Trenton
W. T. Nicholson, printer
1871

ILLUSTRATIONS.

TO MY READERS.

In the sixteenth century "a little book" was the gift of the first English martyr to his family, of whom the writer claims to be a lineal descendant. It was given to comfort the faithful and to warn the faithless that Truth will outlive persecution.

In the nineteenth century, in this now all free country, martyrdom is dead. Little books and big books can be copy-righted by the act of Congress, and what is written can be read or let alone. So be it with my humble Brochure.

The allegorical expression that "the world would not contain the books that might be written," is still a prophecy not likely soon to come to pass. There are no strikes or combinations between writers and readers now. The consumption equals the supply, and progress in almost everything with us has no multiple to calculate what it may come to. Thoughts, however, lag behind words in the chase. Words are cheap. As regards thoughts, the man who writes a book generally has a few over, which he wants to get, somehow, into an appendix, either before or after the work, to finish it politely. I prefer the salutatory rather than the valedictory appendix, although prefaces are seldom read; but I salute on this occasion those only who intend to read my book.

Like a faithful physician, I have studied the case and written out my prescription, but do not insist that my

bolus must be relied upon if it has been tried and does not reach the case or disagrees with the patient. But if it has not been fairly tried, give it one more faithful trial, and if that fails, call in another physician; but remember, my good incurable friend, that

> "When ill indeed,
> E'en dismissing the doctor don't always succeed:"
> He may be right after all.

I have collated and compounded in my humble essay such materials as will establish the true history of the two battles at Trenton and the one at Princeton, which seem to me a necessary and sound recipe for a "*casus omissus*," in the early accounts of them—to restore the obscure light of the missing twin star that once shone here in the revolutionary conflict, and to disabuse the few gainsayers and unbelievers who doubt if it ever was in existence. Their convictions, based on negations or unreliable traditions, cannot counterbalance positive testimony derived from records contemporaneous and conclusively harmonious in their statement of occurrences of which the writers were participants or eye-witnesses.

But to my readers abroad I have but little to offer or to apologize for the publication of my Manual. The public has entirely exhausted the first editions of my three publications concerning the subject, and this is a *resume* of their contents. This revised account of them is deemed a desideratum that, in my 84th year, I offer as the best substitute for new editions of my old historic publications.

C. C. H.

A NEW HISTORIC MANUAL.

THERE was no gloomier period in our American Revolution than that which marked the retreat of Washington and his skeleton army across New Jersey in 1776—none more cheering and important than that which witnessed the capture of the Hessians and the repulse of Cornwallis, now known as the two battles in Trenton, followed by the more costly and decisive one in Princeton. To condense the account of these three engagements into an epitome, suitable for a pocket manual, is no easy task. They were so surprising as to have required volumes. Many of the occurrences were unrevealed at the time, and have been so subject to doubt and debate ever since that all may not yet have been made completely known. New statements of events are by no means to be deemed fallacies, because previous writers may not have been cogni-

zant of them. The official reports of military events then, like balloon bulletins now, might not tell full and exact truths; nor, where there was occasion for concealing facts or magnifying appearances, was even Washington scrupulous of using military reticence or strategy. In both the battles here, and in his reports of them, did he not use both of these devices to deceive the enemy and to inspire the country with hope and confidence?

It is my design to do what can be done briefly to state the chief occurrences, using my own published accounts of them, which are now accredited as history by Bancroft, Lossing, and others. Without purposing generally to give details (which cannot be compressed into the brevity of a syllogism) I trust my statements will be believed as authentic.

Washington's Retreat and Accumulated Embarrassments.

The military disasters on Long Island and in New York, with the loss of more

than twenty-five hundred troops by the surrender of Fort Washington, the diminution of the army by desertion and other causes, General Charles Lee's disobedience and treachery (for he was a traitor afterwards, if not then, as has been proved since), the craven fears and recantations of many Jerseymen, who, affiliating with the tories, believed that pardon and servility to good King George were better than Freedom and Independence, compelled the commander-in-chief of our almost ruined, but still brave defenders, to retreat through this State to take refuge in Pennsylvania. This was done in good order, with scarcely the loss of a man, or any advantage to a pursuing enemy flushed with repeated victories.

Washington's first crossing of the Delaware took place on the 8th of December, 1776. The boats which transported his troops, cannon, and what little camp equippage and baggage he had preserved, were hauled up on the west side of the river in safety. Fortunately the hardy fishermen from Massachusetts, under the command of

Colonel Glover, were still in service with the reserves of some of the fighting States who clung to Washington and Freedom's cause. These faithful sailors and soldiers took care that the boats should not be seized or used by the hireling Hessians. They kept them safe until they were wanted to aid their noble chieftain in sustaining his anticipated hopes of reversing his then gloomy fortune which were realized eighteen days later. By this prudent measure and other precautions, Lord Cornwallis, although close on the heels of the retreating army, was arrested in his pursuit. The river was not as yet frozen. About fifteen hundred Hessians and Yagers, with a few dragoons, were posted here under Colonel Rahl (or Rall, as Bancroft calls him). He was a courageous, but rather showy officer, fond of parade, music, and carousing, but charged with using the British love of *booty and beauty* to excess, and omitting no opportunity of plundering and ravaging the inhabitants of both sexes, and tempting them with the King's pardon. After this

annoying and temporary arrangement was made, General Howe, waiting in luxury and ease at New York or New Brunswick for the Delaware to be bridged over with ice, to enable him to subdue the abandoned rebels, as our brave but distressed fathers, the first-born sons of Liberty, were then called, gave Cornwallis permission to go to England and proclaim there that the revolution in the American Provinces was quelled and the people were gladly accepting his Majesty's pardon.

Forlorn condition of Washington's reduced forces cantoned in Bucks county, Pennsylvania—New recruits mustered in that state, under Mifflin and Cadwallader.

Before giving an account of Washington's celebrated *coup de main* in capturing the Hessians in Trenton, it is my purpose now to attempt a truthful sketch of his desperate situation previously and the wretched condition of his skeleton corps of faithful veterans who clung to our almost hopeless endeavor, under existing doubts and

desertions, to save the cause of Independence from being given up. A portentous gloom had settled over the whole country. Congress was about to remove to Baltimore, after investing the commander of our military forces with almost dictatorial power, and loyalty to the cause was in a waning state, as its friends as well as the tories surmised it would be a failure.

Washington's firmness and the undaunted attachment of a few brave officers and veteran soldiers, whose term of service was about expiring, alone remained to save us from losing the Republic in its infancy and sharing the fate of a less reputable Confederacy that was never able to

"Pluck up its drowning honor by the locks."

Providence, however, after steeping the hopes and anticipations of freedom's first-born sons in the deepest gloom, did not suffer the United States to be without a Saviour. In his bosom, in the darkest hour of despondency and embarrassment, was found the pivotal centre of reconstruction

and subsequent elevation to be the world's last hope for a free and independent people.

And surely such a Providence, manifested in giving this country such a Saviour, and a miraculous delivery out of seemingly inextricable difficulties, should never be ignored by a grateful people. He, Washington, acknowledged the wonderful events as Providential, and shall not we? Let the reader of what I am now about to relate of the darkest epoch in our revolutionary struggle, make up his reply to this inquiry. In their deepest gloom our fathers preserved their inward sight by a devout faith; but, in this fast excelsior age, there may be some danger of our being "blinded by excess of light."

In the beginning of the winter solstice of 1776, the wretched remains of Washington's army which had retreated with him from the Hackensack, and the fragments of different corps under Gates, Lee, and Sullivan had clustered together, fatigued and comfortless, on the nothern side of Penn's Manor, Bucks county, Pennsylvania, opposite to New Jersey, in the midst of the

friendly but non-combatant Quakers, endeavoring to prevent the enemy from getting to Philadelphia, where the gallant old Putnam had as much as he could do to keep down the tory opposition, and prevent the Keystone State from losing its hall of Independence. Their prospects were desperate—their condition frightful. The winter sky was their only covering, the rough frozen or miry ground was beneath their feet. In marching to the river, Wilkinson asserted he tracked their way by their bloody footsteps through the snow, and Washington in one of his despatches says, "many of our poor soldiers are quite barefoot and ill-clad." The destitution and sufferings of the soldiers can hardly be described. I beg the reader here to pause, and try to realize what in reality we can hardly have any conception of. I speak of those brave soldiers, many of them of gentle birth, often exposed to absolute hunger, wet and shivering with cold, or at best relieved by brush-wood fires and an occasional scramble for tainted meat or mouldy bread. They were not generally provided

with tents or cooking utensils. When marching for nights and days together, many of them were destitute of shoes and stockings, in ragged or scanty clothing, and if sick or wounded, dragged along in springless wagons, with or without straw, with none of the modern sanitary comforts or ambulances. Ah! much more might be said truly of these devoted heroes' sufferings; but if the Young Americans of this or future generations cannot feel some sympathy and gratitude for deeds and sufferings, and trials of such ancestors, history is not written for them. At least let not all gratitude be confined to modern patriotism and heroic achievements. With ample and generous appreciation of those who have defended and redeemed our country from foreign and suicidal dangers in later wars, let us be at least as just and grateful to the first founders and brave suffering heroes who secured our independence.

The troops mustered together in these forlorn winter quarters were about three thousand, and the time of service of nearly

all of them would soon expire, and it could hardly be hoped that they would be inclined to stay to recover New Jersey and New York, whose natural defenders had already, with a few exceptions of brave officers, given up the cause. At this recreant and discouraging conduct, Washington was indignant, and forcibly protested against it to Congress, who were about retiring to Baltimore. Troubles seemed to thicken about him from every quarter. In spite of Lee's treachery, secret defamation, embarrassing disobedience and his capture by Colonel Harcourt, at Baskenridge, the complicity of Gates and Joseph Reed, his apparent friend and confidential adjutant, in the cabal then undertaken to undermine his popularity, he still made the best and boldest determination in his life, like King Alfred in his exile, "never to despair" of the commonwealth which he seemed Providentially appointed to preserve. Colonel Joseph Reed, however, although he had been a brave and useful adherent of Washington, and engaged in the maintenance of our

independence and the honor of this, his native State, was at this time the victim of a shameful, timid, and treacherous recreancy, meditating the desertion of his country's friends in their utmost perils, and as Bancroft has proved, was in actual treaty with King George's hireling satrap, Count Dunop, to obtain his pardon. This cowardly act of treacherous dissimulation, unknown to Washington at the time, was promptly repented of when he found victory had turned the scale of fortune in his country's favor, and his prompt co-operation with the army afterwards, and apology finally to the commander-in-chief, gained a different pardon from that he solicited of the British king, and if his more culpable grandson had not trumpeted his fidelity and patriotism as spotless, posterity, like Washington, would have forgiven his faults, and accorded due merit to his tarnished character. His defection, however, as well as that of Gates and other secret gainsayers against the head of the army, and his want of success, might have lost the cause, for

* Wm. B. Reed, of Philada., Ex. Min. to China

which, five months before, they and the signers of the Declaration of Independence had pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

Fortunately, however, there was still a host of brave, unflinching men, patriots as well as soldiers, who did, like a band of Spartans, adhere to our Leonidas in his perilous strait, ready to devote themselves as martyrs to save the country. And when the time came to test their fidelity to it and to their commander, adopting his famous pass-words, "Liberty or Death," they proved their devotedness, and by that eventually saved the cause.

Recrossing of the Delaware and Capture of the Hessians.

The surprise and capture of the Hessians, or Washington's *coup de main*, as the French strategic phrase is, has long been called *the battle* of Trenton. Of late, however, new revelations of contemporaneous events, now admitted by authentic historians and historical societies, show that it

PART OF

NEW JERSEY

embracing Trenton & Princeton to exhibit the operations of the

AMERICAN & BRITISH ARMIES

Jan.y 1st 2nd & 3rd 1777 with

GEN.L WASHINGTON'S

previous movements against the Hessians under

Col.l Rahl at Trenton

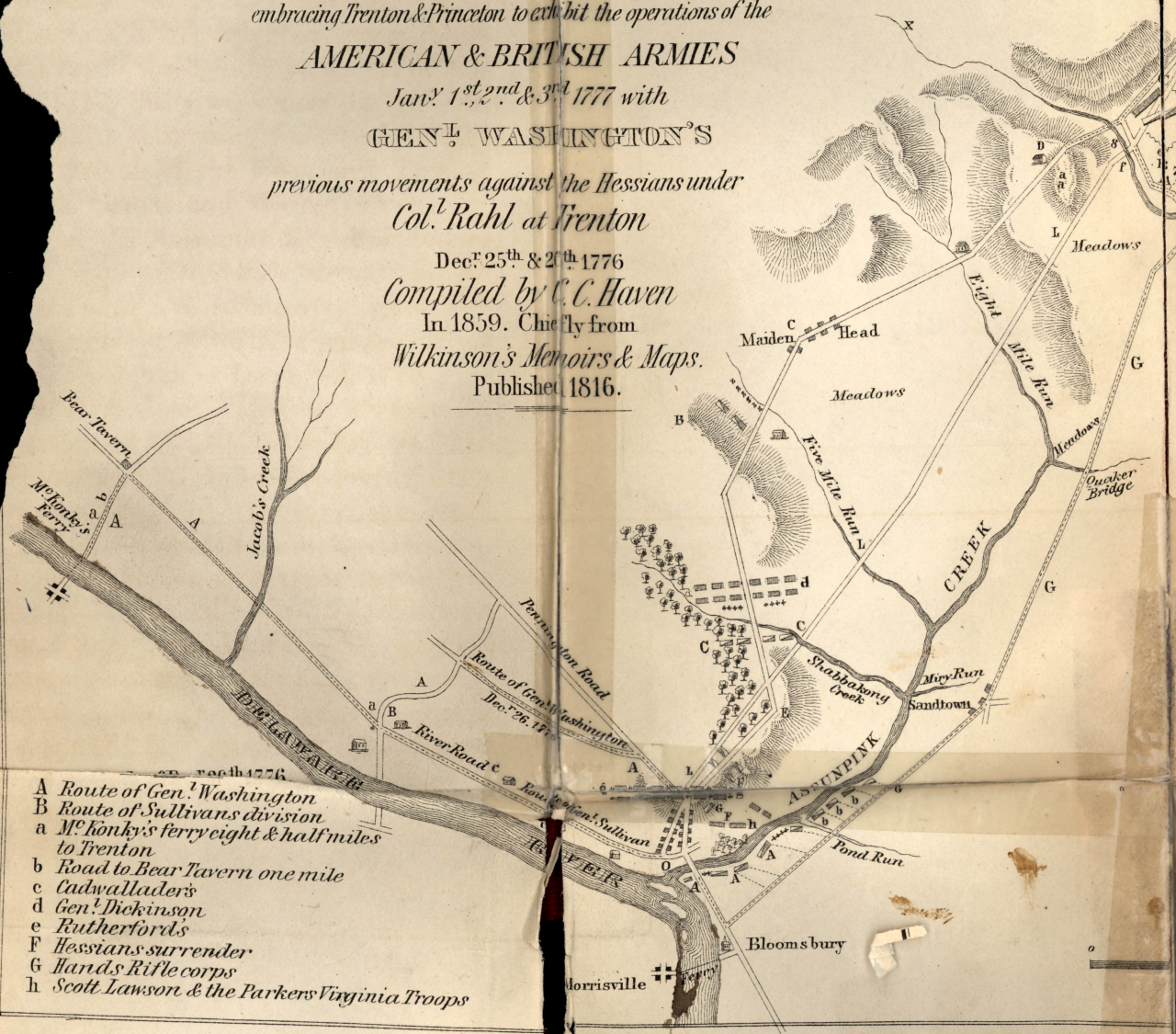
Dec.r 25th & 26th 1776

Compiled by C. C. Haven

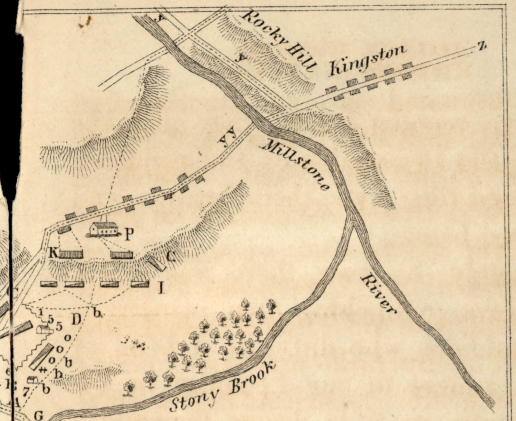
In 1859. Chiefly from

Wilkinson's Memoirs & Maps.

Published 1816.



A Route of Gen.l Washington
B Route of Sullivans division
a McKonky's ferry eight & half miles to Trenton
b Road to Bear Tavern one mile
c Cadwallader's
d Gen.l Dickinson
e Rutherford's
F Hessians surrender
G Hands Rifle corps
h Scott Lawson & the Parkers Virginia Troops



Key to engagements on 2nd & 3rd Jan.y 1777.

AAA	Assunpink Creek & Campfire ground
O	Bridge over ditto
B	American near Five mile Run
C	Maidenhead now Lawrenceville
D	Cochranes
ccc	Hand & Forest at Shabbakoug
dd	Cornwallis in column
hhh	St. Clair brigade at ford of the Assunpink
F	Wilkinson's position
GGG	Night March per Quaker Road
B	Quaker Meeting House
f	Stony Brook
5.5	William Clark's House
7.	Thomas Clark's House
12	American line under Mercer
3.4.	British under Mawhood
000	Moulders Battery
bbb	Washington rallying Penna. troops
h	Hitchcock's Regiment rushing up
X	17th British Regiment repulsed & running off towards Pennington
f	55th Regiment halting
K	Last stand made by the B
P	Princeton College
yyy	March of the Americans ng Princeton
Z	Road to Brunswick
LLL	Branch Turnpike

Scale ½ Mile to an Inch.

0 1 2 3 4 5

The Duval Steam Lith. Co. Phil.a

was not the only engagement in the revolutionary struggle here deserving the name of a battle. If conflict and loss of lives and success in repulsing an enemy constitute a battle, the fighting on the 2d of January, 1777, just a week after the Hessians were taken, continuing from Shabbakonk, on the heights of the town, near Trenton, through Greene and Warren streets, and finally at the Assanpink Bridge and opposite the fords of that little stream, this was in every sense a more important battle than the gallant but short-lived success of our army on the 26th of December, 1776.

I shall proceed to narrate, however, the particulars of both these conflicts as faithfully and truly as my humble investigations of them will permit. Let my readers study these relations carefully, and, let their opinions be what they may, the writer will be satisfied.

Washington, whilst lying in perilous ambush, covered in his retreat by the impassable Delaware, still relied on the chance of making good use of that river before

General Howe could. He was in New York or New Brunswick, waiting for it to be bridged over with ice. History has censured that officer for his love of ease, procrastination, and voluptuous pleasure. Not thus could our noble hero devote his anguished hours. His writings to Congress, to his brother, and to the Committee of Safety in Philadelphia, and confidentially to General Cadwallader, then at Bristol with the new recruits raised in Pennsylvania, prefiguring what he was about to attempt with his shattered forces, seemed as if nothing could dismay him.

A combined attack on Colonel Rahl, when he would probably be off his guard on Christmas night, promised some chance of success. But

> "Between the acting of a dreadful deed
> And the first motion,"

a terrible risk had to be run to make the blow succeed without failure. It was, from necessity, to be a blow in the dark, rendered unsuspected by the supposed impassable state of the Delaware and the opposing

elements, and so utterly derided by the boasting Hessian colonel, although he was warned of his danger by General Grant at Princeton, that he took a faint raid upon one of his pickets as all the attack to be provided against that night, and accordingly dismissed his troops to carouse in their quarters whilst he joined the tories in "cards, wine and dice," and passed that stormy Christmas night, until morning found him too excited to "make any regular stand," as Washington's report says, against our brave but fatigued and half-starved soldiers.

The critical state of the river, which had been frozen over above the ferry, but was then running rapidly with masses of ice, so sharp and jagged that boats could only be navigated across the stream with the utmost care and labor by the marine soldiers from New England, and the "*alongshoremen*," riggers, ship masters, &c., from Philadelphia, (eighty-two of them under Moulder, with his famous battery), occasioned a delay of eight or nine hours. Lutze's celebrated

picture of this scene is, in the main delineations, a strikingly interesting illustration of it; but he is charged with the license of a painter, as well as using an anachronism in point of time, in representing a general officer, probably General Knox, one of the truest and most beloved of Washington's friends lustily bearing up the flag of the stars and stripes, before we had that noble banner ordered by Congress to be the American emblem of our Union. He errs also, in representing the crossing in marine boats instead of Durham barges, so called in those days, in use here. But these seem to me trifling errors when the spirit of the design is so well made manifest.

It was Washington's well digested and comprehensive plan to make such a combined attack on the enemy's forces stationed all along the left bank of the Delaware, from Trenton to Burlington, and as well as at Mount Holly, that they should all be captured. His own little army did not exceed three thousand men. Of these he kept under his own command about twenty-four

hundred, and sent the residue, under the orders of General Ewing, to attempt the passage of the river in boats directly opposite Trenton. The new Pennsylvania recruits and a few of the New England troops, under Colonel Hitchcock, were posted at Bristol, and General Cadwallader had been secretly instructed by him to make every exertion, when the combined movement should be ready, to cross over to Burlington and drive in Count Dunop's videttes at that place and compel him to abandon his post at Mount Holly. Owing, however, to the impassable state of the river and the rough weather, no part of these arrangements could be executed, and Washington alone had the difficult task and glorious opportunity to accomplish his part of the stratagem at Trenton by his intrepid night march. Ewing's division was prevented crossing opposite Trenton.

On Christmas day he began his march from Newtown towards the river, and ordered the other divisions to second his movements, and if possible to entrap the

whole force of the enemy in the snare laid for them. The anxiety and personal sufferings of Washington and his devoted officers and men on that Christmas anniversary cannot now be conceived. I shall not vainly attempt to describe it. He had ordered three days' rations for the troops, but what these rations were, perhaps can hardly be conceived. That they were not modern holiday gifts or even unleavened bread is certain; but the night of the passover was at hand, and under God's providence the deliverers of their country from a despotic vassallage were ready, if it should be His decree, to be sacrificed, like their leader, in attempting its redemption from the hands of its oppressors. They were then suffering almost a daily martyrdom, and their patriotism and faith carried them forward without faltering. But a brighter morrow followed the darkness of that terrible night. The brilliant advent of a return of good fortune at Trenton dispelled the despair that hung over the country like a pall, and followed up, as it was by brighter days a week after,

the Sons of Liberty once more greeted the cheering beams of an undying independence.

The scene of this memorable adventure, commencing at McKonkey's ferry, or, as it is now called, Washington's Crossing, about eight and a half miles from the City Hall in Trenton, and on the new road running near the Lunatic Asylum, can be favorably viewed on both sides of the Delaware. It was about six o'clock on the evening of the 25th of December, 1776, more than an hour after it was dark, in the midst of a chilly eastern storm of snow and sleet, that the boats were got ready on the west side of the river and the embarkation of our then already fatigued and suffering troops, with baggage, cannon, horses, &c., was begun. It was a confused and boisterous time. In the darkness neither silence nor order could be preserved as the commander would have wished, for there was imminent danger of his plans being watched and discovered by the tory spies hovering about. Indeed, they were discovered before he

could reach the town, and communicated to Colonel Rahl after midnight. But that jolly commander was then, it is said, too much engaged in card playing in a whisky-punch party at the house of a tory friend, to attend to them.

The shadows of night, however, and the noise of the rushing wind and waters, became their security. Washington made the best of his necessities. He was no pilot, and never was his own trumpeter. He called on General Knox to use his Stentorian voice to give orders to marshal the several divisions of the barges, and when they were about ready, inquired who would take the helm as a leader. For this responsible office, traditionary accounts say there were several who offered their services. Lieutenant Cuthbert, of Moulder's *along-shore boys,* assured his son *they* assisted in piloting Washington across. Several of the Jersey boatmen on the river are said to have done this; but the Annals of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, report that when the General asked who will take the lead?

he was answered that Captain Blount was a coaster and acquainted with the Delaware navigation. Then Washington replied—"Captain Blount, please take the helm!" He it was, then, in connection with the brave Marblehead marine soldiers under Colonel Glover, who probably managed this perilous Argonautic enterprise. It was done, but not until more than nine hours of incessant toil and struggle with the contending elements had been spent, and still another hour passed before the army got under marching orders. Then Washington, with Generals Greene and Lord Sterling, Sullivan, Mercer, and other field officers, under his orders, marched forward on their eventful expedition, buffeting the northeast storm; first up to the Bear Tavern for a mile or more, and then down to Birmingham, about four miles further. Here the army was put under strict injunctions as when starting, not to speak a word aloud, and to move as noiselessly and orderly as possible, obeying the word of command strictly, and to remember the pass-word

(which Dr. Rush asserted he saw Washington write before he left Newtown) "Victory or Death."

Here, also, the army was re-organized into two divisions. The one under Washington in the van, accompanied by Generals Greene, Sterling, Mercer, Stevens, and others, was to take the Pennington road leading into the north end of Trenton, and the other division, under Sullivan, Stark, and others, was to enter the town by the river road on the west side, passing by General Dickinson's mansion, and drive in the Hessians posted there. By this double movement it was intended to entrap Rahl's whole force. The failure of Ewing's detachment, however, to cross the river opposite Trenton, and of the auxiliary arrangement at Bristol, under General Cadwallader, prevented the anticipated capture of Count Dunop's troops at Burlington and Mount Holly.

The success of Washington's *coup de main* upon the Hessians has now to be related, the plan of which, as well as of the whole

combined enterprise, which could not be carried out on account of the ice, in all its arrangements, was his own, as his confidential letters during its inception clearly show.

I have thus far written from memory and the reflections which have long been fixed impressions on my mind concerning the important events here recorded. Of their truth and fairness I can refer to general history, and to vouchers in my possession, not herein quoted. My own published collections of new and old revelations have been used by Bancroft, Lossing, and other historians, but have not thus far been specifically referred to in this narrative.

One incident occurred during the critical movements of the army on its secret march to Trenton which, as it can be opportunely introduced here, I will quote what relates to it from my "Annals of Trenton."

Colonel Rahl, with three regiments of Hessians and a company of British light-horse, had two warnings sent him, one that he would be attacked on Christmas day, as before alluded to, and the other by some

tory spy probably, up the Delaware, announcing Washington's crossing at McKonkey's ferry. Both failed of their design. The first was defeated in this wise: the particulars related were obtained by the writer from the Potts family and General Anderson, of glorious Fort Sumter fame, and Lars Anderson, Esq., of Cincinnati, both sons of the distinguished hero of our narrative, Captain Richard Clough Anderson, of Kentucky, serving in Scott's Virginia regiment during the old war.

Colonel Rahl was a brave, jovial officer, fond of music, parade, wine, hot whisky-punch, and of card playing. Stacy Potts, a Quaker, who was his host, was no card-player and no tory, but a non-combatant, of course, yet good for a game of chequers or fox and geese, with an enemy, even when concealing Mr. Lanning, a Whig refugee, who afterwards piloted our army down the Pennington road on the 26th of December.

It is stated that Colonel Rahl, after wait-

ing all day on the look-out for the enemy, was playing a game of fox and geese or chequers with his loyal-like host, when an alarm at the outskirts of the town was heard, and, springing up, he left his head-quarters, mustered his troops, "found the outposts attacked," (as Sir Wm. Howe has reported to Lord George Germaine), "and drove the enemy off, and then he (Rahl) attacked Washington unsuccessfully." [See London Magazine of February, 1777].

Gordon, the historian, says: "Colonel Rahl dismissed his men to their quarters after the firing of Christmas night, and some got drunk." This is very probable.

Mr. Potts stated "that the brave Colonel never returned that night to finish the game, but next morning after he was mortally wounded, he was brought to his house and died there."

The company of Virginia regulars, before alluded to, under command of Captain Anderson, were on a scout by permission of General Stevens, but without Washington's knowledge, and approaching Tren-

ton on Christmas evening, attacked and wounded the picket, took their guns and hastily marched back to join the army on its way to surprise the Hessians. They and their commander were satisfied there was no further cause for alarm. They were probably off their guard, although Sir William Howe's report states "that Colonel Rahl was advised of Washington's approach, and made an unsuccessful attack on our troops." General Washington, however, says "the enemy never made any regular stand." The surprise, nevertheless, was complete; more so, perhaps, than our General apprehended, for it is said he was angry with General Stevens when Anderson's attack was told to him, fearing he had alarmed Rahl, and that his own plans would be defeated. Captain Anderson however, was afterwards complimented for his brave and well-timed manœuvre. Washington, with many a noble General, has been free to admit

> "There is a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough hew them how we will."

Another anecdote connected with this "strange eventful history" is related on good authority, and the belief in it is quite current in Trenton.

The reported statement of Mr. Potts that Colonel Rahl never returned to his headquarters on Christmas night, after he left his house, and Sir William Howe's belief that he was apprised of Washington's approach, render the truth of the following story possible, if not probable.

It is said in those times which tried men's souls, the taste of American Independence did not agree with some stomachs as well as British punch and old Jamaica. In the old mansion still standing at the corner of Warren and State streets, lately occupied as a liquor store by the deceased Mr. Norcross, now converted into a drug store, and owned by S. K. Wilson, Esq., there resided a wealthy friend of the tories, Abraham Hunt. On the night of Christmas, 1776, when loyal subjects of his blessed Majesty George the Third, were supposed to have the best spirits, it was

natural that they should wish British friends and their allies, to join in a game of cards—brag, perhaps. Colonel Rahl, it is reported, after his great alarm was succeeded by the brilliant victory over the ragamuffin Yankees (then so called) at his outposts, could not, or would not, resist having a good time at Mr. Hunt's hospitable home.

> "Cards, wine, and dice—no coffee house nor inn—
> But tea and scandal cheered the souls within."

The wintry night was whiled away, and, towards morning, whist and whiskey punch monopolized the *ring:* Washington and state affairs were not much thought of. A colored man at the door was ordered not to let any one go out or come in to disturb the party.

This was the custom of the times, and the janitor obeyed orders. After midnight, Colonel Rahl, being in the midst of a very interesting game of whist, a rap summoned the servant to the door, who inquired, "Who is there?" "A friend—I *must* speak to Colonel Rahl!" *I must,* was uttered with the emphasis of Julius Cæsar. "No!" said

the janitor! "I have orders to let no one in." The messenger had a note which he was ordered to deliver into the hand of Colonel Rahl, informing him that Washington was on his way down to surprise him, and having called in vain at his headquarters had to submit. He sent it in to him, and it being put into the hands of the Colonel, he glanced at the superscription and thrust it into his pocket, intending to read it, but he forgot it until, bleeding and dying,* he was taken to his headquarters, where, handing out his pocketbook to Mrs. Potts, he discovered the note and reading it, he said, with a sigh, "If I had read this at Mr.

* Colonel Rahl was conveyed to his former headquarters at Mr. Potts' house, and after having been visited by Washington who bestowed on him such kindly sympathy as an unfortunate officer would rightly appreciate, died that night. His remains are supposed to have been buried in the Presbyterian grave-yard. Some of the gold treasure belonging to him, or to some one from whom it had been sequestered in this vicinity, and buried also near Mr. Potts' residence, was found in 1870, to the value of more than two hundred dollars in gold. [*See New Jersey Historical Society Proceedings* 1870].

Hunt's I should not now be here," This forcibly suggests the thought that the post of duty should never be neglected, as it was in Colonel Rahl's case, for self-gratification. whilst a good cause, however hopeless, may be saved by energy, perseverence, and watchfulness, when entrusted to a general who, like Washington, never listened to despair, but relied steadfastly on the Providence of God.

To return now to our history as contained in the Annals of Trenton, pages 20, 21, and 22. When the two divisions of Washington's army entered the town, about eight o'clock on the morning of the 26th of December, 1776, Colonel Rahl's forces were off their guard and much scattered. It was Washington's design to entrap them. When arriving at the entrance of the town, where Warren and Greene streets (then King and Queen) unite, he came down Warren with his artillery and the greater part of his division which had entered by the Pennington road, but he sent a detachment under Colonel Hand, down Greene

and Perry streets, to prevent the enemy from escaping to Princeton. The first conflict with the main part of the Hessians, who were endeavoring to form into a line with a battery, took place near the head of Warren street. Captain William Washington, afterwards a distinguished partizan officer, and Lieutenant Monroe, the future President of the United States, were successful, with a few brave men, in capturing two of the enemy's guns, which were afterwards turned upon them. Thus repulsed, they scattered and ran across to Greene street.

General Sullivan's division with Stark in advance, had rushed through Willow street and along Front towards the bridge across the Assunpink at the foot of Greene. Only the dragoons, of the Hessian army and the British light-horse escaped over the bridge towards Bordentown. The Hessian main forces had to turn up Greene street, and with Colonel Rahl's scattered troops, whom he was trying to form into something like a line, were forced back by

Washington's division, and finally huddled together in an old apple orchard extending eastward from Stockton street to where the canal now is near Clinton, and between State and Perry streets. Then, between Montgomery and Stockton streets east of the old Quaker church, Washington was about directing in person a discharge of cannister shot from Morgan's battery, upon the disordered and bewildered Hessians, whose commander had been mortally wounded, when, according to General Wilkinson, who was a witness of this morning's encounter, Captain Morgan (or Baylor, Bancroft says), told Washington they had struck their colors. Raising his arms and being satisfied of the fact, he exclaimed, "Why, so they have," and galloped towards them. The bleeding and vanquished Colonel Rahl, no longer the dreaded master of this important post, but unhorsed and dying, gave up his sword to our General, at that moment pre-eminently the saviour of his country. Let Americans gratefully consider with what emotions he

was excited at that auspicious event. Success had seemed to have abandoned the great cause for which he had risked his life, his fortune, and his fame, and instead of disastrous battles and almost hopeless retreats ever since he had left New England, here was his first signal triumph to reward him for his brave perseverance, and his comrades for their long-enduring sufferings, fidelity, and patriotism. With grateful pride let their descendants still imagine the heartfelt burst of exultation Washington and the brave band with him felt at that ecstatic moment! From "freedom's dying embers," here were rekindled those altar-fires over our happy land which have shed a beacon-light throughout the world—lights which no campaign of disasters can now extinguish and no succeeding glory can eclipse. In the inspired language of our Trenton poetess, Mrs. Ellen Clementine Howarth, our own feelings are expressed. Let Jersey's sons and daughters be no longer unmindful of their monumental duty, but erect a suitable cenotaph on

the consecrated ground here best suited for it,

> To place his statue where the beams of morning
> Shall earliest kiss his brow,
> Where he who led the hope of Freedom's dawning
> May herald sunrise now.
> There build the Monument! record the story,
> And while our waters run
> Let the first name upon our page of glory,
> Be written WASHINGTON!

Here, with propriety, might be terminated my account of this first battle in Trenton. I might enlarge upon it by giving the details of the capture and disposition of the Hessians, the spoils taken, and the needed rest and breakfast enjoyed by our tired and exhausted troops who had been nearly twenty hours without rest, including less than an hour in capturing one thousand of the enemy's troops. It ought to be stated also, that after a short rejoicing and refreshment in the Hessians' comfortable quarters here, our fatigued troops returned into Pennsylvania by the same ferry where they had crossed, and took their prisoners with them. Such details, however, are in

so many old and modern histories they need not be repeated in this Manual intended chiefly for newer revelations. In justice to Mr. Bancroft, however, who has used many of the new revelations published by me, improved by his known skill in altering the phraseology and appropriating the writings of others! I wish to give him credit for what later particulars there are concerning the surprise of the Hessians, which he gained from German and other sources, and appear in his ninth volume of the history of the United States.

The treacherous duplicity and treasonable complicity used by Gates, Lee, and Reed, to all of whom, from my own investigations, I had imputed cowardly or contemptible tergiversation and desertion of our cause in its utmost need of their services, when I published my Essay on Washington and his Army in 1856, Mr. Bancroft has alluded to and added many new proofs thereof and has fully confirmed the intimations given by me. Gates, although he afterwards had the honor of receiving Burgoyne's surrender,

which was mainly due to other officers in our service, never reversed his reputation for infidelity to Washington, both before and after the critical situation he was in—here in New Jersey; the jealous, ambitious Lee proved to be a traitor, and Colonel Joseph Reed, in spite of his professions and boasted incorruptibility, Mr. Bancroft boldly charges with having made an application to Count Dunop for pardon, and whilst professing to have written and done all he could to help his noble chief in his brave design to capture the Hessians, was, on that very night, within the British lines at Burlington, "having previously obtained leave for a conference with Dunop." After success crowned Washington's bold enterprise, however, he returned to active duty, sought to gain favor with Washington, and did receive his forgiveness, but never seems to have been restored to his full confidence or that of his fellow officers who were faithful in the darkest hour of our country's agony.

Mr. Brancroft's version of the movement, numbers, and capture of the Hessians in

Trenton is different from mine and many others that I have studied. It is likely to have been influenced by what he has gained from the German accounts. But I doubt if it is more correct than what Washington and the Committee of Safety reported at the time to Congress and has been generally accredited here.

There is some difference in the number of the enemy's killed and wounded and of those who got away and were off duty, and Mr. Bancroft also says one of the regiments made a surrender to Lord Sterling, in which he may have been correct. His statement of the number of cannon in Washington's army is an error. It lacks two of the number reported by the officer who had charge of them, who says there were twenty, including, I presume, the two brass pieces of Moulder's battery. It is likely their guns were brought along with the other eighteen of the regular service, and the whole had to be transported from and back to the headquarters, which must have been an arduous duty over such roads

as were traversed on that terrible night tramp. Mr. Bancroft only allows seventeen hours for the time taken to accomplish the expedition and thirty-five minutes for the duration of the battle, which certainly is too little. I allow twenty hours for the distance traveled and the delay in crossing the ferry and the surprise of the Hessians, which seems almost an incredible exploit. Let the reader of any history quote a parallel to it if he can. If there is any, it has escaped the observation of the writer. But this was the turning point of a nation's destiny, the first reversal of fortune's wheel continued to be turned in our favor in the two succeeding battles which liberated New Jersey from thraldom and ignominy, giving hope and confidence to the cause of Independence, that eventually extended the principles of Liberty and Right throughout the civilized world, and was an incomparable event.

The second return of Washington to Trenton with increased forces—The repulse of Cornwallis on his march from Princeton and defeat at the bridge of the Assunpink.

Before commencing the account of the events connected with the subjects above alluded to, I deem it allowable to quote a few reflections upon the effect which the capture of the Hessians had, as stated in my history of Washington and his army, copies of which are not now to be had. It is to be hoped that such a true and interesting story as that recorded of "the wonderful days in New Jersey," as Mr. Bancroft calls them, may be read and enjoyed by the young men and women in America, both at school and at home, as much as romances, entirely destitute of truth or much moral benefit, but which tend merely to corrupt and demoralize public taste.

"The conception, execution, and beneficial influence of the successful enterprise at Trenton had an epic grandeur in our

history worthy the pen of genius and the pencil of our best painters. Irving, Leutze, and Trumbull, as well as others of later celebrity, have done it justice. Suffice it to say here, that Washington commanded, Greene, Sullivan, St. Clair, Mercer, Sterling, Knox, Dickinson, Stevens, Wilkinson, Stark, Hamilton, Baylor, McPherson, Glover, Hitchcock, Forest, Hand, and Monroe. Captains Washington, Frelinghausen, Mott, Moore, Moulder, Anderson, Scott, and others of our brave officers, besides two thousand four hunhundred of our hardiest and most reliable soldiers, all did their duty on that occasion."

By this exploit one great object was accomplished. Hope and confidence in our cause were restored, the deliberators and doubters leaped to the free side of the fence, the disaffected and their British allies were amazed, and the music of "God save the King," was not so fascinating to some loyal ears as it had been, and Washington's strategy served to astonish Sir William and Lord Howe, completely to

> "Confound their politics,
> And frustrate their knavish tricks,"

whilst our new-born republic ventured once more to look out of its cradle with an air of independence.

On the evening of the 26th of December, our brave but overtasked troops returned to their desolate quarters, located on the wet and muddy grounds on the west side of the Delaware, in company with the discomfited and pitiless Hessians. A day or two was allowed the army for repose. But for Washington there could be no repose, even for a day. He knew the perils that still surrounded him. He could judge best how to turn the enemy's panic to our own advantage, and to prepare for that vindictive reaction which was sure to stimulate the haughty British Lords (Howe and Cornwallis) who, whilst hunting the lion, had presumed to sell his skin.

With all the despatch possible, in the slow mode of communication in the olden time, the news of Washington's surprise of the Hessians was spread throughout the land. The bow of hope, radiant with the promise of better fortune, was hailed

with delight, spanning the cloud which still hung over the eastern horizon, where Liberty first had its birth. Despair no longer lowered with appalling irresolution and recreancy in the Middle States, but Virginia, with some others of the Southern States, were filled with joy at the success which one of their own sons and his brave comrades, had achieved. Congress, which had really never abandoned either hope or resolution, but were convulsed with the ill-success and unexpected apathy of those of their constituents who had been foremost in extolling their Declaration of Independence, now renewed their efforts to sustain it. In Pennsylvania they had many tories to contend with. Philadelphia was an unsafe place for them to hold their councils in, and New Jersey was deemed equally so.—They had to go to Baltimore, after investing the commander-in-chief of their forces with almost unlimited power. But, with the dawn, which had just broken over the hills of New Jersey, that state with some

of its neighbors, woke again to duty, and renewed co-operation with Freedom's faithful sons.

But, after this reaction, Washington's prudent mind was filled with apprehension. He was fearful of a relapse, which is often most to be dreaded when the system has begun to be relieved from severe disorder and debility. Thus far, only one of the skillfully compounded remedies, which he had been meditating upon to restore the vitality of the disordered body politic, had been successful. The Hessian cloud of cormorants, who had been hovering around his army, clamorous for their prey, had been caged or dispersed. He wished to have West Jersey clear of the whole of them. But the British regulars, now being mustered at Princeton, were soon joined by the foreign German troops under Count Donop and other fugitives, and were ready to pounce upon our skeleton corps who had so recently frightened and astonished their servile allies.

The other two parts of Washington's

reserved plan of reversing his defensive position into an offensive one, consisted in preparing to defeat the schemes of his irritated enemy by measuring swords with him once more in Trenton, to retard his approach as much as he was able, to fortify and defend his own position at the bridge and fords of the Assunpink, to fight and outgeneral him there if possible, and then outflank his position at Princeton, and if successful there, even to break up Sir William Howe's quarters and seize his stores at New Brunswick. He hoped, at all events, to secure ultimately the high grounds at Morristown for his winter quarters, and relieve New Jersey of her ruthless invaders.

With the odds that were against him and the difficulties in his way, which might be thought almost insuperable, his scheme might seem to be a forlorn hope. But it had to be tried to save his own and his country's fame, even though the auspicious advent of the new-born Republic should be sacrificed in the attempt. He, therefore, nerved his Herculean energies for the con-

flict, and then mustered the few Spartans of his veteran band which he had left, and united with them the new volunteer recruits that Generals Cadwallader and Mifflin had been able to enlist of Pennsylvania's noblest sons, and with this combined force, which did not exceed more than five thousand effective men, was determined to take the boldest measures to defeat the enemy, "*a tout hazard.*"

The new recruits had never been under fire, and as to the remnants of the old regiments, they were without regular accoutrements, many of them without bayonets, cooking utensils, tents, shoes and stockings, or money, and almost all of them destitute of decent or comfortable clothing, and all of the sick and wounded, without ambulances or medicine, such as in modern army regulations are deemed indispensable. Such was the actual condition of Washington's forces on the opening of the eventful year 1777.

Let the thoughtful reader not here turn away disgusted at the repetition of these

truthful statements; for, although our country may now boast of its millions of men and money for national defence, and is in no fear of any demand for tribute, or taxation by any foreign power, or the existence of domestic slavery of any sort, we need not undervalue those hardy pioneers of independence, who in the agonies of our Revolutionary trials risked their all for the overthrow of Colonial vassalage which, like that of Canada and British America at this day, might have kept us dwarfed into insignificant importance as an appendage to an empire, which is now no longer our rival in national prestige or continental sovereignty.

Washington's complete plan of reactionary and progressive operations for the winter campaign were communicated to Congress and a few confidential friends, but they depended upon conditions and circumstances wholly beyond control or foresight. The first of the triune series had proved successful. The second, which involved more of courage and strategy, had

now to be tried. Its history will include the details of that memorable day's events, which make the 2d of January, 1777, one of signal distinction. Two nights and a day were employed in preparatory and strategic movements, and although there was no pitched battle, in the modern sense of that term, there were many skirmishes, repulses, and cannonading, that deserve the character of important engagements, or combats, or battles, as that of Lexington or the capture of the Hessians do.

Mr. Bancroft in his eclectic and brilliant report of the "wonderful events in New Jersey," speaks of the "THREE critical days, January 1st, 2d, and 3d," in his fourteenth chapter headed ASSANPINK AND PRINCETON. He has done good service to all lovers of true history by giving the honor of his distinguished name to authenticate what other historians had ignored, but what I claimed before him as "a battle gained" by the revelations collected by me and sent so him. He omits and varies some things, however, which I think important

enough to notice, and which others may choose or not to call corrections. He spells the little river in Trenton, Assanpink. Originally it is Assunpink, an Indian name, meaning "stone water," as Dr. Gordon in his history and Barber and Howe have it, and I have found this to be correct in Jones' Indian Bulletin, No. 1. I therefore prefer to use Assunpink instead of Assanpink, as Mr. Bancroft has it. And I still call Colonel Rahl by the spelling and pronunciation used here by Germans, as also by Washington Irving, instead of leaving out the *h* and adding an *l*, as Mr. Bancroft does, although from his being a good German scholar and having had access to publications and manuscripts in connection with Donop and the Hessians, he is more likely to be right than I am.

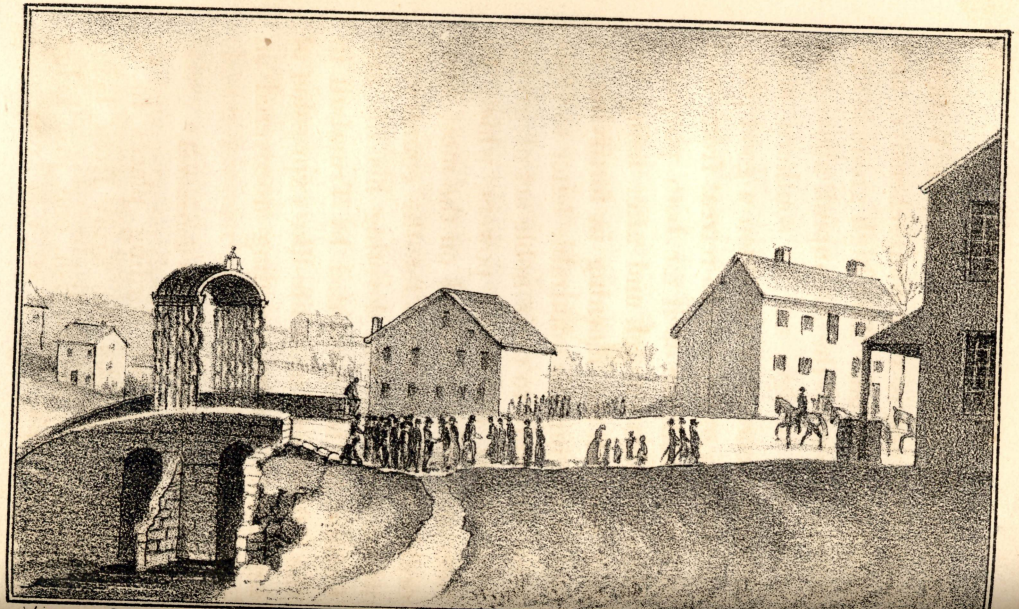
But he omits some very important particulars about the events in this quarter, which, from my local and persevering investigations here and elsewhere, I claim to be important and correct. I think my little essays (not to call them histories)

have the accuracy and fitness of Mosaic work, if not their value. They represent battle scenes if not battles, but I make the truly critical days to be four and not three, as Mr. Bancroft does, and these four separate pieces of Mosaic, I call a very important corner stone or stand point in our history.

On the 1st day of January, 1777, which I term the second critical day, following that of the capture of the Hessians on the 26th of December, 1776, Washington was engaged early in concentrating and organizing his whole forces at Trenton, except a part of those under Cadwallader that were united to them on the next morning. He had sent out a scout to reconnoitre the enemy's position and find out their force and probable intention. He found the thunderbolt charged with portentous destruction, ready to be launched upon him on the morrow, but a new round-about road favored his escape should he be defeated on the Assunpink.

Dividing the town of Trenton from what

is called South Trenton, runs the little river or rivulet, having its source in the notheast, towards Lawrenceville, and running southerly until in Trenton its course is westward, making a bend near where the railroad depot now is, and forming a pond above the dam, at Greene street, and thence below the Assunpink bridge, as it is represented in 1789, when Washington, passing through the triumphal arch, was welcomed with songs and flowers, twelve years after his gallant defence of it, and thence it debouches into the Delaware river, which runs then nearly south until it turns at Bordentown westward towards Philadelphia. From Trenton over that bridge at the foot of Greene street, there is a road to Bordentown, which is about seven miles distant, and there is another outlet called White Horse Road, which connects with the Quaker Road, by which our army found their way to Princeton, on the morning of the 3d of January, as will be seen in the sequel. The accompanying map, for which and for other details I am



View of the ASSUNPINK BRIDGE built in 1760, and the TRIUMPHAL ARCH,

principally indebted to General Wilkinson's memoirs, is very comprehensive, and may be relied on. The high grounds and sloping banks of the Assunpink above and below the bridge, on its southern side, afforded General Washington a good pivotal position to fight or to retreat from, and he made good use of it for both purposes. Here was his citadel, and after using the best part of the morning in fortifying it, and in writing his admirable letter to Congress, in reply to their noble act of giving him almost dictatorial powers, which he then and there accepted on the most honorable and safe terms for the country, in whose cause he was devoting his life and fortune, he is represented by Trumbull in the loftiest and most life-like expression of his heroic nature, standing uncovered on the bridge,

"Like Teneriffe on Atlas unremoved."

There were two fording places to be guarded to protect the army from being outflanked by the British, one just below the dam and bridge, at the foot of Warren

street, where no bridge was then, and the other near Millham, on the road from Princeton. This was guarded by St. Clair, and, fortunately, was not passed by the enemy.

It was Washington's intention, evidently, to check the advance of Cornwallis, to thin his ranks, and, by harrassing him during his march, to weaken his confidence, and to decoy him, adroitly, in pursuit of a retreating but daring adversary, with as much procrastination as practicable, so that the day might be consumed before he could reach our fortified position on the Assunpink, towards which Washington wished his attention exclusively invited, so as not to have his rear so exposed as to place his army in a "*cul de sac.*"

The commander-in-chief having thus chosen his own position, and arranged the heavy artillery and the infantry, who had no bayonets, on the high grounds converging towards the bridge, on each side of the road, now Broad street, and a select body of those old troops, who had bayonets,

placed in readiness behind the old mill, then there, to enfilade the British forces and cut them off, or destroy them, if practicable, with cannon—also in the rear, in direct range of the enemy, if he attempted to cross the bridge, was well prepared for the expected attack on the next day.

To harass and retard the march of Cornwallis on the road from Princeton, he sent up a detachment on the night of the 1st of January, under General Fermoy, with a battery of six guns, under charge of the brave Captain Forrest, Colonel Hand's riflemen, Colonel Scott's Virginia regiment, and the German batallion, under Hausinger, to Five-Mile-Run, on the Princeton road, where they were posted, with pickets extending to Eight-Mile-Run, now Lawrenceville.

These precautionary measures showed Washington's prudence and sagacity, Seldom has strategic skill been more needed or efficient. More than one officer has had the credit of suggesting the plan of this manœuvre, the bold stand made by the

troops on the retreat to Trenton, and the choosing of the route on the march to Princeton, by the Quaker road, south of the Assunpink. Bancroft seems positive that the entire undertaking belonged to the commander-in-chief's own preconceived intention. But, however, in the throes of that agonizing crisis, whoever may have suggested the Cæsarean operation of delivering the republic out of its perilous situation, and of eventually causing a separation, fatal to the hopes of the mother country—let it be remembered, that many may be entitled to a share of distinction whose particular merits may never have been justly honored in history, especially the brave subaltern officers and suffering soldiers, who deserved a rich share of the glory the country gained by their efforts.

Washington's precautionary and prudential preparations for the expected attack of his more numerous, arrogant, and exasperated enemies on the morrow, were being completed on the first of the "critical" days in January, when he had got together the

new recruits, and united with them the hardy veterans whom he and they could rely on in any emergency. They had just re-enlisted for six weeks further service, and were being paid off with the hard cash just received from the patriotic Robert Morris. He was up by daylight on that morning, in Philadelphia, and got $50,000 of his friends, some of whom were Quakers, who lent it to him on his own security, without doubting that he would make such use of it as might satisfy the more scrupulous of the brother-loving peace-makers. Washington still found time, *on that day*, to address several letters to Congress and others, and to write up his account with the United States, crediting part of the "*Cash received of Robert Morris, Esq., in specie,*" and showing a balance due him on his private account of nearly $2,500, in specie. This I extract from the fac-simile transcript of his settlement, made afterwards with the government, published by P. Force.

On the morning of the 2d of January,

1777, as already stated, Lord Cornwallis had assembled at Princeton over eight thousand troops—well equipped with arms, ammunition, food, clothing, and every comfort, which the Americans had not. All but three regiments and one company of light-horse, of these eight thousand troops, were gallantly mustered early on that Thursday morning to repair the disaster which befel the drowsy and disordered Hessians on the previous week. Never since the first attack on the insurgent Yankees, on the 17th of June, 1775, at Bunker Hill, was there a more indignant or more sanguine feeling of assured victory than these haughty Britons had with their bright guns and red coats, and their hired bands of foreign troops and Scotch Highlanders, led on by British Lords and Knights and the bravest generals of the army, maddened by their recent disgrace. With King George's banner and the thrilling music of "God save the King," we can imagine there was no lack of spirit in the officers or men on

that fair and rather mild winter morning. After leaving another regiment of the army at Lawrenceville, Lord Cornwallis marched on as fast as the roads would permit towards Trenton.

I must here again use my own carefully prepared account of this day's proceedings as published in "Washington and his Army," in 1856, and in "Thirty days in New Jersey," in 1867, acknowledging here, as I have done in the latter work, my indebtedness for the facts and traditions which guided me in my statements, to six different sources alluded to therein. To these I refer.

The first shot that was fired upon the enemy on the morning of the 2d of January, 1777, between the two outposts, killed a Hessian Yager, pursuing a Mr. Hunt towards Lawrenceville within the American pickets.

Apprised by this of the enemy's approach, our troops at Five-Mile-Run were called to arms and retired slowly until orders were received from the commander

to dispute every inch of ground without too great risk of their guns. Colonel Hand with his riflemen, and Major Miller with the guards, and Forrest with his six pieces of artillery, at once faced about and made a stand that checked the enemy's advance. This they continued to do with much loss to the British as they advanced, until they reached Shabbakonk, a little rivulet about two miles from Trenton, where there was a thick wood extending on one side of the road nearly a mile in length. Here Hand posted his riflemen, and with Miller's guards on the left, waited under cover of the trees until the British came within point blank shot, and then opening a heavy fire, drove them back with great loss and confusion. As they retreated, their flank and advanced guards were pursued by our riflemen. The boldness of this manœuvre completely checked the whole British forces, and by threatening them with a general attack, caused Cornwallis to form them in order of battle, and bringing up his artillery, he scoured the woods for half an hour to dis-

lodge our riflemen. Before the whole of this could be got through with, full two hours were lost to him, and this gave our fatigued men time to refresh themselves and prepare for another such skirmish, or, more properly, repulse. The British finally got by the woods, and leaving the Shabbakonk in the rear, wheeled to the high ground on the right.

On the north side of Trenton, about a mile from where the town then was, there is a ravine leading to the Assunpink. On the southwest side of the hollow the advance of the Americans was posted in strong force, having Forrest's battery and Moulder's two guns, with about six hundred men to defend their position. Here they made their last stand. Here Washington and Greene were on the ground after three o'clock, and after thanking the troops, especially the artillery and riflemen, for their bravery, and encouraging them still to make as bold a resistance as they could on that ground, Washington retired to marshal the forces for the defences on the Assunpink. *There*, un-

doubtedly, he was then expecting the decisive conflict on which would depend the fortunes of his country, his own reputation as a general, with the probable sacrifice of his life and the total destruction or capture of his devoted band. He, if Trumbull's celebrated picture is correct, (the original of which was bought by the Society of the Cincinnati, and is now in the gallery at New Haven), was dismounted and standing by his proud white charger, as undaunted as himself. They both seemed to breathe defiance and to deserve victory. The General is represented as taking his stand on the west side of the bridge, which was the precise position that old Mr. Howland states was the spot where he (Mr. Howland) was previously crowded against the General's boot in passing over the bridge when the sun was about setting.

The last skirmish with the British on the outskirts of the town was now waxing warm. One of the officers engaged in it states that Cornwallis brought up a battery to attack our guns, and when the action had con-

tinued twenty or twenty-five minutes, the British were formed in column and advanced in strong force. The fire of musketry was soon mingled with artillery, but the enemy's forces being three times as numerous as ours, he continued to advance until he forced our troops to retire towards the bridge across the Assunpink. The body of their army came down Greene street, and is reported to have been much annoyed by musket shot from behind houses and barns, as well as by our cannon, on their approach to the creek, the street being then much narrower than it now is.

The main conflict of this critical day has now to be described, and my readers will be able to judge if the concurrent testimony of my several witnesses makes it out to be worthy the name of a battle. At all events it was a repulse, and although the loss in killed and wounded has never been officially stated on either side, it certainly could not have been a bloodless one to our enemies, in the positions they were necessarily placed, during what Washington calls a

"cannonading until dark," which, as others declared, was accompanied with "a heavy discharge of musketry which continued ten or fifteen minutes," as stated by one writer four days only after the battle, and another, (General Wilkinson) who asserted he saw "the flashes of the muskets;" and still another account published in 1831 by Mr. John Howland, who was in the engagement, states "our artillery, which was posted on the south side of the brook, between the bridge and the Delaware, played into the front and flank of their columns at the same time; several pieces placed at the right and left of the bridge with musketry at the intervals took them partly in the flank; they did not succeed in their attempt to cross the bridge. "On one hour" says Mr. Howland, "yes, on forty minutes, commencing at the moment when the British troops first saw the bridge and creek before them, depended the all-important, the all-absorbing question whether we should be Independent States or conquered rebels."

Besides what I quote above from General

Wilkinson, he says "he was an eye-witness of this day's disaster to Cornwallis," and had a flank view of this little combat *near the bridge*, and recollect that the sun had set and the evening was so far advanced that I could distinguish the flames from the muzzles of our muskets."

A writer in the Connecticut Journal, who was an officer in the battle, states on the 22d of the same month in which it was fought, that "On Thursday the enemy marched down in a body of four to five thousand men to attack our people at Trenton. Not long before sunset they marched into the town, and after reconnoitering our situation, drew up in a solid column in order to force the bridge, which they attempted to do *with great vigor at three several times* and were as often broken by our artillery, and obliged to retreat and to give over the attempt after suffering great loss, supposed to be at least one hundred and fifty killed."

Another more full and graphic account of this attack and repulse of the British

army, but apparently somewhat exaggerated, was communicated in 1842 to the editor of the Princeton Whig, by an eye-witness, who, our late friend Mr. Borden, who was then with the Princeton editor and afterwards was the editor of the State Gazette in Trenton, assured me was a Major Stevens. It was published in this city, and a part of this tradition I have given in both my previous publications. It agrees in many particulars with many other cotemporaneous statements, but seemed at one time somewhat incredible.

"Washington's army was drawn up on the east (south) side of the Assunpink, with its left on the Delaware river, and its right extending a considerable way up the mill-pond, along the face of the hill where the factory now stands. The troops were placed one above the other, so that they appeared to cover the whole slope from bottom to top, which brought a great many muskets within shot of the bridge. Within seventy or eighty yards of the bridge and directly in front of and on the road, as

many pieces of artillery as could be managed were stationed. The British did not delay the attack. They were formed in two columns, the one marching down Greene street to carry the bridge, and the other down Maine (now Warren) street to ford the creek, near where the lower bridge now stands. From the nature of the ground and being on the left, this attack (simultaneously with the one on the bridge) I was not able to see. It was repelled. The other column moved slowly down the street with their choicest troops in front. When within about sixty yards of the bridge they raised a shout and rushed to the charge. It was then that our men poured upon them *with musketry and artillery*, a shower of bullets, under which, however, they continued to advance, though their speed was diminished and as the column reached the bridge it moved slower and slower until the head of it was gradually pressed nearly over, when our fire became so destructive that they broke their ranks and fled. It was then that our army

raised a shout, and such a shout I have never since heard; by what signal or word of command I know not. The line was more than a mile in length, and from the nature of the ground the extremes were not in sight of each other, yet they shouted as one man. The British column halted; instantly the officers restored the ranks, and again they rushed to the bridge, and again was a shower of bullets poured upon them with redoubled fury. This time the column broke before it reached the centre of the bridge and their retreat was again followed by the same shout from our line. They returned a third time to the charge, but it was in vain. We shouted at them again, but they had enough of it. It is strange that no account of the loss of the English was ever published, but from what I saw it must have been great."

In confirmation of the above, Mr. Howland says, "part of the enemy pressed into a street between the Main street and the Delaware (now Warren street) and fired into our right flank at every space between

the houses. When what was now our front arrived near the bridge which we were to pass, and where the lower or Water street (now Washington or Front) formed a junction with (between) Warren and Greene, the British made a quick march in an oblique direction to cut us off from the bridge. In this they did not succeed, as we had a shorter distance from the bridge than they had."

He likewise states, "the street through which we retreated was narrow, and the British pressed closely on our rear; the bridge also was narrow and our platoons in passing it were crowded into a dense and solid mass in the rear of which the enemy were making their best efforts." They did not succeed in their attempt to cross the bridge, and though the creek was fordable below it, they declined attempting a passage there in the face of those who presented a more serious obstruction than the water, *viz.*, Colonel Hitchcock's Massachusetts and Rhode Island troops.

To corroborate the existence of a severe

conflict or battle at and near the bridge over the Assunpink, and other facts omitted in the older and some of the modern histories that treat the contemporary details of it rather curtly, as if positive statements of participants in and witnesses of these occurrences were not stronger than negations not proven, I shall here insert part of my extracts from President Styles' diary in the New Haven library, and the very interesting information sent me by A. Cuthbert, Esq., of Philadelphia, son of Captain Cuthbert, who served in the fights at Trenton as second lieutenant, and was afterwards commander of the celebrated battery under Captain Moulder. These two accounts are published in full in my Thirty Days in New Jersey, which can be found in most Historical Societies. To these I refer and quote from freely, as I can do my subject better justice in this way, perhaps, than by attempting, in my advanced age, to vary or add to them.

The letter in Dr. Styles' diary is entitled "a letter from a gentlemen of great worth

in the American army (probably Dr. Rush, then in attendance on General Mercer, whom he then hoped would live), dated at Princeton, January 7th, 1777, to the editor of the Maryland Journal.

"On the 2d instant intelligence was received by express that the enemy's army was advancing from Princeton towards Trenton, where the main body of our forces was then stationed. Two brigades under Generals Stevens and Fermoy had been detached several hours before from the main body to Maidenhead, and there ordered to skirmish with the enemy during the march, and retreat to Trenton as occasion should require. A body of men under command of Colonel Hand were also ordered to meet the enemy, by which means their march was so much retarded as to give ample time for our forces to form and prepare to give them a warm reception upon their arrival. Two field-pieces planted on a hill at a small distance from the town were managed with great advantage, and did considerable execution for

some time, after which they were ordered to retire to the station occupied by our forces on the south side of the bridge over a little river (the Assunpink) which divides the town into two parts and opens at right-angles into the Delaware. In their way through the town the enemy suffered much by our incessant fire of musketry from behind houses and barns. *Their army had now arrived at the north side of the bridge,* whilst our army was drawn up in order of battle on the southern side. *Our cannon played very briskly* from this eminence and the fire was returned as briskly by the enemy. In a few minutes after the cannonade began, *a very heavy discharge of musketry ensued and continued for ten or fifteen minutes.* During this action a party of men were detached from our right wing to secure a point of the river, which it was imagined from the motions of the enemy, they intended to ford. This detachment arrived at the pass very opportunely and effected their purpose. *After this,* the enemy made a feeble and unsupported attempt to pass

the bridge, but they *likewise* proved abortive. It was now near six o'clock in the evening, and night coming on closed the engagement."

I will now give a few extracts from a personal description given by Lieutenant, afterwards Captain Cuthbert, of Moulder's battery, and "alongshoremen," whose effective service on the three "critical days" in Trenton, and the one afterwards at Princeton, for my narrative would be at fault if it did not refer to it. Such gallant sea-bred soldiers as the Marblehead regiment of Colonel Glover, and the Philadelphia young marines and shore-hands under Captains Moulder and Cuthbert, were indispensable as an arm of Washington's force, which he more than once extolled as serviceable and dauntless when most needed.

Mr. A. Cuthbert, son of the captain, writes me as follows, an account which has never before appeared in print, and can be relied on; his own testimony, as well as that of his distinguished father, being unquestionable:

"In 1776, the company under Captain Moulder was ordered to join, in two weeks, the army in Jersey. It consisted of eighty-two lads from seventeen to twenty-three years, and were detached at the crossing of the Delaware by Washington." * * *

"At the battle of the Assunpink the British, in solid column, charged down the main street to force the passage of the bridge. At this point, the guns of Moulder, long four pounders, and others, were stationed and did great damage to the enemy, being well placed and skillfully manned. At each report a lane was opened through the British ranks, and so rapid and destructive was the firing that the British troops could only be kept up to their work by the flats of the swords of the officers. So determined and successful was the resistance *at this point*, that the enemy was held in check until too late in the afternoon to hope for success that day, and was withdrawn to await reinforcements expected in the morning."

Thus ends my detailed narration of the

fighting on the memorable 2d of January, including the morning and afternoon skirmishing on the road to Trenton, on the high grounds at the head of the town, and through the streets leading to the Assunpink, and the repulse at the bridge and fords thereof.

That there was such a passage of arms on this day as is worthy of being called in history a battle I doubt not, although the official reports of these actions and repulses, both English and American, are very curt and meager in their allusions to it. That it was costly to the British, and ended ingloriously for their boasting and mortified commander, as well as exceedinly critical in its consequences to the Americans, exciting surprise as well as admiration at the time, cannot be doubted. Washington, in this instance, was not vanquished, as he might have been, but, like the celebrated General Blucher, if beaten over night by Napoleon, returned a victor the next morning. Washington certainly, by his admirable strategy and prudent

arrangements to escape out of his perplexing difficulty, both before and after Cornwallis gave over the contest at the bridge, deserves imperishable renown, and, with his brave comrades, earned the lasting gratitude of his countrymen.

Whether few or many of the enemy fell in this engagement cannot now be a matter of much moment to us. Blank cartridges certainly would not have caused his repulse, and if cannon and musket balls could speak, enough of them have been picked up to tell the story of a severe fight at the bridge, besides what had been done at Shabbakonk and elsewhere along the route to the Assunpink. I have not a doubt that our enemies, however they may have ignored these losses during this day's various fights, suffered more than they did in both the engagements at Trenton and Princeton. We may reasonably estimate their losses at five hundred killed and wounded at least.—General Greene, in a letter to Thomas Payne, allowed for twenty days a much larger number in the aggregate, amounting

to between two and three thousand in killed, wounded, and prisoners. This is inclusive of the Hessians. The enemy had other losses also occasioned by our successes, resulting in the release of thousands of the oppressed citizens of New Jersey, who were soon afterwards converted into its unfaltering defenders.

When Lord Cornwallis found himself so roughly handled and repulsed in attempting to cross the Assunpink, a fatal delusion seemed to possess his mind. He told his officers and army he had the enemy safe enough and could dispose of them next morning. For these reasons he proposed that the troops should make fires, refresh themselves, and take repose. General Grant and some of the other officers coincided in this conclusion, and thus the British army indulged in that repose which knew not waking until the thunder of the cannon at Princeton aroused them from their morning sleep, and the frightened Cornwallis, having played the Lord with the then loyal ladies of Trenton, and ex-

changed congratulations with the tories, found himself summoned by the morning drum-beat, to give up his dream of conquest and to admit for once that Washington, whom Sir William Erskine styled the night before, "an old fox," had disdained to be caught even by a lordly sportsman. His Lordship finding the enemy had escaped, in all haste hurried back to join the troops that were ordered up from Lawrenceville and Princeton.

Whilst sleep and refreshing repose were thus wearing away the hours of the winter's night in the enemy's camp at Trenton, the main body of them was bivouacked on the hills above the town and a few videttes watched our troops along the creek. A very different condition of things—a most ominous and anxious state of apprehension of to-morrow's events—filled the minds of every weary officer and soldier on the other side of the Assunpink. There, watched they with patience, still ready to do and dare everything for their country which their beloved commander should require of them. The weather

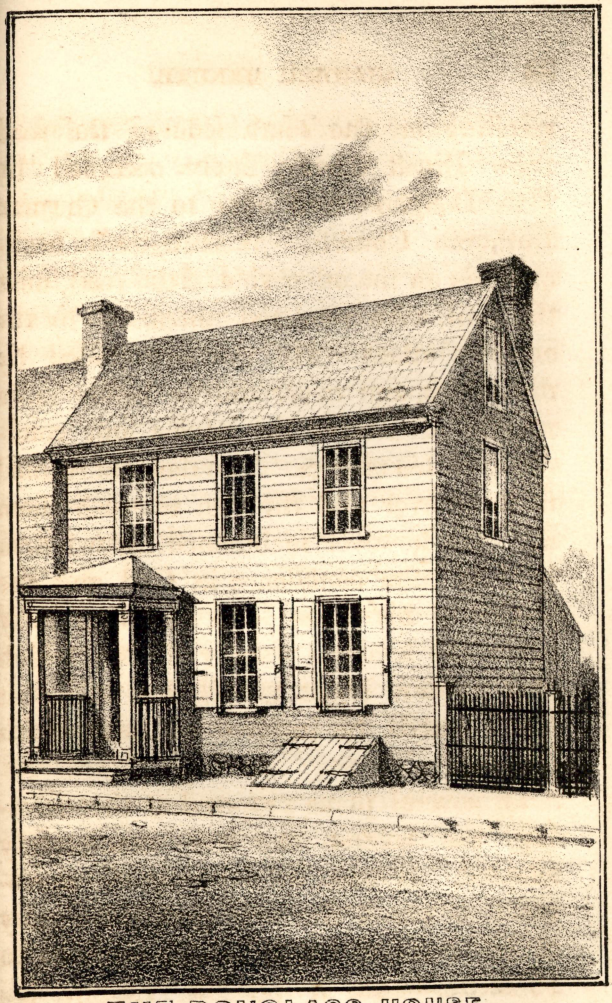
had cleared off cold and the star-studded sky was the only tent they had that night—the miry ground mixed with snow was the only place afforded for repose until a sharp, cold wind stiffened it into seats, which they could use until their orders for the night should be received. But the protecting hand of Providence was still stretched out over them, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that some men among them may have looked up to the firmament over their heads and thanked God for giving this country no cheap independence, and for making its devoted adherents willing to achieve it.

I here continue my report of this night's arrangements and operations from "Washington and his Army," page 47.

The camp-fires of our army were soon lighted and all was then conjecture what was to be done on the morrow. As hour after hour passed away, there was naturally some impatience, but no insubordination. A council of the officers was called at St. Clair's headquarters, in a small house still

standing on the south side of the road (now Broad street), lately occupied by Miss Douglass, and next to the German Lutheran Church. Washington's head-quarters on the other side of the road, near the mill, were rendered untenable by the enemy's attack. He was surrounded by difficulties, and never did he before more require or receive the advice and confidence of his officers. The dangers seemed to hang over and threaten to crush them all. He, however, maintained his own firm hold of calm confidence in God and the justice of his cause; and like that lofty tower, the seeming wonder of Pisa, which ever appears about to fall, but still ever firmly stands, he inspired all hearts with confidence.

Of several plans proposed at that meeting, the boldest one was unanimously adopted. It was, by a retrograde movement, to attack the over confident enemy in his rear—to break up his quarters in Princeton—and, if possible, capture his stores in New Brunswick.



THE DOUGLASS HOUSE,

TRENTON, N. J.

Gen: St. Clair's Head Quarters, at which Washington and his Officers held a Council of War, Jan. 2d, 1777.

Orders were immediately given to put the troops under march, with the least noise and delay possible, and to send off what guns, baggage, and stores were not wanted, to Burlington. The enemy's watchfires being kindled only about one hundred and fifty yards from the American camp, Washington directed his sentinels to take fences and keep up brisk fires opposite to them until morning, (Dr. Ramsay calls this arrangement "a pillar of fire to protect the escape of our army,") and then to retreat to Princeton. Men were also engaged to throw up entrenchments as near the British pickets as possible, and to make evident preparations for the morrow. All was now going on silently and actively as practicable, and fortunately there was what Washington called a Providential change in the weather. The roads became hard enough to support the artillery and for the troops to march on frozen ground. Washington and his officers went the rounds among them, and encouraged them to be firm and quiet.

Then was presented a scene on the banks of our peaceful little Assunpink, which is well realized by Shakspeare's description of Henry the Fifth, (whose army, by the way, was about the same size, and in as miserable a condition at Agincourt before his victory as ours was here).

"From camp to camp through the foul womb of night
The hum of either army stilly sounds,
And the fix'd sentinels almost receive
The secret whispers of each other's watch:—
Fire answers fire.—

—O! now who would behold
The noble captain of this ruined band,
Walking from watch to watch, from tent to tent,
Let him cry praise and glory on his head."

The Night March to Princeton.

This hazardous, difficult, and forced undertaking, the connecting link between the wonderful escape of our army at the Assunpink, in Trenton, and the decisive but more costly victory at Princeton, has now to be narrated.

Washington, in his general, but not full

report to Congress, dated at Pluckemin, on the 5th of February, alludes to this most critical situation and chivalrous determination, a few extracts from which I will here refer to: "Our situation was most critical, and our force small. * * * * After leaving guards at the bridge in Trenton, and other passes on the same stream (Assunpink) above, I marched by a round-about road to Princeton. * * * One thing I was certain of: it would avoid the appearance of a retreat (which was of consequence, or to run the hazard of the whole army being cut off), whilst we might, by a fortunate stroke, withdraw General Howe from Trenton, and give some reputation to our arms. Happily we succeeded."

The distresses of our army on this doubtful night march he does not allude to. But the graphic and affecting account of the truthful Howland, who was in one of the Rhode Island regiments, then in service, and afterwards president of the Historical Society of that state, I give verbatim, as extracted from his letter now

before me, dated November 24th, 1830, and published in 1831:

"Night closed upon us, and the weather, which had been mild and pleasant through the day, became intensely cold. * * * There would have been an end of the American army, &c. (as before quoted in these pages.) If any fervent mind should doubt this, it must be from his not knowing the state of our few half-starved, half-frozen, feeble, worn-out men, with old fowling pieces for muskets, and half of them without bayonets, and the states so disheartened, discouraged, or poor, that they sent no reinforcements, no new recruits to supply this handful of men who, but the day before, had volunteered to remain with their venerated and beloved commander. * * *

"The march, that night, from Trenton to Princeton, is well known. It was not by the direct road; a considerable part of it was by a new passage which appeared to have been cut through the woods, as the stubs were left from two to

five inches high. We moved slow on account of the artillery frequently coming to a halt or stand-still, and when ordered forward again, one, two, or three men in each platoon would *stand* with their arms supported, fast asleep. A platoon next in the rear advancing on them they, in walking or attempting to move, would strike a stub and fall."

This illustrates the dangers, suffering, and difficulties of that exhausting march. It was an eventful and trying crisis, requiring, perhaps, as much persevering energy and patriotic suffering as any during this memorable campaign, but, like the capture of the Hessians, it ushered in a dawn even more glorious, ending in a triumph that ensured more completely the success of our life-struggle for our almost abandoned independence. In its consequences certainly, connected with the victory at Princeton, completing three acts of the exciting drama which was then being performed, few historic events can surpass it, however many more heroic

deeds in "war's vast art" celebrated in ancient and modern times may eclipse it.

When the council of war was assembled at the old house, still well preserved, in Broad street, south of the German church, a venerable relic of the post of danger and resolution, of intrepid perseverance and strategetic sagacity, in the darkest period of our fathers' trials, which no visitor of Trenton, who reverences their memories, should ever omit to notice, they directed that all the heavy cannon should be sent to the care of General Putnam, at Bordentown or Burlington. This, under the uncertainty of the success of their projected movement on the flank of the British army, was a prudential measure But they had some artillery with them, besides Moulder's two guns, which, as will be seen by the sequel, won the day at Princeton. This galaxy of brave officers which sat around a little table, now in Trenton, will ever be illustrious, but their names are already given in this work and need not here be reproduced.

Between twelve and one o'clock on the morning of the 3d of January, in silent and detached columns the army commenced its rearward movement towards Princeton, by the White Horse road. In a very short time silence and stillness reigned along the river bank, and, excepting that the lurid lights of the blazing camp-fires flung their portentous gleams over Trenton, its darkness and dismay must then have made it seem like a doomed city.

The Battle of Princeton.

Weary and wayworn, encountering sufferings and privations almost too severe to be borne, but cheered by the late valiant repulses of the British and Hessian veterans, and the hope that "danger's troubled night" would soon be followed by a brilliant dawn, our brave army reached the outskirts of Princeton just as the sun was rising. Near the old Quaker Church, and where two roads lead into the town, Washington, with the main

body of the old and newly raised troops, marched on the old road towards the eastern side of Princeton, and ordered General Mercer, with less than four hundred men under his charge, to move down quickly towards the road leading from the town to the Stony Brook, and to destroy the bridge there, in order to prevent its being crossed by the enemy. As this small body emerged from behind a wood, it was discovered by Colonel Mawhood, a brave and vigilant British officer, who was on his way, with the Seventeenth and part of the Fifty-fifth regiments, to join Lord Cornwallis at Trenton. He had passed across the bridge over Stony Brook, but seeing Mercer's troops, and supposing them fugitives, wheeled about and being joined by the company of horse and the remainder of the Fifty-fifth regiment, who were in the rear, he made a hasty march towards a high ground and fence, near the house of William Clarke, in order to gain an advantage over the Americans. But Mercer succeeded in reaching that position

first, and a sharp action commenced on that ground. General Mercer and his officers had led their men over the fence into the field, and commenced firing a volley, which was soon answered by Mawhood's troops, and although two of the guns of the Americans were ready to be used, under charge of Captain Neal, a bayonet charge was made fiercely upon our rank and file, and as many of our men had only fowling pieces, without bayonets, they were driven back in confusion, several of our brave officers killed and wounded, and the cannon captured by the enemy. General Mercer's horse being shot, and he, with some of his officers, being unable to rally the exposed soldiers to stand up to a bayonet charge, he was soon knocked down, and having received six or seven bayonet thrusts, was bruised in several places with the butt ends of British muskets, insulted, and left for dead. After the battle was over, however, he was taken off the field to Mr. Thomas Clarke's house, and lived for several, I think seven,

days, attended by Dr. Rush, it is supposed, after the Americans had gone to Morristown. He was an officer of Scotch descent, brave, skillful, highly esteemed, high in rank, and in the confidence of Washington, the army, and country generally. His remains were taken to Philadelphia and there buried with the honor due to so distinguished a general. Others of our bravest men and officers fell in this first encounter, and during the short fight that followed it. Washington, in his report, mentions Colonels Hazlit and Potter, Captains Neal and Fleming, and there were four or five others.

Washington seeing at a little distance from it this unexpected discomfiture of some of his best troops, rushed up a body of the nearest forces he had, the new levies from Pennsylvania, and endeavored to stop the rout with them. But Mawhood's veterans were too much for raw recruits to resist, and although gallant enough, they were borne back in spite of Washington's endeavors to rally them. This was one of the most perilous events of his own and of

his country's life, for if he had been slain where would it have found a savior like him? The moment had arrived when victory or death was to come in action and not merely in words. There was not a space of a hundred yards probably between the two bodies of fighting and fugitive men, when our gallant chief rode boldly up in front of the British lines and bade our routed troops to come on and help him recover the fortunes of the day, and could they behold their chieftain there and let him alone be sacrificed? No! they caught his adventurous spirit, and assisted by Moulder's two guns skillfully handled, and a few brave old New England troops under Hitchcock, the gallant sons of Philadelphia gentlemen and other brave boys of Pennsylvania won the day. Away went the brave Mawhood and his British red-coats, in their turn discomfited, and run down. Many of them were killed or taken prisoners. Some fled away towards Lawrenceville, or up the course of Stony Brook, but most of the Fifty-fifth and Fortieth regiments, in

attempting to make a stand against our right wing, composed mostly of New England troops under Stark and others, were beaten and driven back to Nassau Hall or Princeton College; but our brave Yankees soon dislodged them from thence and captured many as they attempted to run away over Rocky Hill towards New Brunswick.

The panic among our troops was now over, and a reaction of exulting excitement followed. The chase after the British was kept up on all sides, and it was continued in all directions, with the spirit of hungry sportsmen. The old fox was not caught, as Cornwallis, by this time, had found out, at Trenton, but Washington had happily succeeded. His own life, which was now redoubled in estimation, after having been almost made a sacrifice of, on the altar of his country, seemed to be mysteriously preserved, and its vital current promised once more to revive the anxious hearts of his countrymen.

Some stores, and a good supply of clothing and blankets, were taken at Princeton,

and among other trophies were abundance of provisions ready cooked and other luxuries, of which our weak and famished soldiers partook and of *spirits* enough to refresh themselves; then setting fire to the forage and other things not then available to take with them, were compelled to leave the two brass guns there for the want of horses to take them along, and the order was given to move on rapidly towards New Brunswick.

The loss of the British in this engagement, Washington reported to be in killed, wounded, and prisoners, over five hundred. Among the killed was a Captain Leslie, who was buried with the honors of war, and of their bravest officers fourteen are mentioned to have fallen into our hands. Our own loss in officers was severe, as already stated, but of men it was quite inconsiderable, the British fire having been too elevated, whilst our riflemen, and especially the fire of Moulder's two guns, did great execution, after Washington's perilous effort to prevent the first panic had

succeeded. The affecting and graphic description of this desperate and critical situation in which our noble chief hazarded his life for our country's rescue, to secure the little all we had left, which had been so miraculously preserved in the previous encounters, I give in a beautiful poem in the appendix, the author of which I delight to say was a lady, the gifted and patriotic Miss C. F. Orne.

There were several very serious and important casualties in connection with this memorable fight collated by me from the traditions given by Howland, Cuthbert, Wilkinson, Lossing, and others, which I shall now condense into as succinct a recital as possible. They have a claim in our history that will not be denied by lovers of patriotic devotion.

Among the "wonderful events in New Jersey," where Lord George Germain said, "all was lost," that the British had gained previously, there was one circumstance as creditable to those who achieved our success as it seems Providential, I allude to

the extraordinary number of officers, the bravest of the brave, which had adhered to the skeleton regiments they had commanded and which were also dauntless and faithful in their extreme trials, and could be relied on to the extremity of their endurance. In addition to this Washington's prestige, and their exemplary courage and fortitude signally inspired the gallant new levies from Pennsylvania, many of them of wealthy, true, and patriotic standing, with emulation to dare and do all they could to honor the Keystone State and save the cause of Independence which received its baptism in its capitol. With an army of officers winnowed from craven or treacherous deserters together with gallant young patriots who were no ordinary hirelings, Washington had a Spartan band around him on whom he could rely for constancy, courage, council and fidelity, and he was ready like Leonidas to lose his life as their leader if such a sacrifice was necessary to save the Republic. It became necessary to offer it at Princeton, and as Miss Orne truly states

The pulses of that noble heart a nation's life concealed,
But fate refused the sacrifice whose offer won the field!

Among the brave officers here alluded to was the gallant Colonel Hitchcock, who with his Massachusetts and Rhode Island regiment rushed forward to join the faltering new recruits borne back, under fire for the first time, by Mawhood's veterans, and encouraged them to return to the charge in the late conflict by which victory was secured. For this timely succor Washington called him after the battle, thanked him and shook hands with him heartily. And was he not truly worthy of this honor? Colonel Hitchcock was a gentleman, educated at Yale College, a gallant and superior officer, who had served voluntarily and suffered so many hardships throughout the whole campaign, that his health fell a sacrifice to his country, and being then in the last stage of consumption, still nerved himself for one more great effort, and led his troops on, feeble as he was, and having done his duty, died in a week after at Morristown. Such self-sacrificing martyrdom, and patriotic

principle, and ardent fidelity, the "*prisca fides*" revered among the old Romans, is one of the gems in our Revolutionary annals the historian loves to preserve.

Another casualty very important in its consequences is here worthy of record. The bridge over the little Stony Brook was early in the day ordered by Washington to be rendered impassable, for the double purpose of preventing the British escaping as well as to guard against an attack from Cornwallis' troops at or on the road from Trenton. The repulse given General Mercer prevented this being done.

Washington afterwards dispatched Major Kelly to destroy it, but it being later in the day he had just begun to demolish it when a part of Cornwallis' forces came up and fired on him from a hill at a short distance so sharply that he had to desist. But it seems they had just time to tear up some loose planks which rendered it so impassable that Cornwallis had to force his troops to ford the stream which was filled with broken ice.

Leaving his artillery in the rear, he made out to get across with his half-frozen troops. When near the centre of the town a discharge from an iron thirty-two pound gun, left by the British after their defeat, stopped his advancing. It was fired by some lingering soldier or scout, who ventured to do a good service to give Washington a better chance of escaping. It arrested the march after him for full one hour. The fox had again escaped.

Other interesting occurrences may here be inserted from Cuthbert's report. I copy some extracts from the letter inserted in full in my "Thirty Day's in New Jersey Ninety Years Ago," pages 45–46.

At Princeton the guns of Moulder were again active. While the British fired too high over the heads of his men, he "mowed them down in rows." After the first fight had been successful in repulsing Mawhood's attack, part of the Fifty-fifth and the Fortieth regiment, retreated towards the college, and some of them, for a while, occupied Nassau Hall, where was

a large picture of King George the Third. One of the shots from Moulder's guns plunged directly through it, and the frame now encloses a life-like picture of Washington, by the patriotic painter, Peale, of Philadelphia. A mutation like this in the progress of human events, if its does not mark the special act of Providence, is most certainly a noticeable historic occurrence, and shows the utterly absurd habit that kings or men have of boasting of misused human prerogatives. It is but just, however, to say in behalf of the arrogant and ill-advised monarch, that after his humiliation, he told our first Minister at his court, John Adams; he welcomed him as the Embassador of the United States, and, cordially taking his hand, he said, "Sir, I was the last man in my kingdom to acknowledge your independence, and, be assured, I will be the last to call it in question." This, the writer thinks, may be called magnanimous, and the following simple account of a like feeling

among our young Philadelphia sovereigns is of a similar character:

"While pushing his guns up towards the College, Moulders boys told the wounded men who begged for quarter, 'You are safe enough; we are after live men." They then handed over their canteens of whiskey, and received a blessing from their wounded enemies.

"Moulder was here ordered to cover the retreat of our army towards Morristown, by holding the enemy in check as long as safe to his men, then to spike and leave his guns, and save his men by following with all speed after the main body of the army. But they refusing to earn the name of 'grass combers' by running away from their guns, with the aid of ropes and forty men to each, ran them up the road after the army, pursued by a company of British horse. Captain Samuel Morris, of the city of Philadelphia (Quaker Sam), held his company back for the protection of Moulder's boys, and seeing their danger, galloped to their rear

and formed across the road to await the British horse, who, finding their game blocked, wheeled and returned to Princeton. Thus Moulder's guns were saved and taken into camp at Morristown, when Moulder was called before a court for disobedience of orders in risking the loss of his men. On receipt of the order the company formed and marched in silence to headquarters, where, after a solemn reprimand, Moulder received his sword, and the boys, after three hearty cheers, struck up 'Yankee Doodle,' and returned to their quarters in high glee."

This gallant and faithful band of young Philadelphians showed further proofs of an unselfish and magnanimous spirit. Their term of service being expired, and as they could not be spared in the destitute condition in which Washington's ranks then were, they volunteered to enlist again. "When the company was mustered, and the request for their re-enlistment made known, they gave the following answer, 'With our compliments to his

excellency, General Washington, please say that, whether he says three weeks, three months, or three years, we are under his command, and at his service.' The general replied courteously, 'That is all I can ask of them.'" Captain Moulder, at the age of sixty-five, retired in 1780. The commission of Captain Cuthbert, his successor, signed by Colonel Joseph Reed, then Washington's adjutant, was shown to me by his son, A. Cuthbert, Esq. He declined higher office "being a man of war in war only, in other times a man of peace." His property and his mother-in-law's were destroyed by the enemy in Philadelphia. His expenses for his company, and losses in various ways, footed up about $44,000, but this sum was never charged by him, nor would his widow receive some $6,000 or more due her under the law of 1838.

I need not here narrate the well known particulars of Washington's prudent, but hasty retreat from Princeton by the way of Rocky Hill and Kingston, the breaking

down the bridges to retard the pursuit of his enemies, the exhausted state of the troops, many of them with lame or bare or bleeding feet, scanty clothing, and overcome with fatigue and suffering after marching, fighting, and in a constant state of anxious excitement for twice twenty-four hours—of Washington's halt at Kingston and after consulting his officers resolving to give up the intention of breaking up Sir Wm. Howe's headquarters at New Brunswick,—of the retirement of the army that night to Pluckemin, and eventually to the high ground at Morristown, where the commander-in-chief found a safe retreat and winter quarters for his troops, and an opportunity for them to rest, and for having them inoculated to prevent the ravages of the small pox—these and other matters of history are by no means uninteresting, but my little Manual already is enlarged beyond its proper limits, and I reluctantly resign my grateful task.

To my fellow citizens in Trenton I have endeavored to give a faithful description of

the taking of the Hessians, their long cherished battle, and to clear away the obscurities attending the fighting on the eventful occasion when Cornwallis marching from Princeton expected to crush Washington, but was repulsed and outgeneraled in all that days manœuvres towards reaching town and through it, and especially in trying three times to pass the bridge and fords of the Assunpink, and finally was outmanœuvred by Washington after being badly beaten on that second memorable Thursday just a week after the surprise of the Hessians. And now for the last time let me say I deem *that* the most important *battle* of the two, and worthy to be celebrated as such. But whether it is so called or celebrated here or not, is of little moment in the eyes of Historians who adopt *truth* as their guide. *Its* triumph is all the writer asks, and when the enclosure that now awaits his dust shall take him out of sight, and the future shall bury the present and the past, it will be of little consequence how he has written, how conscientious his

convictions of the correctness of his compilations and remarks have been, or how critics may have gainsayed or misconstrued his endeavors to discharge his duty.

To my friends in Princeton and Mercer county in general, I would say, can you ever fail—you whose county bears the name of the noble martyr who fell with scores of brave officers and men, in defence of your fatherland, and your own happy homesteads—can you or your decendants ever fail to realize or appreciate the cause—the motive principle—which animated the dreadful struggle that was once exhibited, like a moving panorama, upon your now peaceful fields?

Tyranny no longer threatens our country with submission—the rambling Stony Brook ran cheerily on its course, when its little bridge bore Cornwallis' proud army on its presumptuous march to Trenton, and brought it crestfallen back again, glad to escape from the Yankee rebels who would not give up to British tyranny. All this has past away, but the

little stream still remains—its waves are passing on. The principles for which our fathers fought still remain also, but the American age is moving on, and its persistent force, guided by the Omnipotent, who gives right, reason and progressive intelligence to men willing to obey His laws, will, we trust, ensure its perpetuity.

To a scholarly community, with which Princeton is distinguished, I may be allowed to present here a classic quotation, which was once true of Rome and its Tiber,

——— "immota labescunt;
Et quœ perpetua sunt agitata manent."

No enemy now beleaguers Nassau Hall from without, no forced desecration of Colleges and Churches for martial purposes is now tolerated as it was in those Revolutionary days—nor as in my own early experience at Old Harvard, after the army had quitted one of its halls, where cannon balls were used by idle boys for mischievous sports. No Church and State creed,—no monopoly of the only true religious doctrine can ever again hamper free and con-

scientious believers in this country, although they once held sway "*in colleges and halls in ancient days*," but progress—an earnest, intellectual progress, must germinate from the precious seed sown by our fathers and the fields once nourished by their blood ought to give the greatest harvest to be obtained from devotion to these principles.

In conclusion I would say to my historic friends generally who have read and appreciated my former publications now acknowledged as authenticated records of new revelations concerning the events which were not fully revealed by other writers, I trust they will not be wearied or dissatisfied by the perusal of this little *resume*, written at an age usually devoted to repose. I have enjoyed my labors, however, and have been only too zealous, perhaps, to tell the truth so as to benefit those who may come after me, and to express emotions truly heartfelt, in honor of the heroes and martyrs who founded and risked their all to sustain our Republic—especially Washington, foremost of them all! *He* was, without question or

denial, entitled to this high distinction. His wisdom, patriotism, fidelity, and unselfish devotedness to the cause he loved from the beginning of its career to the end of his invaluable life, mark an august era in the history of the world. No peroration however, is needed to laud his worth, from my pen. Bancroft, Irving, and others, seem almost inspired in displaying their reverence and admiration of Washington's character and the great cause of American liberty. They have given a Raphael-like enchantment to the sublime scene portrayed by them, and I can do no better than to borrow a few lines concerning Washington's character from Mr. Bancroft, who with Chesterfieldian prestige has himself borrowed from humbler writers to add to his own brilliant plume without thinking it always necessary to give credit for such trifles. Not courting any patronage now, it is a pleasure to express my obligation to him for the delight which his works have afforded me. The following apostrophe

seems to have an infusion of German in it with which he is familiar.

"No man was ever overwhelmed with greater difficulties, or had less means to extricate himself from them," than Washington; but the sharp tribulation which assayed his fortitude carried with it a divine and animating virtue. Hope and zeal illuminated his grief. His emotions come to us across the century, like strains from that eternity which repairs all losses and rights all wrongs. In his untold sorrows, his trust in Providence kept up in his heart an under-song of wonderful sweetness. The spirit of the Most High dwells among the afflicted rather than the prosperous, and he who has never broken his bread in tears knows not the heavenly powers. The trials of Washington are the dark solemn ground on which the beautiful work of his country's salvation was embroidered."

APPENDIX.

WASHINGTON AT PRINCETON.

BY C. F. ORNE.

The Assunpink was choked with dead between us and the foe;
We had mowed their ranks before our guns, as ripe grain is laid low;
But we were few, and worn and spent—many and strong were they,
And they waited but the morning dawn to fall upon their prey.
We left our camp-fires burning, that their ruddy gleaming light
Might hide from Lord Cornwallis our hurried march by night.
While fiery Erskine fretted at his leader's fond delay,
All silently and swiftly we were marching on our way.
For the British troops at Princeton our little force was bound;
We tracked with bare and bleeding feet the rough and frozen ground;
All night we hastened onward, and we spoke no word of plaint,
Though we were chilled with bitter cold, with toil and fasting faint;

We hailed with joy the sunlight, as o'er the hills it streamed,
And through the sharp and frosty air on the near homesteads beamed.
We were weary, we were hungry; before us lay good cheer,
And right gladly to the hearth-fires our eager steps drew near.
But sudden, on our startled sight, long lines of bayonets flash;
The road's a-glow with scarlet coats! The British on us dash!
The smoke-wreaths from our volleys meet; then hand to hand the fight;
Proud gallant Mercer falls; our lines are wavering in flight!
"Press on!" cries Mawhood, "by St. George! the rebel cowards fly,
We'll sweep their ranks before our charge, as storm-winds sweep the sky."

They burst with bold and sudden spring as a lion on the prey,
Our ranks of worn and weary men to that fierce rush gave way.
Black was that bitter moment, and well nigh all was lost,
But forth there sprang a god-like form between us and the host.
The martyr-fires of freedom in his flaming glances burned,
As his awful countenance sublime upon the foe he turned;
And reining up his gallant steed, alone amid the fight,

Like an angel of the Lord he stood to our astonished sight!
And instantly our wavering bands wheeled into line again,
And suddenly from either side the death-shots fell like rain.
All hearts stood still; and horror-struck was each averted eye,
For who could brook that moment's look? or who could see *him* die?
But when the smoke-clouds lifted, and still we saw him there,
Oh, what a mighty shout of joy filled all the startled air!
And tears fell like the summer showers from our bravest and our best,
As dashing up with fiery pace around him close they prest.
A moment's hand-grasp to his Aid, that told the tale of hours,
"Away! bring up the troops," he cried, "the day is wholly ours."

"Now praised be God!" from grateful lips the fervent prayer uprose,
And then, as with an eagle's swoop, we burst upon our foes.
And "Long live Washington," we cried, in answer to his shout,
As still he spurred his charger on amid the flying rout.
They broke their ranks before our charge; amain they wildly fled;
Stiff on the slopes, at Princeton, they left their hapless dead.

No more a band of weary men we followed in his track;
And bore with stern resistless force the British Lion back;
Our toilsome march, our sleepless nights, cold, hunger,—what were they?
We broke the yoke of foreign power on that eventful day.
The great heart of our leader went on before us then,
And led us forth to wield the strength of more than mortal men,
The pulses of that noble heart a nation's life concealed,
But fate refused the sacrifice whose offer won the field.

From Graham's Magazine for February 1856.

ADDENDA.

Two curious testimonials of the truth of my narration of the Revolutionary battles in Trenton and the one following them in Princeton, were handed me by a friend just as my Historic Manual was going to press. They are the production of Mr. Richard Snowden, a quaint old author. One is entitled "THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, WRITTEN IN SCRIPTURAL OR ANCIENT HISTORICAL STYLE." The other is a poem called the "COLUMBIAD," by the same author, and published by him in Baltimore; printed by W. Pechin, No. 10 Second street. As there is no date given by the writer or printer, it is difficult to conjecture the exact time when either was written or published. But concerning the poem, he states in the preface "that he had been desiring *for several years* and ex-

pecting to see the great events that brought about the American Revolution in a poetical dress." The copy of his two interesting works which I have before me has the name of John Vandergrift, 1802, clearly written in the fly-leaf. He was the husband of Sarah Vandergrift, one of the young ladies who scattered flowers in Washington's path in 1789, after passing through the triumphal arch on the Assunpink bridge in Trenton, (which was built in 1760). She died in Trenton in 1864, in the 94th year of her age. I have a good photographic likeness of her.

Putting these corroborative evidences of the olden time together, Mr. Snowden must have been a contemporary of the Revolutionary events he wrote about, and his statements being then freshly remembered, have an air of truthfulness and graphic importance attached to them, which, although not assuming to add much to the dignity of authentic history, still add strength to my circumstantial proofs of one bloody battle at least, that was not fully

described in previous historic reports by many distinguished writers. At all events, in this age of skepticism about past and even recent facts, historically told, but deemed mythical by many pseudo critics, many things doubted, are, if proved credible by agreement of circumstances, as likely to be true in history as in law, negations proving nothing to the contrary, notwithstanding. C. C. H.

EXTRACTS FROM

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION,

WRITTEN IN ANCIENT SCRIPTURAL STYLE.

CHAPTERS XIX & XX.

1st. And it was so that George, the chief Captain, was passing through the Province of Jersey, and that the host of the King of Britain followed hard after him.

2d. Now there was a river (Delaware) which divided the Province of Pennsyvania. It was a mighty stream. * * *

4th. And George the chief Captain, and the men who followed after him, passed over the river and they were chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her young.

6th. And it came to pass that about this time that LEE, the Captain, who had revolted from the King of Britain, was taken captive. * * *

7th. And the people thought he secretly inclined to go back to the king, his master.

8th. Now the hosts of Britain occupied the towns in the Province of Jersey.

9th. * * * And certain sons of Belial (Hessians) went forth * * * and saw the daughters of the land, that they were fair, and withal of beautiful countenance.

10th. They were not restrained by the law; * * * they did those things which are not seemly to be mentioned, nor shall the pen of the scribe recall their cruel acts, lest the tears of the violated virgin should be

multiplied when she remembers the day of her humiliation.

14th. And there was a town in the Province of Jersey (Trenton) * * * occupied by the Hessians * * * and the river was between them and the Province (Penna).

15th. And the waters of the river were frozen, and George, the chief Captain, cast in his mind how he should circumvent the men of Britain, and by what chance he should bring down the towering hope of the enemy.

16th. And it was so, he divided the army of Columbia into two bands, and they passed over the river while it was yet night.

17th. And the two captains with their companies came against the town where the Hessians were in camp, and the Hessians fled—nevertheless nine hundred were taken captive and the residue made their escape.

18th. And George, the chief Captain, entered the town; and there was great joy throughout all the land of Columbia.

19th. And it came to pass after these things, that the people of the Province of

Jersey and from the other Provinces round about, flocked to the banners of the great sanhedrim.

20th. Now the army of Britain encamped on one side of the town and the hosts of the people of the Provinces on the other side thereof, and there was a brook (Sandpink creek) of water between the two armies.

21st. And there was a high place cast up over the brook for wayfaring men. It was built up of hewn stone, and the inhabitants of the land called it a bridge.

22d. And the people of the Provinces planted some of the destroying engines on the bank of the brook, and the soldiers of Britain went forth to drive them from thence.

23d. And it came to pass that the destroying engines gaped upon them with their mouths, and vomited out their thunders, and the soldiers of Britain were smitten to the earth so that they could no more rise, and the residue made their escape, inasmuch as they could not perform their enterprise.

CHAPTER XX.

1. And the two armies encamped nigh unto each other, and the brook was between them, and the host of Britain, when they had kindled their fires, set a watch and betook themselves to rest.

2. But George, chief Captain of the host, suffered not his eyes to sleep; and he gathered the Captains of the host together.

4. And furthermore he spake and said, let every man of the host be ready with his weapons of war in his hand, and let the destroying engines go out of the camp, and let certain men stay behind to kindle the fires, that the men of Britain may be deceived thereby.

5. And the host of Columbia moved forward, and the watchmen of the host of Britain verily thought that the people of the Provinces were taking their rest in sleep.

6. Now as the host of the people of the Provinces drew nigh unto the town (Prince-

ton), they were espied by some of the soldiers of the King of Britain who were journeying towards their brethren that were encamped at the bridge of Sandpink (Trenton).

7. And when they perceived that the people of the Provinces were journeying forward, they let in a jealousy that evil was intended against their brethren in the town.

8. Now it was about the dawning of the day when George, the chief Captain, drew nigh unto the town, and the soldiers of the King rushed out to meet the armed men.

9. And the centre of the host of Columbia could not withstand the impetuosity of the soldiers of Britain, but gave way and were confused.

10. And when the chief Captain saw the men giving place to the soldiers of Britain, he hastened forward and placed himself between the hosts of the people of the Provinces and the soldiers of the King of Britain.

11. And George, the chief Captain, en-

couraged the men to fight valiantly that day for their country, their wives, and their children. Then the people turned about and the men of Britain were fain to flee from before the people of the Provinces.

12. And George, the chief Captain, was in great jeopardy, nevertheless he received no harm.

13. And the men of Britain fled to a certain building, where children were taught, called a college.

14th. And the balls of the destroying engines smote against the walls thereof. And the fear of George, the chief Captain, fell upon the men of Britain, and they came forth and delivered themselves up to be captives to the people of the Provinces.

15th. Now the slain of the men of Brittain were about three-score persons and three hundred taken captives.

16th. And there fell of the people of the Provinces three captains and some others; moreover a chief captain, whose name was

Mercer, was slain; a worthy man, and came from the land of Caledonia.

18th. Now the army of Britain on the morning of the same day, prepared to assault the camp of the people of the Provinces, for they wist not that the people were departed.

19th. And lo! when they drew nigh unto the camp there was no man there and they were amazed beyond measure. Now they had heard the noise of the destroying engines and they said it thundered; notwithstanding it was winter.

20th. And while they were musing concerning these things, behold a messenger came, and he had tidings in his mouth.

21st. And he reported all the things which George, the chief Captain, had done.

22d. And the people were sore amazed, and *gaped on the messenger with their mouths!*

COLUMBIAD.

(*Extracts from page* 23 *to* 27.)

Again, the chief prepares to save the land.
His well-known voice is heard along the strand.
The valiant remnant mustered at the call,
Resolv'd with him, to conquer or to fall.
Above all pain, all passion, and all pride,
His courage rises, as the flowing tide;
Stung by reproach, by love of country fired,
His brave example other chiefs inspired;
The sacred unction spread throughout the host,
To arms they fly, then seize the envied post;
The Hessians droop, and give the town for lost.
No obstacle could stop their bold career,
No dangers daunt, or chill their hearts with fear.
Onward they rush—regardless of their fate—
And seize the town the foes possess'd of late.
The German troops, so terrible in name,
Submission yield, and mourn their ravish'd fame;
Disgrace and shame oppress'd the British chief,
Loud broken murmurs spoke his poignant grief.

The captive foe, a motley, numerous, band,
Then cross'd the tide to wait the chief's command,
Who follow'd soon, and with his gallant band,
Consults new measures to redeem the land.
Cornwallis, now encamp'd within the town,
Haughty and proud and thirsting for renown:

He, the chief leader of the British van,
Scorning the foe, the battle first began.
The winding Sandpink, the fierce hosts divide
The bridge to storm, and gain the other side,
Was the great object of each warring host,
And all prepared to seize the dangerous post.
The Jersey troops, full in the front of war,
Wait the strong torrent thundering from afar;
Columbia's chief, to mighty cares resigned,
His laboring soul to noble acts inclined;
Each post he visits with paternal care,
Examines, cool, the dreadful scenes of war.

Here valiant Hugg, in dreadful thunder toss'd
The whirling balls among the British host.
Ellis, in arms long tried, beheld the foe,
Impatient waits to give the fatal blow.
The Britons hear, and stand in wild affright;
They wheel, they turn, then save themselves in flight.
The Hessian troops close form'd in dread array,
Fearless came on and wedged the narrow way.
A death-like silence and a dread suspense,
For one small moment chain'd the active sense,
Then, quick as lightning, the loud cannon's roar,
And death and slaughter stalk'd along the shore.
"Victors and vanquished join promiscuous cries,
Rend the wide arch and pierce the vaulted skies."
* * *

Great Washington beheld the glorious strife
And nobly showed a brave contempt of life.
Sol now retired behind the western main;
The vanquish'd Britons mourn their heroes slain.
One noble chief Columbia lost that day,

In Freedom's cause he bore superior sway;
In him there shone a bright and manly flame,
The grateful muse records this patriot's fame;
Ingenious, open—generous, brave, and free,
These virtues, MORRIS, all ascribe to thee!

Lo! now fresh honors wait Columbia's host,
Th' incautious Britons lose another post;
The British rear, in Princeton, idly sought,
Inglorious ease, whilst others nobly fought;
They unsuspicious saunter round the town
Fearless of danger or great Washington.
To take them by surprise, the chief prepares,
Each leader anxious in the danger shares;
Just as Aurora tinged the Eastern sky,
Columbia's host and matchless chief drew nigh;
In terrors clad they rush into the field,
Success attends—the haughty Britons yield—
Delusive hope had lull'd the British chief,
His soul, indignant, scorn'd to yield belief;
Thus far outwitted by an abler hand,
He stamp'd, he rav'd and madden'd round the land.
He vainly thought the foe an easy prey,
And watch'd impatient for the break of day,
The nightly fires the British host deceives,
They, sure of conquest. took their wonted ease,
Vainly secure and scorning all surprise,
Supine repose and close their weary eyes,
Delusive dreams, weak phantoms of the night,
Present the foe in wild disordered flight,
And now surrounded by their puissant bands,
Before them bend and raise their suppliant hands.
Thus visions oft the sons of men deceive,
And pleasing dreams the troubled souls relieve,

But now when morning rose amazed they found
The foe they sought, decamp'd from off the ground,
Perplex'd with doubts, alive to every fear,
Intent they stood—and trembled for the rear,
Nor stood they long—to camp a soldier came,
With hair erect and blaz'd Columbia's fame,—
Told how the field was strew'd with British slain,
And that three hundred wore the victor's chain,
Fortune changed sides on that auspicious day,
The haughty Britons sullen stalk'd away.
A hasty march to Brunswick saved the foe,
Their tow'ring hopes of conquest now laid low,
On board their ships in wild confusion run,
And hail with joy the friendly setting sun,
The navy groaned beneath the guilty load,
Launch'd from the shore where late it proudly rode.
Then sought inglorious some more peaceful shore,
Rapine and murder stalk'd along before,
In mystic darkness *Howe's* designs were bound,
Rapt up in shades—a mystery—profound.