

on the men were brought to the verge of starvation. The daring leader pressed on in the hope of gathering supplies from some unguarded French village. Before his return the famishing soldiers had killed and devoured every dog that could be found. Then the brave fellows gnawed the roots of trees and ate their moose-skin moccasins until Arnold's return, when the whole force proceeded to Quebec. Morgan, Greene and Meigs, all three noted leaders of the Revolution, and Aaron Burr, one day to become Vice-President of the United States, were in this company of suffering heroes.

Arnold and his men, climbing to the Plains of Abraham, as Wolfe had done sixteen years previously, offered battle. But the English garrison of Quebec remained in their fortifications awaiting an assault which the Americans were not strong enough to make. Conscious of his weakness, Arnold withdrew his men to Point aux Trembles, twenty miles up the river, and there awaited the approach of Montgomery. When the latter arrived, he assumed command of the whole force, which did not exceed nine hundred effective men. Quebec was defended by greatly superior numbers, well fortified and warmly quartered. For three weeks, with his handful of men, Montgomery besieged the town, and then, relying only on the courageous valor of his men, determined to stake everything on an assault.

It was the last day of December, 1775. Before daybreak the little army was divided into four columns. The first division, under Montgomery, was to pass down the St. Lawrence and attack the Lower Town in the neighborhood of the citadel. The second column, led by Arnold, was to sweep around the city to the north, attack by way of the St. Charles, and join Montgomery in order to storm the Prescott Gate. The other two divisions were to remain in the rear of the Upper Town, making feigned attacks to draw the attention of the garrison. Montgomery's column reached the point from which the charge was to begin. A battery lay just before, and it was thought that the gunners had not discovered the assailants. "Men of New York," said the brave Montgomery, "you will not fear to follow where your general leads! Forward!" There were masses of ice and clouds of blinding snow, and broken ground and the cold gray light of morning. As the Americans were rushing forward, all of a sudden the battery burst forth with a storm of grape-shot. At the first discharge Montgomery and both of his aids fell dead. The column was shattered. The men were heartbroken at the death of their beloved general. They staggered a moment, then fell back, and returned to Wolfe's Cove, above the city.

Arnold, ignorant of what had happened, fought his way into the

Lower Town on the north. While leading the charge he was severely wounded and borne to the rear. Captain Morgan, who succeeded him, led his brave band farther and farther along the narrow and dangerous streets until he was overwhelmed and compelled to surrender. Arnold retired with his broken remnant to a point three miles above the city. Reinforcements soon began to arrive; but the smallpox broke out in the camp, and active operations could not be resumed. As soon as the ice disappeared from the St. Lawrence, Quebec was strengthened by the arrival of fresh troops from England. Governor Carleton now began offensive movements; the Americans fell back from post to post, until, by the middle of the following June, Canada was entirely evacuated.

The worst calamity of the whole campaign was the death of General Richard Montgomery. He was one of the noblest of the many noble men who gave their lives in the cause of American liberty. Born of an illustrious Irish family, he became a soldier in his boyhood. He had shared the toils and the triumph of Wolfe. To the enthusiasm of a warm and affectionate nature he joined the highest order of military talents and the virtues of an exalted character. Even in England his death was mentioned with sorrow. New York, his adopted State, claimed his body, brought his remains to her own metropolis and buried them with tears. To after times the Congress of the nation transmitted his fame by erecting a noble monument.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

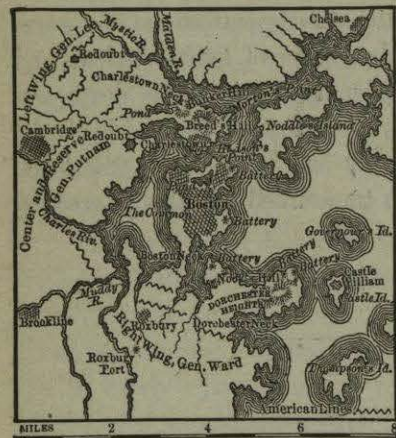
THE WORK OF '76.

AT last came the king's answer to the appeal of Congress. It was such an answer as George III. and his ministers always made to the petitioners for human rights. The colonies were insulted and spurned; their petition was treated with contempt. The king of England did not know any such a body as the Continental Congress. The first thing necessary was to disband the army and to submit without conditions. Then the monarch would settle all questions with each colony separately. By this offensive and tyrannical answer the day of independence was brought nearer.

Meanwhile, General Howe had succeeded Gage in command of the

British troops in Boston. All winter long the city was besieged by Washington. By the middle of February the American army had increased to fourteen thousand men. The country became restless; and Congress urged the commander-in-chief to press the enemy with greater vigor. Washington, knowing the insufficiency of his supplies, and fearing the consequences of rashness more than the charge of inactivity, narrowed his lines, strengthened his works, and waited his opportunity. By the first day of spring, 1776, he felt himself strong enough to risk an assault; the officers of his staff thought otherwise, and a different plan was adopted.

On the north, Boston was commanded by the peninsula of Charlestown; on the south, by Dorchester Heights. Since the battle of Bunker Hill the former position had been held by the British; the latter was, as yet, unoccupied. Washington now resolved to take advantage of the



SIEGE OF BOSTON, 1776.

enemy's oversight, to seize the Heights and drive Howe out of Boston. A strong entrenching party was prepared and put under command of General Thomas. For two days the attention of the British was drawn by a constant fire from the American batteries. Then, on the night of the 4th of March, the detachment set out under cover of the darkness, passed over Dorchester Neck, and reached the Heights unperceived. Through the night the Americans worked with an energy rarely equaled. The British, distracted with the cannonade, noticed nothing unusual; and when morning dawned, they could hardly trust their senses. There was a line of formidable entrenchments frowning upon the city; cannon were mounted, and the Americans in force. Howe saw at a glance that he must immediately carry the threatening redoubts or himself abandon Boston. Enraged at being outgeneraled, he ordered Lord Percy to select a column of two thousand four hundred men and storm the American works before nightfall.

Percy put his men in order and proceeded as far as Castle Island, intending to make the assault in the afternoon. Washington visited the trenches and exhorted his men. It was the anniversary of the Boston Massacre, and the soldiers were eager to avenge the deaths of their coun-

trymen. A battle was momentarily expected; but while Percy delayed, a violent storm arose and rendered the harbor impassable. It continued to blow for a whole day, and the attack could not be made. Before the following morning the Americans had so strengthened and extended their fortifications that all thoughts of an assault were abandoned. Howe found himself reduced to the humiliating extremity of giving up the capital of New England to the rebels.

After some days there was an informal agreement between Washington and the British general that the latter should be allowed to retire from Boston unmolested on condition that the city should not be burned. On the 17th of March the arrangement was consummated, and the whole British army went on board the fleet and sailed out of the harbor. Nearly fifteen hundred loyalists, fearing the vengeance of the patriots, left their homes and fortunes to escape with Howe. The American advance at once entered the city. On the 20th, Washington made a formal entry at the head of the triumphant army. The desolated town, escaping from the calamities of a ten months' siege, broke forth in exultation. The exiled patriots returned by thousands to their homes. The country was wild with delight. From all quarters came votes of thanks and messages of encouragement. Congress ordered a gold medal to be struck in honor of Washington, victorious over an enemy "for the first time put to flight."

The next care of the commander-in-chief was to strengthen the defences of Boston. That done, he repaired with the main division of the army to New York. It was not known to what part of the coast Howe would direct his course; and Washington feared that his antagonist might make a sudden descent in the neighborhood of Long Island. General Lee pressed forward with the Connecticut militia, and reached New York just in time to baffle an attempt of Sir Henry Clinton, whose fleet arrived off Sandy Hook and threatened the city. Clinton next sailed southward, and on the 3d of May was joined by Sir Peter Parker, in command of another fleet, and Lord Cornwallis with two thousand five hundred men. The force was deemed sufficient for any enterprise, and it was determined to capture Charleston.

In the mean time, General Lee had reached the South, and was watching the movements of Clinton. The Carolinians rose in arms and flocked to Charleston. The city was fortified; and a fort, which commanded the entrance to the harbor, was built on Sullivan's Island. On the 4th of June the British squadron came in sight, and a strong detachment was landed on Long Island, a short distance east of Fort Sullivan. There was a delay until the 28th of the month; then the British fleet began a furious bombardment of the fortress, which was commanded by

Colonel Moultrie. Three men-of-war, attempting to pass the fort, were stranded. Clinton ordered a storming-party to wade the channel between Long Island and Sullivan's Island and carry the works by assault; but the water was too deep to be forded, and Colonel Thompson, who was stationed with a company of riflemen on the opposite bank, drove the British back in confusion. For eight hours the vessels of the fleet poured a tempest of balls upon the fort; but the walls, built of the spongy palmetto, were little injured. The four hundred militiamen who composed the garrison fought like veterans. The republican flag was shot away and thrown outside of the parapet; Sergeant Jasper leaped down from the wall, recovered the flag and set it in its place again. The fire from the fleet was returned with great spirit; and as evening drew on the British were obliged to retire with a loss of more than two hundred men. Lord Campbell, the royal governor of South Carolina, was killed, and Admiral Parker was severely wounded. The loss of the garrison amounted in killed and wounded to thirty-two. As soon as the British could repair their shattered fleet they abandoned the siege and set sail for New York. In honor of its brave defender the fort on Sullivan's Island was named Fort Moultrie.

During the summer Washington's forces were augmented to about twenty-seven thousand men; but the terms of enlistment were constantly expiring; sickness prevailed in the camp; and the effective force was but little more than half as great as the aggregate. On the other hand, Great Britain was making the vastest preparations. By a treaty with some of the petty German States, seventeen thousand Hessian mercenaries were hired to fight against America. George III. was going to quell his revolted provinces by turning loose upon them a brutal foreign soldiery. Twenty-five thousand additional English troops were levied; an immense squadron was fitted out to aid in the reduction of the colonies, and a million dollars were voted for the extraordinary expenses of the war department.

By these measures the Americans were greatly exasperated. Until now it had been hoped that the difficulty with the mother country could be satisfactorily adjusted without breaking allegiance to the British Crown. The colonists had constantly claimed to be loyal subjects of Great Britain, demanding only the rights and liberties of Englishmen. Now the case seemed hopeless; and the sentiment of disloyalty spread with alarming rapidity. The people urged the general assemblies, and the general assemblies urged Congress, to a more decided assertion of sovereignty. The legislature of Virginia led the way by advising in outspoken terms a declaration of independence. Congress responded by recommending all

the colonies to adopt such governments as might best conduce to the happiness and safety of the people. This action was taken early in May, and in the course of the following month nearly all the provinces complied with the recommendation.

Finally, on the 7th of June, 1776, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia offered a resolution in Congress declaring that the United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown; and that all political connection between them and Great Britain is, and ought to be, dissolved. A long and exciting debate ensued. The sentiment of independence gained ground; but there was still strong opposition to the movement. After some days the final consideration of Lee's resolution was postponed until the 1st of July. On the 11th of June a committee, consisting of five members, was appointed to prepare a more elaborate and formal declaration. Mr. Lee had been called home by sickness; and his colleague, Thomas Jefferson, was accordingly made chairman of the committee. The other members were John Adams of Massachusetts, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Roger Sherman of Connecticut and Robert R. Livingston of New York. The special work of preparing the paper was allotted to Jefferson and Adams; the latter deferred to the former, whose vigorous style of writing specially fitted him for the task. The great document was accordingly produced in Jefferson's hand, with a few interlinings by Adams and Franklin.

On the 1st of July, Lee's resolution was taken up, and at the same time the committee's report was laid before Congress. On the next day the original resolution was adopted. During the 3d, the formal declaration was debated with great spirit, and it became evident that the work of the committee would be accepted. The discussion was resumed on the morning of the 4th, and at two o'clock on the afternoon of that memorable day the DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE was adopted by a unanimous vote.

All day long the old bellman of the State House had stood in the steeple ready to sound the note of freedom to the city and the nation. The hours went by; the gray-haired veteran in the belfry grew discouraged, and began to say: "They will never do it—they will never do it." Just then the lad who had been stationed below ran out and exclaimed at the top of his voice, "Ring! ring!" And the aged patriot did ring as he had never rung before. The multitudes that thronged the streets caught the signal and answered with shouts of exultation. Swift couriers bore the glad news throughout the land. Everywhere the declaration was received with enthusiastic applause. At Philadelphia the king's arms were torn down

from the court-house and burned in the street. At Williamsburg, Charleston and Savannah there were bonfires and illuminations. At Boston the declaration was read in Faneuil Hall, while the cannon from Fort Hill and Dorchester shook the city of the Puritans. At New York the populace pulled down the leaden statue of George III. and cast it into bullets. Washington received the message with joy, and ordered the declaration to be read at the head of each brigade. Former suffering and future peril were alike forgotten in the general rejoicing.

The leading principles of the Declaration of Independence are these: That all men are created equal; that all have a natural right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that human governments are instituted for the sole purpose of securing the welfare of the people; that the people have a natural right to alter their government whenever it becomes destructive of liberty; that the government of George III. had become destructive of liberty; that the despotism of the king and his ministers could be shown by a long list of indisputable proofs—and the proofs are given; that time and again the colonies had humbly petitioned for a redress of grievances; that all their petitions had been spurned with derision and contempt; that the king's irrational tyranny over his American subjects was no longer endurable; that an appeal to the sword is preferable to slavery; and that, therefore, the United Colonies of America are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States. To the support of this sublime declaration of principles the members of the Continental Congress mutually pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor.

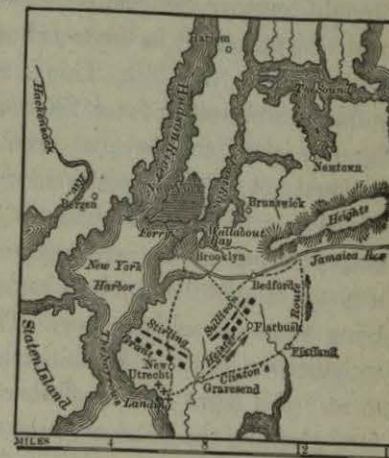
On leaving Boston, General Howe sailed to Halifax. There he remained until the middle of June, when he embarked his forces and set sail for Sandy Hook. Early in July he landed a force of nine thousand men on Staten Island. Thither Clinton came from the unsuccessful siege of Charleston, and Admiral Howe, brother of General Howe, from England. The whole British force, now gathered in the vicinity of New York, amounted to fully thirty thousand men. Nearly half of them were the hated Hessians whom the king of Great Britain had hired at thirty-six dollars a head. Washington's army was inferior in numbers, poorly equipped and imperfectly disciplined.

There was some delay in military operations; for Lord Howe, the admiral, had been instructed to try conciliatory measures with the Americans. First, he sent to the American camp an officer with a despatch directed to George Washington, *Esquire*. Of course Washington refused to receive a communication which did not recognize his official position. In a short time Howe sent another message, addressed to George Wash-

ington, etc., etc., etc.; and the bearer, who was Howe's adjutant-general, insisted that *and-so-forth* might be translated *General of the American Army*. Washington was the last man in the world to be caught with a subterfuge; and the adjutant was sent away. It was already well known that Howe's authority extended only to granting pardons, and to unessential matters about which the Americans were no longer concerned. Washington therefore replied that since no offence had been committed no pardon was required; that the colonies were now independent, and would defend themselves against all aggression.

Baffled in his efforts, Lord Howe and his brother determined to begin hostilities. On the 22d of August the British, to the number of ten thousand, landed on the south-western coast of Long Island, near the village of New Utrecht. The Americans, about eight thousand strong, commanded by Generals Sullivan and Stirling, were posted in the vicinity of Brooklyn. The advance of the British was planned with great skill. From Gravesend, where Howe's forces were landed, there were three roads to Brooklyn; the British army was accordingly arranged in three divisions. The first column, commanded by General Grant, was to advance by way of Utrecht and the Narrows. The second division, composed of the Hessians, under command of General Heister, was to proceed to Flatbush, and thence to Bedford and Brooklyn. The third and strongest column, led by Clinton and Cornwallis, was to make a circuit to the right as far as Flatland, reach the Jamaica road, and pass by way of Bedford to the rear of the American left wing. All of the movements were executed with perfect ease and fatal precision.

The advance from Gravesend began on the morning of the 27th of August. Grant's division proceeded as far as the hill now embraced in Greenwood Cemetery, where he met General Stirling with fifteen hundred men; and the battle at once began. But in this part of the field there was no decisive result. Heister, in command of the British centre, advanced beyond Flatbush, and engaged the main body of the Americans, under General Sullivan. Here the battle began with a brisk cannonade, in which the Hessians gained little or no ground until Sullivan was suddenly



BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND, 1776.

alarmed by the noise of battle on his left and rear, and the battalions of Clinton came rushing on the field.

For General Putnam, who had come over and taken command of the entire force of the island, had, neglectful of Washington's orders, failed to guard the passes on the left of the American army. During the previous night Clinton had occupied the heights above the Jamaica road, and now his force came down, unopposed and unperceived, by way of Bedford. Sullivan found himself surrounded, cut off, hemmed in between the two divisions of Clinton and Heister. From that moment it was only a question as to what part of the army could be saved from destruction. The men fought desperately, and many broke through the closing lines of the British. The rest were scattered, killed or taken prisoners.

Cornwallis's division pressed on to cut off the retreat of Stirling. At first the British were repulsed, and Stirling began his retreat toward Brooklyn. At Gowanus Creek a number of his men were drowned and many others captured; the rest reached the American lines in safety. Before the battle was ended Washington arrived on the field, and his soul was wrung with anguish at the sight. At first his army seemed ruined; but his resolute and tranquil spirit rose above the disasters of the battle. Generals Stirling, Sullivan and Woodhull were all prisoners in the hands of the enemy. Nearly a thousand patriot soldiers were killed, wounded or missing. It seemed an easy thing for Clinton and Howe to press on and capture all the rest. Yet in a few hours Washington brought together his shattered forces, reorganized his brigades and stood ready for an assault in the trenches back of Brooklyn.

During the 28th, Howe, who was a sluggish, sensual man, ate pudding and waited for a fitter day. On the 29th there was a heavy fog over island and bay and river. Washington, clearly perceiving that he could not hold his position, and that his army was in great peril, resolved to withdraw to New York. The enterprise was extremely hazardous, requiring secrecy, courage and despatch. By eight o'clock on that memorable night every boat and transport that could be obtained was lying at the Brooklyn ferry. There, under cover of the darkness, the embarkation began. Washington personally superintended every movement. All night with muffled oars the boatmen rowed silently back and forth, bearing the patriots to the northern side of the channel. At daylight on the following morning, just as the last boatload was leaving the wharf, the movement was discovered by the British. They rushed into the American entrenchments, and found nothing there except a few worthless guns. After a severe battle which had cost him nearly four hundred men, Howe had gained possession of Long Island—and nothing more.

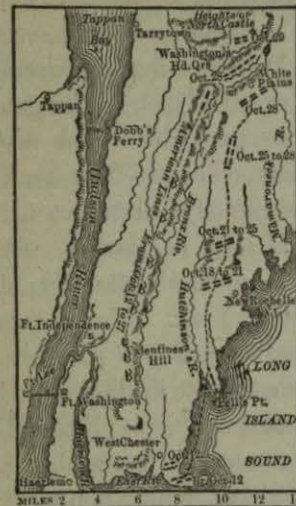
General Greene, who was a competent judge, declared that Washington's retreat was the most masterly he ever read or heard of.

The defeat on Long Island was very disastrous to the American cause. The army was dispirited. As fast as their terms of enlistment expired the troops returned to their homes. Desertions became alarmingly frequent; and it was only by constant exertion that Washington kept his army from disbanding. To add to the peril, the British fleet doubled Long Island and anchored within cannon-shot of New York. Washington, knowing himself unable to defend the city, called a council of war, and it was determined to retire to the Heights of Harlem. On the 15th of September the British landed in force on the east side of Manhattan Island, about three miles above New York. Thence they extended their lines across the island to the Hudson, and took possession of the city. It was in this juncture of affairs that Howe made overtures of peace to Congress. General Sullivan was paroled and sent to Philadelphia as Howe's agent; but Congress was in no mood to be conciliated. Franklin, on behalf of that body, wrote Howe a letter, telling him many unpalatable truths about what might henceforth be expected from the American colonies.

On the next day after the British gained possession of New York, there was a skirmish between the advance parties of the two armies north of the city. The Americans gained a decided advantage, and the British were driven back with a loss of a hundred men. On the American side the loss included Colonel Knowlton and Major Leitch—two valuable officers—and nearly fifty privates. On the night of the 20th of September a fire broke out in New York and destroyed nearly five hundred buildings. On the 16th of October, while the Americans were still in their entrenchments above the city, Howe embarked his forces, passed into Long Island Sound and landed in the vicinity of Westchester. The object was to get upon the American left flank and cut off communications with the Eastern States. Washington, ever on the alert, detected the movement, put his army in motion and faced the British east of Harlem River. For some days the two generals manœuvred, and on the 28th a battle was brought on at White Plains. Howe began the engagement with a furious cannonade, which was answered with spirit. The Americans were driven from one important position, but immediately re-entrenched themselves in another. Night came on; Howe waited for reinforcements, and Washington withdrew to the heights of North Castle. Howe remained for a few days at White Plains, and then returned to New York.

Washington, apprehending that the British would now proceed

against Philadelphia, crossed to the west bank of the Hudson and took post with General Greene at Fort Lee. Four thousand men were left at



SCENE OF OPERATIONS ABOUT
NEW YORK, 1776.

North Castle under command of General Lee. Fort Washington, on Manhattan Island, five miles north of the city, was defended by three thousand men under Colonel Magaw. This fort was a place of great natural and artificial strength. The skill of its construction had attracted the attention of Washington and led to an acquaintance with the engineer, who from that time forth, through the stormy vicissitudes of nearly a quarter of a century, enjoyed the unclouded confidence of his chief; the engineer was ALEXANDER HAMILTON, then a stripling of but twenty years of age.

On the 16th of November the British attacked Fort Washington in overwhelming force. The garrison made a stubborn defence.

More than five hundred of the assailants were killed or wounded. But valor could not prevail against superior numbers, and Magaw, after losing a hundred and fifty men, was obliged to capitulate. The garrison, numbering more than two thousand, were made prisoners of war and crowded into the foul jails of New York. Two days after the surrender, Cornwallis crossed the Hudson with a body of six thousand men and marched against Fort Lee. Seeing that a defence would only end in worse disaster, Washington hastily withdrew across the Hackensack. All the baggage and military stores collected in Fort Lee fell into the hands of the British, who at once pressed forward after the retreating Americans. Washington with his army, now reduced to three thousand men, crossed the Passaic to Newark; but Cornwallis and Knypphausen came hard after the fugitives. The patriots retreated to Elizabethtown, thence to New Brunswick, thence to Princeton, and finally to Trenton on the Delaware. The British were all the time in close pursuit, and the music of their bands was frequently heard by the rearguard of the American army. Nothing but the consummate skill of Washington saved the remnant of his forces from destruction. Despair seemed settling on the country like a pall.

On the 8th of December, Washington crossed the Delaware. The British essayed to do the same, but the American commander had secreted or destroyed every boat within seventy miles. In order to effect his passage, Cornwallis must build a bridge or wait for the freezing of the

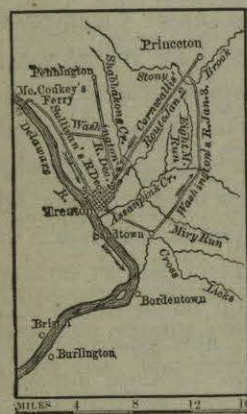
river. The latter course was chosen; and the British army was stationed in detachments in various towns and villages east of the Delaware. Trenton was held by a body of nearly two thousand Hessians under Colonel Rahl. It was seen that as soon as the river should be frozen the British would march unopposed into Philadelphia. Congress accordingly adjourned to Baltimore; and there, on the 20th of the month, a resolution was adopted arming Washington with dictatorial powers to direct all the operations of the war.

Meanwhile, the British fleet under command of Admiral Parker had left New York for Narragansett Bay. On the same day that Washington crossed the Delaware the islands of Rhode Island, Prudence and Conanicut were taken; and the American squadron under Commander Hopkins was blockaded in Blackstone River. During his retreat across New Jersey, Washington had sent repeated despatches to General Lee, in command of the detachment at North Castle, to join the main army as soon as possible. Lee was a proud, insubordinate man, and virtually disobeyed his orders. Marching leisurely into New Jersey, he reached Morristown. Here he tarried, and took up his quarters at an inn at Basking Ridge. On the 13th of December, a squad of British cavalry dashed up to the tavern, seized Lee and hurried him off to New York. General Sullivan, who had recently been exchanged, now took command of Lee's division, and hastened to join Washington. Fifteen hundred volunteers from Philadelphia and vicinity were added, making the entire American force a little more than six thousand.

The tide of misfortune turned at last. Washington saw in the disposition of the British forces an opportunity to strike a blow for his disheartened country. The leaders of the enemy were off their guard. They believed that the war was ended. Cornwallis obtained leave of absence, left New Jersey under command of Grant, and made preparations to return to England. The Hessians on the east side of the river were spread out from Trenton to Burlington. Washington conceived the bold design of crossing the Delaware and striking the detachment at Trenton before a concentration of the enemy's forces could be effected. The American army was accordingly arranged in three divisions. The first, under General Cadwallader, was to cross the river at Bristol and attack the British at Burlington. General Ewing with his brigade was to pass over a little below Trenton for the purpose of intercepting the retreat. Washington himself, with Greene and Sullivan and twenty-four hundred men, was to cross nine miles above Trenton, march down the river and assault the town. The movement was planned with the utmost secrecy—the preparations made with prudence and care. Christmas night was

selected as the time; for it was known that the Hessians would spend the day in drinking and carousals.

About the 20th of the month, the weather became very cold, and by the evening of the 25th the Delaware was filled with floating ice. Ewing and Cadwallader were both baffled in their efforts to cross the river. Washington's division succeeded in getting over, but the passage was delayed till three o'clock in the morning. All hope of reaching Trenton before daybreak was at an end; but Washington, believing that the Hessians would sleep late after their revels, divided his army into two columns and pressed forward. One division, led by Sullivan, passed



BATTLE OF TRENTON AND PRINCETON, 1776-7.

down the river to attack the town on the west; the other, commanded by Washington and Greene, made a circuit to the Princeton road. The movement was entirely successful. At eight o'clock in the morning the American columns came rushing into the village from both directions. The astonished Hessians sprang from their quarters and attempted to form in line. At the first onset Colonel Rahl was mortally wounded. Forty or fifty others fell before the volleys of the patriots. For a few minutes there was confusion, and then a cry for quarter. Nearly a thousand of the dreaded Hessians threw down their arms and begged for mercy. At the first alarm about six hundred light horse and infantry had escaped toward Bordentown. All the rest were made prisoners of war. Before nightfall Washington, with his victorious men and the whole body of captives, was safe on the other side of the Delaware.

The battle of Trenton roused the nation from despondency. Confidence in the commander and hope in the ultimate success of the American cause were everywhere revived. The militia from the neighboring provinces flocked to the general's standard; and fourteen hundred soldiers, whose term of enlistment now expired, cheerfully re-entered the service. It was at this time that Robert Morris of Philadelphia, the great financier of the Revolution, came forward with his princely fortune to the support of his distressed country. As to Cornwallis, he found it necessary to postpone his visit to England and hasten back to New Jersey.

Three days after his victory, Washington again crossed the Delaware and took post at Trenton. Here all the American detachments in the vicinity were ordered to assemble. To General Heath, in command of the New England militia stationed at Peekskill, on the Hudson, Wash-

ington sent orders to move into New Jersey. The British fell back from their outposts on the Delaware and concentrated in great force at Princeton. Cornwallis took command in person, and resolved to attack and overwhelm Washington at Trenton. So closed the year. Ten days previously, Howe only waited for the freezing of the Delaware before taking up his quarters in Philadelphia. Now it was a question whether he would be able to hold a single town in New Jersey.

CHAPTER XL.

OPERATIONS OF '77.

ON the 1st of January, 1777, Washington's army at Trenton numbered about five thousand men. On the next day Cornwallis approached from Princeton with greatly superior forces. The British were exasperated and the Americans resolute. *During the afternoon there was severe and constant skirmishing in the fields and along the roads to the east and north of Trenton. As the columns of the enemy pressed on, Washington abandoned the village and took up a stronger position on the south side of Assanpink Creek. The British, attempting to force a passage, were driven back; it was already sunset, and Cornwallis deferred the attack till the morrow.

2. Washington's position was critical in the extreme. To attempt to recross the Delaware was hazardous. To retreat in any direction was to lose all that he had gained by his recent victory. To be beaten in battle was utter ruin. In the great emergency he called a council of war and announced his determination to leave the camp by night, make a circuit to the east, pass the British left flank and strike the detachment at Princeton before his antagonist could discover or impede the movement. Orders were immediately issued for the removal of the baggage to Burlington. In order to deceive the enemy, the camp-fires along the Assanpink were brightly kindled and a guard left to keep them burning through the night. Then the army was put in motion by the circuitous route to Princeton. Everything was done in silence, and the British sentries walked their beats until the morning light showed them a deserted camp. Just then the roar of the American cannon, thirteen miles away, gave Cornwallis notice of how he had been outgeneraled.

At sunrise Washington was entering Princeton. At the same mo-