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BENARES.

THE city of Benares stands on the left bank of the Ganges, at a part where the river forms a fine sweeping curve of nearly four miles in length. The bank on which the city is situated is the concave side of the river, and is considerably higher than the opposing shore; so that if the town is viewed from a position in the upper part of it, from the breadth of the Ganges at this place, and the lowness of the opposite side, it has the appearance of standing on the margin of a beautifully formed bay.

Benares stands on a spot held peculiarly sacred by the Hindoos, and it has long been considered as the head quarters of brahminical learning.

The edifice, with the high minarets so conspicuous in the annexed sketch, was built by the Mohammedan emperor, Aurungzebe, it is said with the intention of humbling the pride of the Hindoos, as not only possessing a very elevated station in the city, but being also erected on the site of a Hindoo temple, removed on purpose to make room for the Mussulman mosque.

The immense flight of steps called the Ghauts of Benares, form a great ornament to the river face of the city. Various Christian missionaries are now laboring in this city.

closes round, and renders our ignorance more manifest. We see a wonderfully fabricated creature struggling from the cradle of its being, just perfected by the elaboration of months or years, and decorated with a vest of glorious splendor; it spreads its wings to the light of heaven, and becomes the next moment, perhaps, with all its marvellous construction, instinct and splendor, the prey of some wandering bird! and human wisdom and conjecture are humbled to the dust. That these events are ordinations of supreme intelligence, for wise and good purposes, we are convinced. But we are blind beyond thought, as to secondary causes; and admiration, that pure source of intellectual pleasure, is almost alone permitted to us. If we attempt to proceed beyond this, we are generally lost in the mystery with which the divine Architect has thought fit to surround his works; and perhaps our very aspirations after knowledge increase in us a sense of our ignorance: every deep investigator into the works of nature can scarcely possess other than an humble mind.—
Journal of a Naturalist.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.**WILLIAM FLOYD.**

William Floyd, who was the first delegate from New-York that signed the Declaration of Independence, was born on Long Island, on the 17th of December, 1734. His father was Nicoll Floyd, an opulent and respectable landholder, whose ancestors came to America from Wales, about the year 1680, and settled on Long Island. The father of William died while his son was young, and left him heir to a large estate.

The early education of young Floyd, by no means corresponded to the wealth and ability of his father. His studies were limited to a few of the useful branches of knowledge, and these were left unfinished, in consequence of the death of that gentleman. The native powers of Floyd were, however, respectable, and his house being the resort of an extensive circle of connexions and acquaint-

ance, which included many intelligent and distinguished families, his mind, by the intercourse which he thus enjoyed with those who were enlightened and improved, became stored with rich and varied knowledge. His wealth enabled him to practise a generous hospitality, and few enjoyed the society of friends with more pleasure.

At an early period in the controversy between Great Britain and the colonies, the feelings of Mr. Floyd were strongly enlisted in the cause of the latter. He was a friend to the people; and, with zeal and ardor, entered into every measure which seemed calculated to insure to them their just rights. These sentiments on his part, excited a reciprocal confidence on the part of the people, and led to his appointment as a delegate from New-York to the first continental congress, which met in Philadelphia on the 5th of September, 1774. In the measures adopted by that body, so justly eulogized by the advocates of freedom, from that day to the present, Mr. Floyd most heartily concurred.

In the following year, he was again elected a delegate to congress, and continued a member of that body, until after the Declaration of American Independence. On that occasion, he assisted in dissolving the political bonds which had united the colonies to the British government; and in consequence of which, they had suffered numberless oppressions for years. Into other measures of congress, Mr. Floyd entered with zeal. He served on numerous important committees, and by his fidelity rendered essential service to the patriotic cause.

It was the lot of not a few, while thus devoted to the public good, to experience the destructive effects of the war upon their property, or the serious inconveniences arising from it in relation to their families. In both these respects, Mr. Floyd suffered severely. While at Philadelphia, attending upon congress, the American troops evacuated Long Island, which was taken possession of by the British army. On this latter event, the family of Mr. Floyd were obliged to flee for safety to Connecticut. His house was occupied by a company of horsemen, which made it the place of their rendezvous during the remain-

der of the war. Thus, for nearly seven years, Mr. Floyd and his family were refugees from their habitation, nor did he, during this long period, derive any benefit from his landed estate.

In the year 1777, General Floyd, (we give him this military appellation, from the circumstance of his having some time before been appointed to the command of the militia on Long Island) was appointed a senator of the State of New-York, under the new constitution. In this body, he assisted to organize the government, and to accommodate the code of laws to the changes which had recently been effected in the political condition of the State.

In October, 1778, he was again elected to represent the State of New-York in the continental congress. From this time, until the expiration of the first congress, under the federal constitution, General Floyd was either a member of the national assembly, or a member of the Senate of New-York. In this latter body, he maintained a distinguished rank, and was often called to preside over its deliberations, when the lieutenant governor left the chair.

In 1784, he purchased an uninhabited tract of land upon the Mohawk River. To the clearing and subduing of this tract, he devoted the leisure of several successive summers. Under his skilful management, and persevering labors, a considerable portion of the tract was converted into a well cultivated farm; and hither, in 1803, he removed his residence. Although, at this time, he was advanced in life, his bodily strength and activity were much greater than often pertain to men of fewer years. He enjoyed unusual health, until a year or two before his death. The faculties of his mind continued unimpaired to the last. A little previous to his death, he appeared to be affected with a general debility, which continuing to increase, the lamp of life was at length extinguished. This event occurred on the 4th of August, 1821, and when he had attained to the extraordinary age of eighty-seven years.

In his person, General Floyd was of a middle stature. He possessed a natural dignity, which seldom failed to impress those in whose company he was thrown. He

appeared to enjoy the pleasures of private life, yet in his manners he was less familiar, and in his disposition less affable, than most men. Few men, however, were more respected. He was eminently a practical man. The projects to which he gave his sanction, or which he attempted, were those which judgment could approve. When his purposes were once formed, he seldom found reason to alter them. His firmness and resolution were not often equalled.

In his political character, there was much to admire. He was uniform and independent. He manifested great candor and sincerity towards those from whom he happened to differ; and such was his well known integrity, that his motives were rarely, if ever, impeached. He seldom took part in the public discussion of a subject, nor was he dependent upon others for the opinions which he adopted. His views were his own, and his opinions the result of reason and reflection. If the public estimation of a man be a just criterion by which to judge of him, General Floyd was excelled by few of his contemporaries, since, for more than fifty years he was honored with offices of trust and responsibility by his fellow citizens.

THE FLOATING GARDENS OF CASHMERE.

The city of Cashmere, being the capital of the province of that name in Asia, is situated in the midst of numerous lakes, connected with each other, and with the River Vedusta, by canals, separated by narrow lines and insulated plots of ground. Upon these lakes are floating gardens, cut off generally from the body of the lake by a belt of reeds; the cultivation of which is not only very singular, but highly profitable, and worthy of imitation in many parts of Europe as a resource for raising food for man. The second number of the 'Journal of the Geographical Society' contains a notice of the Natural Productions and Agriculture of Cashmere, from which the following account is compiled:—