle of April, and in that town, where he had no command, made himself at home. Not a step was taken toward Ticonderoga. The mails to the fort were infrequent and precarious. From Albany he could keep up his campaign in Congress much more conveniently, and there he remained directing the movements and arguments of his friends.

On May 1st Lovell of the New England delegation wrote him: "The affairs to the northeast are in a critical situation, for the State of New York in particular. Disaffection, as you see, is greatly prevalent, and those who profess well to our cause judge and say that there is but one single man who can keep their subjects united against the common enemy, and that *he* stands in our books as commander-in-chief in the northern department; that his presence is absolutely necessary in his home quarters for their immediate succor and service, as well as that of the United States necessarily connected; that if he returns, he is a general without an army or military chest, and 'why is he thus disgraced?' . . . If you are not confined (to Ticonderoga) you entirely destroy the idea of their chief to whom they profess devotion unbounded. How this matter will be untangled, I cannot now exactly determine, but I expect not entirely agreeable to your *sentiments*."

"Why," replied Gates, "when the argument in support of General Schuyler's command was imposed

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upon Congress, did not you, or somebody, say: 'The second post upon this continent next campaign will be at or near Peekskill?' There General Schuyler ought to go and command; that will be the curb in the mouth of the New York Tories and the enemy's army. He will then be near the convention, and in the centre of the colony, have a military chest and all the insignia of office. This command in honor could not be refused without owning there is something more alluring than command to General Schuyler, by fixing him at Albany. By urging this matter home, you would have proved the man. He would have resigned all command, have accepted the government of New York, and been fixed to a station where he must do good, and which could not interfere with, or prevent, any arrangement Congress have made, or may hereafter make. Unhappy State! that has but one man in it who can fix the wavering minds of its inhabitants to the side of freedom! How could you sit patiently and uncontradicted suffer such impertinence to be crammed down your throats? . . . If General Schuyler is solely to possess all power, all the intelligence, and that particular favorite, the military chest, and constantly reside at Albany, I cannot, with any peace of mind, serve at Ticonderoga."

In such style did this great general address his political supporters. He belonged to that type of English soldier who considered all men not born in England and bred in her army as necessarily inferior

CORRESPONDENCE OF GATES

to himself. Washington was no exception and came in for his share of disrespect. Gates took the time from his Philadelphia correspondence to send an aide-de-camp to Washington at Morristown to ask for a supply of tents. Washington replied that his army needed all the tents they had, and suggested that the northern army, being stationary, could be protected in huts. Gates wrote back: "Refusing this army what you have not in your power to bestow, is one thing; but saying this army has not the same necessities as the southern armies, is another. I can assure your Excellency the northward requires tents as much as any service I ever saw." Then to his friend Lovell he insinuated that Washington was actuated by sectional motives: "Either I am exceedingly dull or unreasonably jealous, if I do not discover by the style and tenor of the letters from Morristown how little I have to expect from thence. Generals are so far like parsons they are all for christening their own child first; but let an impartial moderating power decide between us, and do not suffer southern prejudice to weigh heavier in the balance than the northern."

Lovell gave signs of being fatigued by this correspondence, and on the 22d of May brought that to an end, together with Gates's hopes, by informing him that: "Misconception of past resolves and consequent jealousies have produced a definition of the northern department, and General Schuyler is ordered to take command of it." Gates's anger was great

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and freely expressed to all who would listen. Colonel Wilkinson, of his staff, who, like his chief, held the pen of a ready writer, wrote from Ticonderoga: "The manœuvres of Congress really baffle my penetration; by no stretch of ingenuity can I discern the motives of their late conduct; they have injured themselves, they have insulted you, and by so doing have been guilty of the foulest ingratitude. How base, how pitiful, or how little deserving the name is that Public Power which individual consequence can intimidate or bribe to its purpose! It can surely never sustain, unless ashamed of virtue, the just indignation of injured honesty. No, my general, every satisfaction which justice demands, with every submission which pleases vanity, you will, you must, you shall, sooner or later receive."

After all, what had Congress done? It had simply declared that Schuyler's conduct in office had been without reproach and reaffirmed him in his command of the northern department. Gates's appointment to the command of Ticonderoga under Schuyler remained in force. His opportunity to display his military abilities, to be in the forefront of a great campaign, to render distinguished services to the State, was assured. It was common talk that Burgoyne was to lead a great attack upon New York from Canada, that such an attack was imminent. He himself had lately written to Lovell: "Nothing is more certain than that the enemy must first possess that single

CONDUCT OF GATES

rock before they can penetrate the country. It is foolish in the extreme to believe the enemy, this year, can form any attack from the northward but by Ticonderoga." And yet that post of honor, which must bear the brunt of attack, was left to take care of itself during the two months that he spent in Albany writing letters to his political friends in Philadelphia. And now, that the matter was settled, that Schuyler was to remain at the head of the northern department, and that he was to have command of the great fortress at the gateway of the country, what was his obvious duty and interest? Plainly, to repair to his post, to apply all his skill to making it impregnable, and to make a reputation in defending it in the approaching struggle. Such was the course natural to a soldier. Instead he sulked, applied to Schuyler for leave of absence and hastened to Philadelphia. On the 18th of June, Roger Sherman, delegate from Connecticut, informed Congress that General Gates was waiting at the door for admittance. "For what purpose?" inquired William Paca. "To communicate intelligence of importance," replied Sherman. Being admitted, Gates took a seat, and of the ensuing scene a lively description is given by William Duer:—

"The intelligence he communicated was that the Indians were extremely friendly, much delighted with seeing French officers in our service, and other commonplace stuff, which at present I cannot recollect.