

MILITARY JOURNAL

DURING THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

From 1775 to 1783,

DESCRIBING INTERESTING EVENTS AND TRANSACTIONS OF THE WAR,
WITH NUMEROUS

HISTORICAL FACTS AND ANECDOTES.

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT.



TO WHICH IS ADDED

AN APPENDIX.

CONTAINING

Biographical Sketches

OF

SEVERAL GENERAL OFFICERS.



BY JAMES THACHER, M. D.
LATE SURGEON IN THE AMERICAN ARMY.



'As Americans we had with delight any attempt to rescue from oblivion the
actions of those whose names we have been taught to revere.'



BOSTON :

PUBLISHED BY RICHARDSON AND LORD.

.....

J. H. A. Frost, printer.
1823.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, to wit:

DISTRICT CLERK'S OFFICE.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the seventeenth day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-three and in the forty-seventh year of the Independence of the United States of America, *Richardson & Lord*, of the said District, have deposited in this office, the title of a book the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

"A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783, describing Interesting Events and Transactions of this period, with numerous Historical Facts and Anecdotes, from the original Manuscript. To which is added, an Appendix, containing Biographical Sketches of several General Officers. By James Thacher, M. D. late Surgeon in the American army." "As Americans we had with delight any attempt to rescue from oblivion the words or actions of those whose names we have been taught to revere."

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies, during the times therein mentioned," and also to an Act entitled, "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, An Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the Arts of Designing, Engraving and Etching Historical and other Prints."

JOHN W. DAVIS,

Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

DEDICATION.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN BROOKS, ESQUIRE.

Governor of Massachusetts.

It is with peculiar felicity that your Excellency is recognized as one among the few survivors of that heroic band, who have been crowned with military honors for glorious achievements at an era when our republic was in its infancy, and in peril for its existence. This production, though aspiring not to the dignified title of history, may revive in your recollection scenes and events of the deepest interest, in which you nobly participated, and may afford to the rising generation lessons of instruction and motives for gratitude to their progenitors, when we shall be at rest. Long may those public virtues and that philanthropy, which are so eminently your characteristics, continue to cement the love and gratitude of the people, and may the benedictions of Heaven be your final reward. With sentiments of profound veneration for the patriotic warrior and statesman, this work is dedicated,

By your Excellency's obedient,
and very humble servant,

JAMES THACHER.

Plymouth, January 1st, 1823.

INTRODUCTION.

It is through your earnest solicitations, my dear friends, that I commit to public inspection the crude fragments, recorded in my Military Journal, kept during the American Revolutionary War. The subordinate station which I sustained did not permit access to the great source from which all important events derived their origin; nor was I made acquainted with the views and motives of action. The transactions and occurrences which I shall relate, though of minor import and penned for temporary amusement, are nevertheless of a nature too deeply interesting to be consigned to oblivion. No circumstance pertaining to our country's emancipation, but should be embalmed in the memory of our children and transmitted to the latest posterity, as among the most interesting transactions recorded in the annals of man. When we contemplate the vastly extended consequences of our revolution, it will be conceded that every incident respecting its rise and progress, and the renowned patriots and heroes by whom it was

achieved, is well worthy of perpetual remembrance. With these are associated the primary principles of the rights of man, which so successfully prevailed at the period of our country's infancy. Those *principles*, which are the great spring of action in the bosom of the honest patriot, spurn the power and paralyze the hearts of tyrants. The contents of these sheets refer more to details of military manœuvres and the internal police of camps, than to projects and events which decide the fate of nations; they may however, afford amusement to the inquisitive mind, and to the rising generation, precepts not altogether destitute of importance and useful instruction. They will disclose some interesting particulars, not generally known, and may serve to augment the stock of information developing the fatal policy of the British government, as displayed on the theatre of her American colonies. This production may moreover subserve the purpose of an epitomy of the history of the revolutionary contest, and abridge in some measure the labor of the youthful mind in the study of the more elaborate and technical histories of that ever memorable epoch. With this view I have prefixed a short sketch of interesting transactions prior to the actual commencement of hostilities. "History," says a late elegant writer, "presents no struggle for liberty, which has in it more of the moral sublime, than that of the American revolution. It has been of late years too much forgotten in the sharp contentions of party, and he who endeavors to withdraw the public mind from these debasing conflicts, and to fix it on the grandeur of that epoch, which, magnificent in itself, begins now to wear the

solemn livery of antiquity, as it is viewed through the deepening twilight of almost half a century, certainly performs a meritorious service, and can scarcely need a justification.”*

It may be deemed reproachful to our country, that nearly half a century has elapsed since the American colonies were emancipated from British thralldom, and that we are yet unfurnished with proper biographical memoirs of the renowned patriots and heroes whose unparaleled efforts under Providence, achieved the inestimable blessings of liberty and freedom. No characters assuredly, are more worthy to excite the curiosity and gratitude of posterity than those who contributed so largely to the establishment of our invaluable civil and religious privileges under a republican constitution. The immortal chieftain, indeed, and his illustrious compeer, General Greene, can receive no additional memorials from any labors in my power to bestow. I might incur the imputation of arrogance were I to imagine myself competent to the duty of portraying in a just light the characters of those whose revered names are introduced into the appendix of this work. I can only claim the merit of having exerted my best efforts to procure documents and assistance, and to illustrate their qualities under the guidance of the legitimate principles of impartiality and justice. Should posterity inquire why their ancestors, destitute of military education or experience, abandoned their peaceful abodes to encounter the perils of uncertain warfare, let them be told it was not to execute the mandates of a tyrant in subjugating their fellow men, but it

* Silliman's Tour from Hartford to Quebec. 1820.

was in defence of our most precious rights and privileges; it was a display of that genuine patriotism and true glory which it is ever most honorable to venerate and cherish. While their own hearts glow with patriotic fervor, let them reflect, that true glory consists in the love of peace and the culture of benevolence and good will to men. Let their souls hold in detestation every species of warfare, save that which may secure and defend the invaluable heritage which their fathers have bequeathed them, and for which their memories should be embalmed with the incense of gratitude.

N. B. Should the reader conceive that in detailing the ravages and aggressions of the British army, I have indulged in language of asperity, inconsistent with that urbanity and good fellowship which it is desirable should be cultivated between the two nations at the present day, it may be observed that this is but a feeble specimen of the belligerent language employed by writers at that period when the wrathful passions were reciprocally excited and continually aggravated.

fled in every direction. Colonel Donop, their commander, was mortally wounded and taken, and more than one hundred were killed on the spot, and a greater number wounded and prisoners. The enemy retreated with great precipitation, leaving many of their wounded on the road, and returned to Philadelphia with the loss of one half their party. Colonel Greene, and his brave troops, acquired great honor for their gallant defence of the fort, which is a key to other posts on the river. Congress have rewarded the Colonel, with an elegant sword. The British army found it difficult to procure the necessary supplies in Philadelphia, and the continental galleys and strong chevaux de frize in the Delaware, rendered a passage of their ships up to the city, almost impossible. Admiral Lord Howe, determined to attempt the removal of these formidable obstructions, and he ordered six of his ships to engage in this service. They were so unmercifully handled by our galleys, and from Fort Mifflin, at Mud Island, that two of them, one of sixty four guns, run aground and were set on fire by the crews who deserted them, and soon after they blew up.

December.—Fort Mifflin, on Mud Island, has been evacuated by the continental garrison, after having been bravely defended against the prodigious force of the enemy's shipping. Our troops secured all their stores, destroyed the block houses, and demolished the bank, to let in the water, by which the Island is entirely inundated. The fort at Red Bank is also abandoned, and the continental fleet has been burnt, to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy. The British are now in full possession of the city of Philadelphia, and their fleet has obtained access to it by way of the Delaware river. The continental army, since the close of the campaign, has retired for winter quarters to a place called *Valley Forge*, about 20 miles from Philadelphia. Here they are subjected to the fatigue and labor of clearing the woods and

constructing log huts for their accommodation during the winter.

An occurrence of a very singular complexion, has lately been published in a Pennsylvania newspaper, which occasions much indignant speculation. The Reverend Jacob Duche, a popular Episcopal minister in Philadelphia, was the first chaplain appointed by Congress. He performed his official duties to general acceptance, frequently and fervently imploring heaven to succeed the American cause. Whether from alarm at the success of the royalists, or from any change in his sentiments respecting the justice of our cause, is uncertain, but after having officiated about three months, he gave in his resignation. He left Philadelphia, and "took shelter under the arm of that power which from the sacred pulpit he had exhorted his hearers to oppose." But it is no less extraordinary, that this apostate addressed a letter to his Excellency General Washington, with whom he was on terms of friendship, in which, to use the author's own words, "*he has spoken freely of Congress, and of the army.*" He enjoins it on his Excellency to abandon the American cause, and resign his command of the army; or at the head of it, to force Congress immediately to desist from hostilities and to rescind their declaration of Independence. If this is not done, he says, "You have an infallible resource still left, *negotiate for America at the head of your army.*" He represents the Congress in the most despicable point of view, as consisting of weak, obscure persons, not fit associates for his Excellency, and the very dregs of the first Congress. The New England delegates he treats with the greatest indelicacy. The officers and men which compose our army, he describes as destitute of principle and courage; undisciplined, taken from the lowest of the people, unfit for a seat at his Excellency's table, &c. &c. Thus has this vile calumniator disgraced his profession, and involved his own character in that

ignominy which he designed for his superiors. His Excellency in noticing this transaction in a letter of October the 16th, observes, "To Mr. Duche's ridiculous, illiberal performance, I made a very short reply, by desiring the bearer Mrs. Ferguson, if she should hereafter, by any accident meet with Mr. Duche, to tell him I should have returned his letter unopened if I had had any idea of its contents.*"

20th.—The wounded soldiers committed to my care in October last, have all recovered, and as a compliment for my assiduity, and attention to my patients, I have received from Dr. Potts, our Surgeon General, a generous and handsome present. The duties of our hospital being now greatly diminished, I have obtained a furlough for forty days, and shall to-morrow commence my journey to visit my friends in New England.

February 4th, 1778.—Having performed a journey on horseback to Boston and Barnstable, in

*The following is the form of prayer made use of by the Reverend Mr. Duche in the Congress after Independence was declared.

O Lord! our heavenly Father, high and mighty, King of kings, and Lord of lords, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers on earth, and reignest with power supreme and uncontroled over all kingdoms, empires and governments. Look down in mercy, we beseech thee, on these our American States, who have fled to thee from the rod of the oppressor, and thrown themselves on thy gracious protection, desiring to be henceforth dependent only on thee; to thee have they appealed for the righteousness of their cause; to thee do they now look up for that countenance and support, which thou alone canst give; take them, therefore, heavenly Father, under thy nurturing care; give them wisdom in council, and valor in the field; defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries; convince *them* of the unrighteousness of their cause, and if they still persist in their sanguinary purposes, O! let the voice of thine own unerring justice, sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop the weapons of war from their unnerved hands in the day of battle. Be thou present, O God of wisdom, and direct the councils of this honorable assembly; enable them to settle things on the best and surest foundation, that the scene of blood may be speedily closed, that order, harmony and peace may be effectually restored, and truth and justice, religion and piety, prevail and flourish amongst thy people; preserve the health of their bodies and the vigor of their minds; shower down on *them*, and the millions they here represent, such temporal blessings, as thou seest expedient for them in this world, and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come. All this we ask in the name, and through the merits of Jesus Christ thy Son and our Saviour. Amen.

*Head Quarters, Camp, }
Valley Forge, May 5th, 1778. }*

It having pleased the Almighty Ruler of the Universe propitiously to defend the cause of the United American States, and finally, by raising us up a powerful friend among the Princes of the Earth, to establish our liberty and independence on a lasting foundation; it becomes us to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the Divine goodness, and celebrating the important event which we owe to His benign interposition.

The several brigades are to be assembled for this purpose at nine o'clock to-morrow morning, when their Chaplains will communicate the intelligence contained in the Postscript to the Pennsylvania Gazette of the second instant, and offer up a Thanksgiving, and deliver a discourse suitable to the occasion.

At half past ten o'clock a cannon will be fired, which is to be a signal for the men to be under arms. The Brigade Inspectors will then inspect their dress and arms, form the battalions according to the instructions given them, and announce to the commanding officers of brigades that the battalions are formed. The Brigadiers and Commandants will then appoint the field officers to command the battalions; after which, each battalion will be ordered to load and ground their arms.—At half past eleven, another cannon will be fired as a signal for the march; on which the several brigades will begin their march by wheeling to the right by platoons, and proceed by the nearest way to the left of their ground, in the new position that will be pointed out by the Brigade Inspectors.—A third signal will be given, on which there will be a discharge of thirteen cannon: when the thirteenth has fired, a running fire of the infantry will begin on the right of Woodford's, and continue throughout the whole front line; it will then be taken up on the left of the second line, and continue

passed through Quibbletown, and the village of Middle brook. In this vicinity we are erecting log huts for our winter quarters.

I called at a house with Colonel Gibson and other officers to view a phenomenon in the human form—a child that has grown to an enormous size at the age of seven years; he measures three feet six inches round his breast, and three feet nine inches round his belly, his limbs and joints are proportionably large, and he weighs one hundred and thirty pounds. I was informed by the boy's mother that she discovered in him an extraordinary growth when two years old, since which he has increased very rapidly. He enjoys good health, and is not deficient in capacity.

30th.—Our officers have not permitted the Christmas days to pass unnoticed, not a day without receiving invitations to dine, nor a night without amusement and dancing. I dine to day with General Muhlenburg. Our soldiers are constantly employed in cutting down trees and building log huts for our winter's accommodation, and we are obliged to live in our uncomfortable tents till they can be completed. This is appropriated as a day of Thanksgiving throughout the state. Our brigade was paraded in the field to attend divine service. Dr. Belmain, our chaplain, delivered a judicious sermon, well adapted to the occasion, adverting to the great cause in which we are engaged and enjoining a grateful reverence to the Almighty Ruler of the universe, and a faithful discharge of the duties incumbent on us in our several stations.

January 1st, 1779.—Colonel Gibson made an entertainment and invited all the officers of his regiment to dine at his quarters in the country a short distance from camp. The table was amply furnished and the guests did not separate till evening, when we were requested to resort to General Muhlenburg's quarters. Here we were introduced to a

at liberty, a circumstance which I believe has never before occurred in our army. He closed by ordering that divine service shall be performed in the several brigades tomorrow, and recommends that the troops attend with a serious deportment, and with that sensibility of heart which the recollection of the surprizing and particular interposition of Providence in our favor claims.

22d.—Yesterday being Sunday, our brigade of infantry, and the York brigade were drawn up in the field to attend divine service performed by Mr. Evans. After offering to the Lord of hosts, the God of battles, our grateful homage for the preservation of our lives through the dangers of the siege, and for the important event with which Divine Providence has seen fit to crown our efforts, he preached an excellent and appropriate sermon. Generals Lincoln and Clinton were present. In the design and execution of this successful expedition, our Commander in Chief fairly *out generated* Sir Henry Clinton, and the whole movement was marked by consummate military address, which reduced the royal general to a mortifying dilemma that no skill or enterprize could retrieve. A siege of thirteen days, prosecuted with unexampled rapidity, has terminated in the capture of one of the greatest generals of which the English can boast, and a veteran and victorious army which has for several months past spread terror and desolation throughout the southern states. The joy on this momentous occasion is universally diffused, and the hope entertained that it will arrest the career of a cruel warfare, and advance the establishment of American Independence. In the progress of the royal army through the state of Virginia the preceding summer, they practised the most abominable enormities, plundering negroes and horses from almost every plantation, and reducing the country to ruin. Among the prodigious assemblage of spectators at the time of surrender, were a number of planters

searching for the property which had been thus purloined from their estates. The famous Colonel Tarleton, mounted on a horse remarkable for elegance and noble appearance, while riding in company with several French officers with whom he was to dine, was met by a gentleman, who instantly recognized the animal as his own property. Tarleton was stopped, and the horse peremptorily demanded; observing a little hesitation, the British General O'Harra, who was present, said, "you had better give him his horse, Tarleton," on which the colonel dismounted and delivered the horse to the original proprietor; after which, being remounted on a very miserable animal, he rejoined his company, and the French officers were greatly surprized that he should be so humbly mounted. The British prisoners were all sent off yesterday, conducted by a party of militia on their way to the interior of Virginia and Maryland. I have this day visited the town of York, to witness the destructive effects of the siege. It contains about sixty houses, some of them are elegant, many of them are greatly damaged and some totally ruined, being shot through in a thousand places and honey combed ready to crumble to pieces. Rich furniture and books were scattered over the ground, and the carcasses of men and horses half covered with earth, exhibited a scene of ruin and horror beyond description. The earth in many places is thrown up into mounds by the force of our shells, and it is difficult to point to a spot where a man could have resorted for safety.

The loss on the part of the French during the siege, was fifty killed and one hundred and twenty seven wounded. Americans twenty seven killed and seventy three wounded, officers included. Cornwallis' account of his loss during the siege is one hundred and fifty six, three hundred and twenty six wounded, and seventy missing, probably deserted, total five hundred and fifty two. The whole num-

quarter to our people at Cherry Valley, in November, 1778.

When Congress received General Washington's letter, announcing the surrender of the British army, they resolved, that they would at two o'clock, go in procession to the Dutch Lutheran Church, and return thanks to Almighty God, for crowning the allied arms with success, by the surrender of the whole British army, under the command of Earl Cornwallis. They also issued a proclamation for religiously observing throughout the United States the 13th of December, as a day of thanksgiving and prayer. They resolved, that thanks should be given to General Washington, Count Rochambeau, Count de Grasse and the officers of the different corps, and the men under their command, for their services in the reduction of Lord Cornwallis. Also, resolved, to erect in Yorktown a marble column adorned with emblems of the alliance between the United States and his Most Christian Majesty, and inscribed with a succinct narrative of the surrender of the British army. Two stands of colors, taken from the royal troops under the capitulation, were presented to General Washington in the name of the United States in Congress assembled; and two pieces of field ordnance so taken, were by a resolve of Congress to be presented by General Washington to Count Rochambeau, with a short memorandum engraved thereon, that "Congress were induced to present them from considerations of the illustrious part which he bore in effecting the surrender."

The Congress of the United States, the assembly and council of the state of Pennsylvania, and a number of principal gentlemen of various orders, having been invited by the minister of France to be present at the praises offered to Heaven in the Catholic Church, on occasion of the late glorious success of the allied arms, the Abbe Baudouin, Honorer to the Embassy of His Most Christian Majesty,

ascended the pulpit, and addressed this august assembly in the following discourse ; after which a Te Deum was sung.

The occasion was in this hemisphere singular and affecting ; and the discourse itself is so elegant and animated in the French, so warm with those sentiments of piety and gratitude to our Divine Benefactor, in which good men of all countries accord, and so evidently dictated by the spirit of that new friendship and alliance from which such important advantages have been derived to the rights of America, as must give pleasure to every serious and candid friend to our glorious cause.

“ GENTLEMEN,— A numerous people assembled to render thanks to the Almighty for his mercies, is one of the most affecting objects, and worthy the attention of the Supreme Being. While camps resound with triumphal acclamations, while nations rejoice in victory and glory, the most honorable office a minister of the altar can fill, is to be the organ by which public gratitude is conveyed to the Omnipotent.

“ Those miracles which he once wrought for his chosen people, are renewed in our favor ; and it would be equally ungrateful and impious not to acknowledge, that the event which lately confounded our enemies, and frustrated their designs, was the wonderful work of that God who guards your liberties.

“ And who but he could so combine the circumstances which led to success ? We have seen our enemies push forward amid perils almost innumerable, amid obstacles almost insurmountable, to the spot which was designed to witness their disgrace ; yet they eagerly sought it, as their theatre of triumph ! Blind as they were, they bore hunger, thirst, and inclement skies, poured their blood in battle against brave republicans, and crossed immense regions to confine themselves in another Jericho, whose walls

were fated to fall before another Joshua. It is he, whose voice commands the winds, the seas, and the seasons, who formed a junction on the same day in the same hour, between a formidable fleet from the south, and an army rushing from the north, like an impetuous torrent. Who but he, in whose hands are the hearts of men, could inspire the allied troops with the friendship, the confidence, the tenderness of brothers? How is it that two nations, once divided, jealous, inimical, and nursed in reciprocal prejudices, are now become so closely united, as to form but one? Worldlings would say, it is the wisdom, the virtue, and moderation of their chiefs, it is a great national interest which has performed this prodigy. They will say, that to the skill of the generals, to the courage of the troops, to the activity of the whole army, we must attribute this splendid success. Ah! they are ignorant, that the combining of so many fortunate circumstances, is an emanation from the all-perfect mind; that courage, that skill, that activity bear the sacred impression of him who is divine.

“For how many favors have we not to thank him during the course of the present year? Your union, which was at first supported by justice alone, has been consolidated by your courage, and the knot which ties you together, is become indissoluble, by the accession of all the states, and the unanimous voice of all the confederates. You present to the universe the noble sight of a society, which founded in equality and justice, secure to the individuals who compose it, the utmost happiness which can be derived from human institutions. This advantage, which so many other nations have been unable to procure, even after ages of efforts and misery, is granted by Divine Providence to the United States: and his adorable decrees have marked the present moment for the completion of that memorable happy revolution, which has taken place in this extensive continent. While your councils were thus acquiring

new energy, rapid and multiplied successes have crowned your arms in the southern states.

“We have seen the unfortunate citizens of these states forced from their peaceful abodes; after a long and cruel captivity, old men, women and children thrown, without mercy, into a foreign country. Master of their lands and their slaves, amid his temporary affluence, a superb victor rejoiced in their distresses. But Philadelphia has witnessed their patience and fortitude; they have found here another home, and though driven from their native soil, they have blessed God, that he has delivered them from the presence of their enemy, and conducted them to a country where every just and feeling man has stretched out the helping hand of benevolence. Heaven rewards their virtues. These large states are at once wrested from the foe. The rapacious soldier has been compelled to take refuge behind his ramparts, and oppression has vanished like those phantoms which are dissipated by the morning ray.

“On this solemn occasion, we might renew our thanks to the God of battles, for the success he has granted to the arms of your allies and your friends by land and by sea, through the other parts of the globe. But let us not recall those events, which too clearly prove how much the hearts of our enemies have been hardened. Let us prostrate ourselves at the altar and implore the God of mercy to suspend his vengeance, to spare them in his wrath, to inspire them with sentiments of justice and moderation, to terminate their obstinacy and error, and to ordain that your victories be followed by peace and tranquillity. Let us beseech him to continue to shed on the councils of the king, your ally, that spirit of wisdom, of justice, and of courage, which has rendered his reign so glorious.—Let us entreat him to maintain in each of the states, that intelligence by which the United States are inspired. Let us return him thanks that a faction, whose rebellion he has

corrected, now deprived of support, is annihilated. Let us offer him pure hearts, unsoiled by private hatred or public dissention; and let us, with one will and one voice, pour forth to the Lord that hymn of praise, by which Christians celebrate their gratitude and his glory.”

January, 1782.—The huts which we now occupy were erected the last winter by some of the Massachusetts troops, a short distance from the banks of the Hudson, and called New Boston. they afford us a very convenient and comfortable accommodation. Orders having been received for all the troops that have not gone through the small pox to be inoculated, I commenced this business a few weeks since, and inoculated about two hundred, including women and children. Their accommodations were not such as their circumstances required: we were unprovided with proper articles of diet, and a considerable number were seized with putrid fever, which proved fatal in several instances.

March 10th.—A singular incident occurred in the sixth regiment to day. Two soldiers were eating soup together, and one forbid the other eating any more: as he did not desist, his comrade gave him a blow with his fist on the side of his head, on which he fell to the ground and instantly expired. On close examination, I could discover no bruise or injury which could enable me to account satisfactorily for his death.

An unhappy controversy has subsisted for some time between Captain H. and Lieutenant S. both of the first Massachusetts regiment. Captain H. was esteemed a man of modest merit and unexceptionable character, he has long commanded a company and proved himself brave in the field, and a good disciplinarian. Lieutenant S. though a good active officer, is assuming, high spirited and values himself on what he deems the principles of honor and the gentleman. Having imbibed a strong pre-

due, and that as soon as their acceptance shall be signified, the superintendent of finance be, and he is hereby, directed to take measures for the settlement of their accounts accordingly, and to issue to them certificates bearing interest at six per cent.

“That all officers entitled to half pay for life, not included in the preceding resolution, may also collectively agree to accept, or refuse the aforesaid commutation, signifying the same within six months from this time.”

April 18th.—The Commander in Chief thus addressed the army on the cessation of hostilities :

“The Commander in Chief orders the cessation of hostilities, between the United States of America and the King of Great Britain, to be publicly proclaimed tomorrow at twelve o’clock, at the New Building : and that the proclamation which will be communicated herewith, be read tomorrow evening, at the head of every regiment and corps of the army ; after which, the chapl. is. with the several brigades, will render thanks to Almighty God for all his mercies, particularly for his overruling the wrath of man to his own glory, and causing the rage of war to cease among the nations.”

Though the proclamation before alluded to, extends only to the prohibition of hostilities, and not to the annunciation of a general peace, yet it must afford the most rational and sincere satisfaction to every benevolent mind, as it puts a period to a long and doubtful contest—stops the effusion of human blood—opens the prospect to a more splendid scene—and, like another morning star, promises the approach of a brighter day than has hitherto illuminated this western hemisphere ! On such a happy day—a day which is the harbinger of peace—a day which completes the eighth year of the war, it would be ingratitude not to rejoice : it would be insensibility not to participate in the general felicity.

the most advantageous point of light. On taking all the circumstances into consideration, I cannot sufficiently express my surprize and indignation, at the arrogance, the folly, and the wickedness of the mutineers; nor can I sufficiently admire the fidelity, the bravery and patriotism, which must forever signalize the unsullied character of the other corps of our army. For when we consider that these Pennsylvania levies, who have now mutinied, are recruits, and soldiers of a day, who have not borne the heat and burden of the war, and who can have in reality very few hardships to complain of; and when we at the same time recollect that those soldiers, who have lately been furloughed from this army, are the veterans, who have patiently endured hunger, nakedness, and cold; who have suffered and bled without a murmur, and who, with perfect good order, have retired to their homes, without a settlement of their accounts, or a farthing of money in their pockets; we shall be as much astonished at the virtues of the latter, as we are struck with horror and detestation at the proceedings of the former; and every candid mind, without indulging ill grounded prejudices, will undoubtedly make the proper discrimination.

On the second of November, 1783, General Washington issued his farewell orders to the armies of the United States. Having taken notice of the proclamation of Congress, of October 18th, he said, "It only remains for the Commander in Chief to address himself once more, and that for the last time, to the armies of the United States, however widely dispersed the individuals who composed them may be, and to bid them an affectionate, a long farewell. But before the Commander in Chief takes his final leave of those he holds most dear, he wishes to indulge himself a few moments in calling to mind a slight review of the past. He will then take the liberty of exploring with his military friends their future prospects,—of advising the general line of conduct, which

in his opinion, ought to be pursued, and he will conclude the address by expressing the obligations he feels himself under for the spirited and able assistance he has experienced from them, in the performance of an arduous office.

“A contemplation of the complete attainment, at a period earlier than could have been expected, of the object for which we contended, against so formidable a power, cannot but inspire us with astonishment and gratitude. The disadvantageous circumstances on our part, under which the war was undertaken, can never be forgotten. The signal interpositions of Providence, in our feeble condition, were such as could scarcely escape the attention of the most unobserving: while the unparalleled perseverance of the armies of the United States, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement, for the space of eight long years, was little short of a standing miracle.” His closing words are, “and being now to conclude these his last public orders, to take his ultimate leave in a short time, of the military character and to bid adieu to the armies he has so long had the honor to command, he can only again offer in their behalf his recommendations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of armies. May ample justice be done them here and may the choicest of Heaven’s favors both here and hereafter attend those, who, under the divine auspices have secured innumerable blessings for others! With these wishes, and this benediction, the Commander in Chief is about to retire from service. The curtain of separation will soon be drawn, and the military scene to him will be closed forever.” The definitive treaty of peace was signed on the 23d of September, and Congress, having ratified it, they issued a proclamation to disband their army. The proclamation purports, “that part of the army which stood engaged to serve during the war, and by several acts of Congress had been furloughed, should be absolutely discharged

after the 3d of November from said service, and that the further service in the field of the officers deranged, and on furlough, are now dispensed with, and they have permission to retire from service, no more to be called to command, &c." In their proclamation Congress give their thanks to the army for their exertions in the cause of America, and the common rights of mankind. The mode of disbanding the army was well calculated to prevent any disorders, which might have been the consequence of dismissing a large number of men in a body. The advice of their beloved Commander in Chief, and the resolves of Congress to pay and compensate them in such manner as the ability of the United States would permit, operated to keep them quiet and prevent tumult. Painful indeed was the parting scene, no description can be adequate to the tragic exhibition. Both officers and soldiers, long unaccustomed to the affairs of private life, turned loose on the world to starve and to become a prey to vulture speculators. Never can that melancholy day be forgotten when friends, companions for seven long years in joy, and in sorrow, were torn asunder, without the hope of ever meeting again, and with prospects of a miserable subsistence in future. Among other incidents peculiarly affecting on this occasion, were the lamentations of women and children, earnestly entreating that those with whom they had been connected in the character of husband and father, would not withdraw from them the hand of kindness and protection and leave them in despair: but in several instances the reply was, no. "we took you as *companions during the war*, and now we are destitute of the means of support, and you must provide for yourselves."

November 25th.—The British army evacuated New York, and the American troops under General Knox, took possession of the city. Soon after, General Washington and Governor Clinton, with their suite, made their public entry into the city on horseback, followed

by the lieutenant governor and the members of council, for the temporary government of the southern district, four abreast. General Knox and the officers of the army, eight abreast; citizens on horseback, eight abreast—the speaker of the assembly and citizens on foot, eight abreast. The governor gave a public dinner, at which the Commander in Chief, and other general officers were present. The arrangements for the whole business were so well made and executed, that the most admirable tranquillity succeeded through the day and night. On Monday the governor gave an elegant entertainment to the French ambassador, the Chevalier de la Luzerne; General Washington, the principal officers of New York state, and of the army, and upwards of a hundred gentlemen were present. Magnificent fireworks, infinitely exceeding every thing of the kind before seen in the United States, were exhibited at the Bowling Green in Broadway, on the evening of Tuesday, in celebration of the definitive treaty of peace. They commenced by a dove descending with the *olive branch*, and setting fire to a marron battery. On Tuesday noon, December 4th, the principal officers of the army assembled at Francis' tavern, to take a final leave of their much loved Commander in Chief. Soon after his Excellency entered the room. His emotions were too strong to be concealed. Filling a glass, he turned to them and said, "With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you. I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable." Having drank, he added, "I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged to you, if each of you will come and take me by the hand." General Knox being nearest, turned to him. Incapable of utterance, Washington, *in tears*, grasped his hand, embraced and kissed him. In the same affectionate manner he took leave of each succeeding officer. In

every eye was the tear of dignified sensibility; and not a word was articulated to interrupt the eloquent silence, and tenderness of the scene. Leaving the room, he passed through the corps of light infantry, and walked to White Hall, where a barge waited to convey him to Paulus' Hook. The whole company followed in mute and solemn procession, with dejected countenances, testifying feelings of delicious melancholy which no language can describe. Having entered the barge he turned to the company, and waving his hat, bid them a silent adieu. They paid him the same affectionate compliment, and after the barge had left them, returned in the same solemn manner to the place where they had assembled. The passions of human nature were never more tenderly agitated than in this interesting and distressful scene."

General Washington now repaired to Annapolis, where Congress were in session, to whom he resigned his commission, which eight years before, he had received from this honorable body. On the 23d of December, the day appointed for the very interesting transaction, a vast concourse of spectators attended. The gallery was filled with a group of ladies, and some graced the floor of Congress. The governor, council and legislature of Maryland, several general officers, the consul general of France, and numerous citizens of Annapolis were present. Congress were seated and covered, as representatives of the sovereignty of the union; the spectators were uncovered and standing. The general was introduced to a chair by the secretary, who, after a decent interval ordered silence. A short pause ensued, when the honorable Thomas Mifflin, the president, informed the general that "the United States in Congress assembled were prepared to receive his communications." On which he rose with dignity and delivered this address.

•• MR. PRESIDENT.—The great events on which my resignation depended, having at length taken

place, I now have the honor of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them, to surrender into their hands, the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country.

“Happy in the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States, of becoming a respectable nation, I resign with satisfaction the appointment I accepted with diffidence; a diffidence in my abilities, to accomplish so arduous a task, which, however, was superseded, by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the supreme power of the union, and the patronage of Heaven.

“The successful termination of the war has verified the most sanguine expectations,—my gratitude for the interpositions of Providence, and the assistance I have received from my countrymen, increase with every review of the momentous contest.

“While I respect my obligations to the army in general, I should do injustice to my own feelings, not to acknowledge in this place, the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the persons, who have been attached to my person during the war. It was impossible the choice of confidential officers, to compose my family, should have been more fortunate. Permit me, Sir, to recommend in particular, those who have continued in the service to the present moment, as worthy of the favorable notice and patronage of Congress.

“I consider it as an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country, to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendance of them to his holy keeping.

“Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and, bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have long acted. I here offer my com-

mission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life.”

This address being ended, General Washington advanced and delivered his commission into the hands of the President of Congress, who replied as follows.

“The United States in Congress assembled, receive with emotions too affecting for utterance, the solemn resignation of the authorities under which you have led their troops with success, through a perilous and doubtful war.

“Called on by your country to defend its invaded rights, you accepted the sacred charge before it had formed alliances, and whilst it was without friends or a government to support you.

“You have conducted the great military contest with wisdom and fortitude, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power, through all disasters and changes. You have by the love and confidence of your fellow citizens, enabled them to display their martial genius, and transmit their fame to posterity: you have persevered till these United States, aided by a magnanimous king and nation, have been enabled under a just Providence, to close the war in safety, freedom, and independency: on which happy event, we sincerely join you in congratulations.

“Having defended the standard of liberty in this new world; having taught a lesson useful to those who inflict, and to those who feel oppression, you retire from the great theatre of action, with the blessings of your fellow citizens: but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command, it will continue to animate remotest ages. We feel with you, our obligations to the army in general, and will particularly charge ourselves, with the interest of those confidential officers, who have attended your person to this affecting moment.

“We join you in commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God,

beseeching him to dispose the hearts and minds of its citizens to improve the opportunity afforded them of becoming a happy and respectable nation; and for you we address to Him our earnest prayers, that a life so beloved, may be fostered with all his care; that your days may be happy, as they have been illustrious, and that he will finally give you that reward, which this world cannot give."

It is impossible to conceive that greater honor can be conferred on any man, than to receive the united acknowledgments of three millions of people, assembled by their representatives, declaring to all the world, that he has been the temporal savior of his country! His mind was powerful and enlightened, his devotion to his country fervent, his sacrifices great and important, and his triumphs noble and splendid; and his memory will be blessed and immortal!

It has been estimated, that the loss of lives in the various armies of the United States, during the war, is not less than seventy thousand. The numbers who died on board of the horrid prison ships of the enemy, cannot be calculated. It is however confidently asserted, that no less than eleven thousand of our brave soldiers, died on board the one, called the *Jersey prison ship*, only! This dreadful mortality is universally attributed, to the cruel treatment, which they received while crowded together in close confinement.

The loss to Great Britain, is two large armies captured by the United States, exclusively of many thousands, killed and taken in various actions, during the war: thirteen colonies dismembered from her and an increase of her national debt in seven years, one hundred and twenty millions.

The *United States* have gained that independence and liberty for which they contended, and find their debt to be less than forty five millions of dollars, which is short of ten millions of pounds sterling! This long, protracted warfare, waged in behalf of

American freedom, is now triumphantly terminated, and a sanctuary sacred to civil and religious liberty will be opened in this western hemisphere.

Extract of a Circular Letter from his Excellency George Washington, Commander in Chief of the armies of the United States of America, to the Governors of the several States.

HEAD QUARTERS, Newburgh, June 13, 1783.

“ For my own part, conscious of having acted, while a servant of the public, in the manner I conceived best suited to promote the real interests of my country; having in consequence of my fixed belief, in some measure pledged myself to the army, that their country would finally do them complete and ample justice, and not willing to conceal any instance of my official conduct from the eyes of the world, I have thought proper to transmit to your Excellency the enclosed collection of papers, relative to the half pay and commutation granted by Congress to the officers of the army.

•• From these communications, my decided sentiment will be clearly comprehended, together with the conclusive reasons which induced me at an early period, to recommend the adoption of this measure in the most earnest and serious manner. As the proceedings of Congress, the army, and myself are open to all, and contain, in my opinion, sufficient information to remove the prejudice and errors which may have been entertained by any, I think it unnecessary to say any thing more, than just to observe, that the resolutions of Congress, now alluded to, are as undoubtedly and absolutely binding on the United States, as the most solemn acts of confederation or legislation.

•• As to the idea, which I am informed has in some instances prevailed, that the half pay and commutation are to be regarded merely in the odious light of a pension, it ought to be exploded forever: That pro-