

marching on land with the regiment. On Sunday we rested, and Chaplain Gano gave us another good sermon. I attended a soldier's funeral — the first ever I saw. This man, of the Fourth Pennsylvania Regiment, had died of putrid fever. The ceremonies were very solemn, and three volleys were fired over the grave. At one place, we came to an Indian town where there had been about sixty houses, with one British family among them. Only the cellars and walls, fruit trees and grain fields remained. From this time forth our men burned all the Indian villages, one that we passed belonging to the Tuscaroras. We were not allowed to stop and eat any of the ripe apples, or shoot any game, for General Sullivan had sent word to hasten our march. In one place, called Ingaren, we found several sides of tanned leather in a vat, and a dead white man, probably a prisoner, under a tree blown down by the wind. There was a Scotch bonnet near him.

“My friend, Claes Vrooman, who knows all the Indian signs, pointed out, on a ledge of rocks by the river, the colored picture of a boat on high water. This was a notice given by Indian spies, who, some days before, had seen our flotilla issue from the woods, and had run ahead, making these pictures all along, thus informing his fellow-savages as to the manner of our coming. At another place, Mr. Vrooman showed me a war post, which was all smeared with paint and cut in several lines, up and down

and crosswise, with a hatchet. This, Vrooman said, would tell just how many scalps, and also how many prisoners, the party had taken. In such a way, just as we write letters, or our officers send despatches, the different Iroquois parties communicate with each other. All along the march, the Indians have had spies on the hilltops. As we are to make our way mostly in valleys until we get to the lake country, all our movements will be well known before we arrive. By sending swift runners ahead, they have kept the Senecas and other savages well informed about our numbers and purpose. I suppose, by this time, Brant has returned from Minisink and joined forces with Butler.

“After burning a good many houses on the 18th, two scouts from General Poor’s New Hampshire brigade came in to tell us that both camps, Clinton’s and Poor’s, would soon be within eight miles of each other. The next day we met at nine o’clock in the morning, and both armies gave three cheers and welcomed each other. We marched together to a place called Owego, where was a big Indian settlement, with plenty of fine land and crops growing. Vrooman, who talked with Lieutenant McKendry, the quartermaster of Alden’s Sixth Massachusetts Regiment, says that this was the town to which Sergeant Hunter was taken from near Cherry Valley, last November, and Vrooman thinks that possibly his sister might have been here too, though he rather cher-

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ishes the idea that she is up in the Cayuga Lake region.

“Nearly every morning this week we have waked up in a fog and had to march through the haze, although the sky was clear. Vrooman says that all the streams flowing south make fog, but those whose waters go northward do not. Is it not strange?”

“How we did enjoy burning the big bark houses here! Think of over fifty dwellings, some of them sixty feet long and divided into rooms with a fireplace in each! Whew! what a blaze, and how the dry bark did crackle! We did not march on the morrow, for it rained too hard, but on the next day we passed more fine maize land and a place where some Indians had burned a white prisoner to death. A deer ran right through our camp, but he saved his venison by being too swift for us. In spite of many rapids and rough places which turned the boats around in every direction, our watermen were lucky; but, in one place, in deep water we lost a boat, which had on board three barrels of powder and fourteen boxes of cartridges, besides one man drowned. Now, about this episode, I must tell you in detail, for it shows what curious beliefs some folks have.

“There were five men in charge of the boat, but the current had made it unmanageable, and it was overturned. Now, if it had been Cayuga Lake, about which the Indians tell, we should not have expected to see the body float again, for in this lake, which we

are yet to see, the water is so deep and so cold that it is almost never that the corpse of an Indian man or woman drowned in its waters comes to the surface again. The Indians do not expect to see their friends who have sunk, but they begin mourning for them at once, wailing as for those who have not only died but disappeared even from the solid earth.

“The reason of this is that down in the unsounded depths, where it is too cold even for fish to live, in the icy caves of the dead dwells the spirit of a malignant squaw, who is eager to have and to hold the bodies of men, whom she hates. Her blind rage, however, does not discriminate, and her grip is relentless upon all that come to her. After hearing of Queen Esther, I can believe in such a being.

“When a person drowns, the Senecas have no rites or incantations by which they hope to appease the malignity of the queen of the ice; but with our men it was different. They thought that the body of the drowned man deserved honorable burial, and so they attempted, after their own way, to make the corpse float, and this was the way they did it. From one of the other boats they borrowed a loaf of bread,—the staler and drier the better,—and into this bread they cut a tube-like hole from the top to the centre. The next thing was to get some quicksilver to put inside the bread. The idea was that the loaf of bread set floating on the water would, because of the quicksil-

ver in it, and its subtle relation to the human interior organs, especially the bladder, bring the corpse to the surface.

“But how to get the white quicksilver — this was the question. There was none in any of the military stores, or in any one's private possession, but, appealing to the surgeon, who was willing to humor the men, he found that he had an unusually large amount of the red precipitate, or oxide of mercury. Rigging up a rude alembic, made of bottles and a bit of glass tube, over the camp-fire, and carefully manipulating it, a globule of mercury as big as a large pea was obtained. This was duly set into the loaf of bread, which was properly plugged up with a part of the material cut from the top crust.

“Then the man who most fervently believed in the prescription of literally raising the dead, carefully launched the dry loaf some thirty feet above the place where the man fell overboard. The current bore the novel burden upon its bosom, first slowly, then swiftly, until down near the place of the accident, when it began to move near the shore and then around in the curve of the land, but, instead of passing on, out and over into the stronger channel, it eddied entirely round, making a circle nearly six feet in diameter. At this the eyes of the expectant man danced with delight. He was a cousin of the deceased, and would rather have been shot in battle than face the man's parents, and especially his grand-

mother, without having tried the mystic mercury and the staff of life.

"All the other spectators kept quiet, some half believing in the efficacy of the trial. The others, not wishing to hurt the man's feelings, refrained from jeers or laughter. Soon, to the astonishment of all, something appeared on the surface of the water, and in a moment it was recognized as a human foot, with some grass and leaves with it. In but a few seconds more, the water became clearer and the body could be seen, and was soon brought to the shore by two men already waiting with boat-hooks.

"By this time the loaf of bread had become so soaked that it had sunk. Of course the man's faith in the traditional method of raising a drowned man from a watery to a dry grave was, in his own eyes, amply vindicated. Out of respect for his feelings, criticism, comment, and challenge of superstition were postponed. There in the forest a grave was dug, a volley fired. Then, brushwood and timber, heaped up and fired, covered from desecration and gave to oblivion the unfortunate boatman.

"Sunday, the 22d, was a bright day for us, for at nine o'clock in the morning we arrived at General Hand's camp. The light infantry, all splendid fellows and mostly Pennsylvanians, came out to meet us with cheers, while thirteen cannon made the hills and forest ring with echoes, such as I have never heard before. We marched a mile further, and

arrived at Tioga Point. Sullivan's main body lies in camp on the west side of the river, the east being apparently all mountains. This new river flows out of the country of the Senecas, and we shall proceed up its valley. I can tell you that I was interested in seeing the stream which for ages had floated the canoes of the biggest of the Iroquois tribes. They certainly do make pretty craft. Being of birch bark, they are much handsomer and lighter, but also more fragile than our clumsy boats, but both are alike in having no iron nails in them, for even our big flat boats are held together with pins of wood.

"By noontime we were safely encamped in a fine, large Indian field. You would be surprised to see how many hundred acres the redmen long ago cleared at this place, first by cutting off the bark of the trees (using the best for making houses and canoes) and thus deadening them. After a year or two, they burn the timber and underbrush, until, after a decade or so, many of the fields look as smooth and beautiful as any on the flats near Schenectady or even in the Bowery.

"All the field officers of our brigade dined with General Sullivan; but the next day we had a sad accident when Captain Kimble, in Colonel Cilley's regiment, was killed by a soldier's careless handling of his musket.

"Though I have often seen soldiers march through Schenectady, and even a brigade at a time, yet this

is the biggest army I have yet looked upon, for there are nearly five thousand men, including three hundred boatmen, who came with us and with Sullivan up from Wyoming. There are thirty or forty women in the camp, — soldiers', sutlers', or drovers' wives, though two or three are rescued captives, — and there are five or six children.

“I must tell you an incident about one of these men accustomed to the rifle from childhood, showing also what sure marksmen Pennsylvania buck-shooters are. A boy and girl, out with their father tending the cows, rambled in the woods one day and found what they thought to be a nest of kittens. The boy put the pretty little things in his sister's apron to carry back to show their parents. He himself was carrying one on his shoulder and petting it, when the mother wildcat, coming back, saw herself robbed, and in a moment seemed infuriated. She sprang on the boy's head, seized her cub in her mouth, and appeared just about ready to claw the boy's eyes out, when fortunately the father, who had seen the whole affair, coolly took aim and sent a ball just through the animal's eyes. The boy was only scratched in a few places, and the girl brought her kittens home. The family has a small menagerie of wild creatures, including a hedgehog, a white owl, an eagle, and two bears' cubs.

“We have plenty of good bread here, baked in the ovens which have been set up by the assistants of Mr.

Ludwig, the Philadelphia baker-general. Whether 'salt-raised' or 'milk emptin's,' or 'yeast riz,' I cannot say; but it is light and sweet.

"The branches of the Susquehanna here come very close together, about a half a mile above the point where they unite, and it is on the narrow neck of the peninsula that Fort Sullivan has been built. It is shaped like a diamond, with points touching the river, a block house being at each of the points. On the great flat, at the wedge of land between the rivers, and shaped like an arrow-head, are camped the soldiers of the four brigades, with the artillery and the riflemen. The Six Nations called this place, where the fort stands, the 'Southern Door of the Long House,' for here all the trails centred, and their representative, a Seneca chief, the 'Guardian of the Door,' always dwelt here.

"Queen Esther, the granddaughter of Madame Montour, whose father was Count Frontenac, ruled this part of the country and had hundreds of acres southwest of the fort covered with cornfields. Of course you have heard of her. She is supposed to be the natural great-granddaughter of Count Frontenac, whose men burned our town of Schenectady in 1690, when our own grandfather was shot and scalped. Queen Esther had so fine a house at the village of Sheshequin that our Pennsylvania boys always speak of it as a palace, and her husband was a famous chief named Echobund. She had only

one son, and he was killed in a battle the day before the fall of Wyoming, in one of the skirmishes, and so she took her revenge on the prisoners. She made fourteen of them kneel in a ring, while she tomahawked them all, one after the other. Last autumn Colonel Thomas Hartley came here, burned her palace and wasted her farms, but the land is still called 'Queen Esther's plain.'

"There is another queen, named Catherine, sister of Esther, near Seneca Lake. Queen Catherine is a great horse trader. We expect to take and burn her town, with its stock farms.

"The scenery here is so beautiful that I get homesick. One afternoon, when the lovely white clouds in the sky were reflected on the face of the river, I wondered why war had to be. It was in this region, only a little farther east, that the Moravians worked so faithfully to tame the savages by means of the Gospel. But how can a poor lout of a redskin know what is right, when we white men make war with each other? So long, also, as the Indians kill and burn and scalp as they do, I am afraid the counsels of our town founder, Arendt van Curler, who always told our fathers to keep peace with the Five Nations, cannot be carried out. Why did the savages who cherish 'Corlaer's' memory follow the Tories in their murderous purpose?

"We are going to march within a day or two, and Vrooman says we are sure to have a battle up in the

river valley within two or three days after our start. Before I close my letter I must tell you how kind Colonel Van Cortlandt has been to me. Seeing me one day in the camp here, he stopped and asked me my name, and when I told him, he said, 'Why, are you the son of Barent Clute, who was drowned by the overturning of a canoe at Little Falls?' and I answered 'Yes, the same.' He said, 'You had a noble father. He once saved my life. When you write home, please convey my respects to your mother. I hope you will make a good name as a soldier.' I said, 'Thank you, colonel; I'll try.'

"I must tell you, too, that I have not parted with my little book, the 'Heidelberg Catechism,' at which I try to get a look once every day.

"Please remember me to Domine Vrooman and to my brothers and sisters at home, pet Frolic, my dog, and wag pussy's tail for me, and take a great deal of love from your oldest son. I hope to write to you again, but where and when I do not know. Mr. Vrooman also sends kind regards to all friends in church and Dorp."

We must now turn to read about Sullivan's Continentals, of the main army.

CHAPTER X

THE MAIN ARMY STARTS FROM EASTON

EASTON, the settlement at the point of junction of the Lehigh with the Delaware, was in 1779 in its infancy. It had been begun by Germans from the Palatinate region of the Rhine. Fleeing from the oppression of the French, who desolated the land, as well as slaughtered its people, they were glad in this lonely spot in far-off America to have again around them fertile fields and the glorious beauty of the everlasting hills. The future city was regularly laid out. The houses, one story in height, with massive, thick walls and much cosey comfort within, were mostly built of stone. There were not many books in these dwellings, but there were the Bible in German and the "Heidelberg Catechism." Besides the public buildings, jail and court-house, there was the handsome stone church, in which the people of the Reformed faith met Sabbath by Sabbath. Besides the preaching of the gospel of peace within its walls, many a treaty with the Indians had been made, and other works of mercy wrought. Since the battles of Brandywine, Germantown, and Monmouth, the edifice had

been turned into a hospital. Even yet a few maimed Continentals lay here, much helped and often attended by the kindly women of the Reformed Church.

The point of junction where the waters of the Lehigh come rushing down to join those of the Delaware was a spot sacred to all the tribes in the valleys of the two rivers. Here, from time unrecorded, had been held many a council, here the hatchet had been buried, the calumet smoked, and the white wampum exchanged in token of peace; for these symbols had, with their users, the same meaning as the snowy dove and the olive branch have among us. Here again, when warlike passions raged, had the tomahawk been dug up and the red wampum of war sent forth as the messenger of blood and fire, to summon the tribes to battle. Glorious was then the view of the primeval forest and untouched nature, and magnificent is yet the vista of mountain and valley, forest and stream, from the lordly city of Easton. The Delaware was already flowing out from the Catskills to the sea, and was then the boundary line of states, as it had been, for ages, the highway of the canoe. Along the western line of what is now the superb campus of Lafayette College, was begun by the pioneers, in the line of westward advance toward Wyoming, that "Sullivan's Road" which in historic interest is great and in local annals has many tender associations, for it is known, and justly so, as "Lovers' Lane." Thus with this highway are

locally associated those two passions most deeply rooted in man's nature, the passion of giving and the passion of taking life, — which outflower in love and war.

To this place, rich in glorious scenery of hill and vale, Maxwell's brigade of New Jersey men marched from Elizabethtown, in their native state.

The New Hampshire regiments under General Poor, by a still longer journey, arrived from Redding, Connecticut marching through Fishkill, Warwick, and across New Jersey. The Eastern men, although quartered in "the Court House and other spare buildings," were not, apparently, much pleased with this frontier town. They thought the people were chiefly of "the Dutch descent," by which they meant German, and the principal merchants were Hebrews. The houses were built of stone. One disappointed Yankee wrote that it was "a place of about one hundred and fifty houses, and inhabited chiefly by High Dutch and Jews." On the contrary, the Rev. Dr. William Rogers, chaplain, thought it was a pretty village. Here he met Domine Kirkland, who knew the Indian dialects, and had four Stockbridge Indians with him to act as guides.

By the 18th of June, all the troops in town were prepared for marching. They started between five and six o'clock in the morning. With long lines of loaded pack horses and wagons from Bucks and Berks counties, they moved out of town and over the

hills by what is now called "Lovers' Lane," — or "Sullivan's Road," which Sullivan's pioneers had vastly improved,—and marched that day twelve miles. Their route was from Easton to the foot of the Blue Ridge, by way of Bushkill Creek. This stream has a curious geological history, for, like some people, it has changed its course in life.

The army encamped at Heller's tavern, near Hellersville, in the southern opening of the Wind Gap, which is a wonderful pass in the Blue Ridge Mountains. At daybreak next morning, the army moved through this pass and took breakfast at Brinker's Mills, where were plenty of supplies laid up in big buildings, — "Sullivan's Stores," — erected some time before. Here the men drew four days' provisions, which were to feed them until they should arrive at Wyoming. Nine miles farther march brought them to a log tavern, which was the last house on the frontier. In those days, every inn had a name or sign, such as "The Ball," "The Plough," "The Wain and Six Horses," "The Star," or, they took their "hail," as a sailor would say, from the king or some famous hero. But although King George's face had long ago been smashed or smeared out or over, yet, in some cases, where the paint was thin or bad, the Hanoverian's face and queue were visible. Not infrequently the landlords liked the old state of affairs, and the officers complained of many a "Torified house."

Until early in the spring of 1779, there had been

only a bridle-path between Easton and Wyoming. General Sullivan had sent Van Cortlandt's New Yorkers and Spencer's Jersey men to chop a pathway through the forest and lay a road-bed that should be fit for wagons and artillery. So the bears and wolves, woodchucks and ground hogs, were routed out of their lairs and holes, rattlesnakes and other vermin compelled to glide farther afield, and the deer sent flying. Often, when camp was made near their old runways, these antlered creatures rushed right among the gangs of workmen, as if in surprised protest at intrusion. Great sunshiny swaths were cut in the forest among the mighty tamarack trees. Swales and puddle-holes were gorged with stone, timber, or truck of any sort that was handy. Over swamps and miry places, corduroy roads were laid by chopping down the larch trees and packing the logs together, like candles in a box. Over these, brush wood was laid and earth thrown. Thus a rough road and difficult to travel, but a wonderful improvement on the old bridle-path or Indian trail, opened the path of civilization into northern Pennsylvania.

Now, in the regular order of march, Maxwell's brigade went ahead; Proctor's regiment, of a quarter of a thousand men, with eight pieces of artillery, followed. Poor's New Hampshire brigade closed the rear. The wagon trains were still farther back. Wyoming was reached June 23d, but Sullivan was ahead of his supplies, which had not come, and the

host had to wait until July 31st. Then, leaving the fort well garrisoned, the band played and the advance began. Besides the thirty-five hundred men on foot, there were a thousand on deck. A fleet of two hundred and fourteen boats floated on the bosom of the Susquehanna, bearing the artillery, salt provisions, flour, liquor, ammunition, and heavy baggage. On land, about twelve or fifteen hundred pack horses carried stores and food, and seven hundred cattle were driven along to provide fresh meat. Game and fish in the forest might provide tit-bits, and in the lake region were corn, potatoes, and vegetables; but meat and flour they must carry with them. Like a snail the army had to carry its house on its back, while moving on its belly.

The march to Tioga Point, a distance from Wyoming of sixty-five miles, through the rough forest country, was one of great hardship; but, on August 10th, the army halted at a point a mile below the junction of the Chemung River with the branch of the Susquehanna flowing from Otsego Lake. Then the whole body of infantry, locking arms, stepped waist deep into the water, and the men, bracing themselves firmly against the swift current, crossed to the opposite side. Then, going westward a mile, they forded again the Chemung River, and encamped at Tioga Point, between the rivers flowing out of the heart of New York, the seat of the Iroquois confederacy. Here were the headquarters of the army

and the base of supplies for the farther march westward. The stores and boats, as well as the sick and wounded, were to be left here under guard, in the large fort which was to be built and named by the army after its trusted commander.

To this place with her father, John Harby, in charge of the army wagons, came Henrietta Harby, who, as it proved, was to spend several weeks in Fort Sullivan, and lose her own heart.

We must now glance at that country, rich in grain fields, which the Continental Congress had ordered Major-General John Sullivan, with his five thousand Continental troops, to invade, wherein pined many scores of captives, survivors of the hundreds who had sunk under the tomahawk or who filled unknown graves.

CHAPTER XI

KING GEORGE'S GRANARY

UNTIL after the Revolutionary War, nearly all central and western New York was a wilderness. The Palatine Germans had settlements in the Schoharie and in the upper Mohawk valleys as far west as the Utica of to-day. Between Schoharie and Oswego, the respective headquarters of the patriots and the British, there was Fort Stanwix, later called Fort Schuyler, where is now Rome. These people had been driven out from their homes in the Rhine River region by the ravages—equal to anything ever wrought with torch and knife by red Indians—of the generals of Louis XIV. of France. Some had sailed away to South Africa, to help, with the Dutch and Huguenots, to make the Boer Republic. Others, their kinsmen, helped by the British government, with the idea of making “naval stores,” had come into the colony of New York; but they and their children, like General Herkimer and his Oriskany heroes, were staunch supporters of the Continental Congress. At Cherry

Valley and on Otsego and Schuyler lakes, there were clearings and hamlets, occupied chiefly by Scottish people, some Tories, some patriots. Not a few Highlanders had found peace and prosperity here after the disaster at Culloden, which broke forever the power of the clans.

Watercourses and Indian trails furnished the only paths by which the adventurous wood-runner or white trader made his way among the lands which the Iroquois claimed as their own. When the Revolutionary War broke out and the savages sallied forth in small bands, five, ten, fifteen, rarely twenty at a time, or when the Tories and redmen joined forces, numbering hundreds of warriors, to kill, burn, or destroy, where did they hatch their plots? Whence did they begin their march?

Apart from the Indian council fires and tribal capitals, with the great central council-hearth at Onondaga, near the later Syracuse, and the large palisaded towns and fortresses at places which we know only by their modern names, such as Pompey, Aurora, and Batavia, there were, besides Niagara at the extreme west end of New York, two points at which magazines and storehouses furnished supplies. From these issued the great marauding parties. One was at Oswego, easily reached from Canada, and by all the waterways east and west. From Oswego, by Oswego River, that supplies the thread on which many lakes are strung together as

on a rosary, long journeys by canoes, of warriors fully equipped, could be made into the Mohawk Valley and the eastern settlements. Farther south lay that region which supplied waterways by its chain of fifteen "finger lakes," and their connections, besides the Delaware and Susquehanna rivers and their many tributaries. Their valleys and tributary water routes could bring the redmen within easy striking distance of the white population in eastern Pennsylvania and southeastern New York. The capital of all this region "the Seneca Country" — was at Kanedasaga, near Geneva, at the northern end of Seneca Lake.

Here, between 1776 and 1779, with storehouses filled with everything to please the Indians' tastes and desires, dwelt British Canadians and Tories by the score, and sometimes by the hundreds. There were civilians as well as soldiers, who lived among the savages, keeping their guns and war gear in repair for them, helping them to improve in agriculture and house building, and ready to give them, so far as the savage desired them, whatever material advantages the white man's civilization afforded.

If the Caucasian teacher went too fast in his suggestions of progress, the Indian plainly told him that beyond a certain point he could not proceed, and that he proposed to stick to the traditions and ways of his fathers. The savage would fight and he would work according to his own ideas, but the

squaw must be the chief beast of burden. As to using a plough or the tools of the white man's special crafts, the redman would not. So the ploughs were left to rust, and the grindstones and carpenter's adzes, planes, and chisels, lay idle or were turned into toys. Bullets, lead, powder, axes, knives, iron arrow-heads, beads, woven goods, and things that accorded with the Indian's style of life, with rum and brandy for his debauches, were eagerly sought. On the subject of firearms, the taste of the warriors was highly cultivated. No quality of guns was too fine for the redman. He wanted the best. He would make almost incredible sacrifices of comfort, pride, or self to get a rifle. This latter rarity among soldiers, who had only smooth-bore muskets, usually came from Pennsylvania or the continent of Europe. The British and American army authorities furnished only the ordinary guns that shot a larger ball, but with less distance, certainty, and power of penetration than the leaden pellets of the riflemen.

The two garden spots of Iroquoisia were those of the Genesee Valley and the inter-lake region between the Cayuga and Seneca sheets of water. Like two middle fingers of a great hand, they lay on the rosy bosom of mother earth and between them, like dimples were the fat valleys filled with thriving villages. In the early summer of 1779, tens of thousands of acres of young corn, fruit trees, — peach, apple, and pear, — with gardens of beans, squashes,

and vegetable food in wonderful variety, were in their glory of greenery and bloom.

It had been the purpose of the British government to make this fertile portion of New York a granary for the feeding of its army. The newly imported British soldier and the Hessian mercenary could hardly be made to eat maize or corn meal, or, as it was known in England, "Oswego flour," but all the king's native-born adherents, Canadians and Tories, with the soldiers long on service in America, had learned to eat the delicious food, whether as "suppawn," hasty pudding, "hoe," "ash" or "johnny" cake; while, as boiled on the cob or as roasting ears, few even of the "green" troops were proof against the attractions of this succulent grain, monarch of American cereals. It is true that some skill was necessary in learning to eat boiled corn on the cob. The beginner who had never seen "beans growing on a stick" was apt to bite deep into the cob, to the detriment of his teeth. How to nibble just deep enough, get the sweet grain, and let go the hard core, was the problem which all could not master at once. Yet, when once learned, the art of eating corn on the cob added notably to the joys of life.

It was hoped and planned that, with the Indians' aid, a considerable saving of British revenue could be made by feeding the royalists among the revolted colonists from the maize lands of New York. In return, the red allies were to have unlimited ball,

powder, whiskey, woollens, beads, mirrors, and other coveted supplies.

The impartial historian and the truth-seeking philosopher are more ready to-day than of yore to do justice to our grandfathers' red foes. No philosophy of religion is now accounted sound which does not take into account the fact that the redman, though a savage, was religious. He bowed in awe before the Power that rules this universe. He saw in the lightning and the storm, in the sun and moon, in the cloudless blue and the star-embroidered sky, in the carillon of the waterfalls and the sighing of the wind through the forest, signs and proofs of the Great Spirit's presence and power. He pondered on the mystery of creation, generation, and being. However rude his ideas, grotesque his ritual, or revolting the form which his notions took, we must acknowledge that the Indian was a worshipper. Many a rock, a precipice, gorge, and tree, was sacred or awesome, because of the supposed presence of Deity or Spirit. Along the forest trail and the river path, and at the great landmarks on the lake, were totems, idols, pictures, shrines, and votive tablets. Offerings, which, in purpose, meaning, and self-denial, ally themselves with the gorgeous worship in the Christian cathedral, were made continually.

The Indian had a diplomacy, also. He possessed and made use of what stood for written parchments, engrossed documents, marks, and seals. He held

conventions and sat for days in deliberative bodies. His orators made eloquent speeches and argued the various points and sides of a question. He had ceremonies for the making of war and peace, of which the tomahawk and the calumet were the respective signs. Wampum, or belts of shells woven together, was his money and his documents of state. Sent rapidly by special messenger, or ceremoniously delivered in council, they were, in importance and the forcing of decisive action, as significant, as compelling, as royal despatches. Stored up in the tribe's archives, they had a significance such as the great seal of the state, the steel dies of the mint, the book's title-page, or the originals of standard weights and measures have among civilized nations.

CHAPTER XII

THE CAPTIVE AT KENDAIA

WE now return to the lone captive girl at Kendaia, Mary Vrooman, who had been seized by the savages at Cherry Valley, and see how savage life looked to her. It was many months after she wrote to her brother, Claes Vrooman, that he received the letter. When it came, it was not an affair of folded sheets of white paper, duly held together with wafers and directed by the outside, as in the days of '79. Nor had it any sign of postmarks. Nor did it in any way look like an epistle, either of this or the last century. In outward form it was a package of layers of birch bark, cut into pieces about six inches square. The writing was done with a sharpened reed, dipped in some kind of red vegetable juice, which made a legible mark on the white bark. Ten or twelve of these birch sheets, pressed down together, were tied with a piece of fawn skin and sewed up all around, with strings to tie and hold it inside of a man's shirt. Thus, between the heart and the buckskin of a faithful negro, a captive like herself, it reached her brother, Claes Vrooman, the rifleman, right after the

decisive battle of August 29th. Of the negro we shall have something further to say, and also as to how Claes Vrooman found him. As the letter was dated late in June, this is the place to tell about its contents, which are clear enough:—

“KENDAIA, June 20, 1779.

“MY DEAR BROTHER: I am alive and not dead. The negro boy, Drusus, who is here a captive like myself, is to be my postman. He remembers gratefully your own and father’s kindness to him, and has offered to take a letter to you, when the braves march southward, though he must run great risks in getting to you. I gladly take this opportunity of letting you, and through you, all my friends, know that, by the great mercy of God, I am not only alive but very well, and surprised every day at being treated so kindly. Nevertheless, I do not give up for an hour the hope that I am yet to see my home and friends again.

“Let me tell you about this negro boy Drusus. He belonged to a Tory from Cherry Valley who came, with his slaves, to live among the Indians, and who died here. The negro, without political opinions of any kind, seems quite happy, but says he would rather be among our people and in his old ways of life again, than with the Senecas, for, when the war parties go off on long distances, the warriors take him with them. He finds the travelling too hard,

and they make him do all the hard work they can, treating him, he says, 'like a squaw and nothing else.' His fault lies in having too good an appetite. He is so fond of whiskey, and of getting plenty to eat, that both the Tories and Indians amuse themselves by playing on his weakness—or — shall I say — his strength of stomach.

"They do it in this way: Drusus has a tremendous thick skull, even for a black fellow, and quite often, to get even so much as an acorn cup of whiskey, or some nice thing a squaw has cooked, he will let some of the most muscular of the Indian boys crack him over the noddle with a club. The blows would certainly stun a white man or crush his skull, but, after taking off his cat-skin cap and rubbing his woolly head a little while, Drusus does not seem to mind it, though the squaws giggle endlessly over it and call him 'Stone-head.'

"He has never forgotten the kindness you showed him, in Schenectady, when nearly frozen and tired to death while on his way with a bundle of ginseng root to Albany, for which the Dutch, who export it to China, pay such high prices. You gave him a good warm dinner in the kitchen, and let him rest there for an hour or two. I can remember that I once warmed some soup for a black boy, but apart from that, cannot think of any details; but his memory of our house is extraordinary. He tells me of the standing clock in the hall, and the print of Prince

Maurice and the painting of John DeWitt that hung on either side on the wall—though he cannot, of course, tell the names of these worthies. He speaks of the brass andirons faced with the Leyden arms, the keys of St. Peter crossed, and remembers the two rifles set on pins over the fireplace. What more than anything else made me certain that he was not lying, but was the same man I helped to feed, was that he recalled that our cat, Jan Steen, had six toes. Drusus has not only been very kind to me and a blessing, because able to talk with me in English, besides knowing a little Dutch, but he is certain that he can get this letter to you. The Indians do not like him to act as a fighter, and think he may escape if he goes with arms on the war-path, but they trust him as a burden-bearer and general ‘squaw-man,’ or laborer. Already rumors of the coming of General Sullivan’s army are flying about, and all the fighting men are expected to march southward soon.

“I cannot get over my kind treatment by everybody here. My ideas of savage life have changed in some things. How fortunate for me that I had so many Indian girls as playmates, when we learned the catechism under Domine Vrooman, so that I knew enough of the Mohawk language to talk easily with these Seneca people, whose dialect is different, but not very much so. You have heard, perhaps, how at Cherry Valley, Sarah and I were seized at the same time, and our hands tied behind our backs with deer

skin thongs, and how we were put with the other captives under guard of some warriors till the fighting was over. The next day we were marched off. I cannot remember much of the journey here, except the awful weariness, but I want to tell you at once that Sarah was left at a village of the Tuscarora tribe called 'Coreorganel.' It lies on the banks of the creek running from south to north into Cayuga Lake. The Indians call this stream by a name meaning 'pink with salmon,' as indeed the water often is, in spring or spawning time. Then, passing around the southern end of Cayuga Lake, our party of Senecas travelled northwest, and came to this place, called Kendaia, which is in a very pretty country, between the two lakes, Cayuga and Seneca, within a mile or so of the latter. About half the captives were distributed in different Indian villages before we reached this place where I am.

"There are about sixty houses in our town, made of poles and bark. They are quite water and air tight, except that they have only smoke holes for chimneys. Four or five of the buildings inhabited by the chiefs are two stories high, of hewn and sawed timber, and painted; but these were made by white men from the settlements, who got their pay in skins and produce, for some of the chiefs are smart traders, and know how to strike a bargain.

"In our long house there are eight families, each living in a big room with the fireplace in the middle.

A hallway runs the whole length of the building, from door to door, and the family rooms are on either side. Though you know Indian houses and apartments pretty well, I must tell you that the one in which I live with five squaws, — one a widow woman, and the others her daughters, — is cleaner than most of them. As the house is only three or four years old, the rafters are not so black and shiny with smoke, and the soot does not hang in such long streamers as in the others.

“Many of the walls are decorated with scalps, plain and painted, some old and well smoked, others so new that I can recognize the property of owners I formerly knew. For example, no one could be mistaken as to Mrs. Jane McMurtrie’s hair, for it is of such beautiful golden-auburn tint. Poor thing, I wonder how her four bairns, now orphans, fare without their mother! It seems that when the Indians entered at one end of the village, she had time to escape to the hills, taking her baby in her arms, and one child by the hand, the other two children following. All day long she was able to keep hidden, though she saw the fires and heard the yells below. Toward evening the children were so hungry and cried so persistently for food, that she found she must go down toward the house for some milk. As all seemed to be quiet, she ventured forth, hoping to get to the spring house.

“Alas! the children saw their mother no more. They cried themselves to sleep in the woods. The

next morning the older boy, cautiously venturing forward, saw hanging on a bush to dry what he knew to be his mother's hair. The children were nearly starved, but I have heard from a later captive who passed through Kendaia that they were all living yet. By the way, all the Indians in our village declare that Brant was not in the Cherry Valley massacre, nor anywhere near at the time.

"Except that I have to work hard like the squaws here, all through the winter, gathering fire-wood, pounding corn, making clothes and baskets, and dressing skins and furs, I cannot complain, for I have good health. Now that summer has come, I work out in the corn-fields, and in planting, weeding, and tending the vegetable garden. I do not find my life hard, except for the loneliness. Being kept so busy, the time passes away tolerably well. I have been adopted into the tribe, and am now the daughter of the old squaw woman, who lost her husband and only son on the war-path a good while ago. All her daughters are older than I am, except one. Just think of your sister as a Seneca damsel. My name in Indian means Rising Moon.

"Although I have to hear a great deal that is rough and even vile, no Indian man has in any way abused me, and I must say that many of the braves are very respectful. Although I knew that the redmen were pagans and had heard nothing about the true God, I have been surprised to find they have many customs

and beliefs which seem very much like doctrine and worship, and are so to them. I must tell you about these, for the warriors, when they know that they are going on a war expedition are, after their way, particularly religious. The most wonderful of their festivals is that of the White Dog, which they allowed me to see and even take part in, because I am one of the adopted daughters of the tribe. After this feast of the White Dog are the ceremonies of planting, of which also I shall tell you something.

“The Indians think that a white dog, when offered up, is particularly grateful to their god. The great festival of sacrifice takes place usually in the month of February. I asked the squaws why they chose white dogs for this purpose. They answered: ‘Because the color, like that of the white cloud, is acceptable. It suggests purity, and the skin of the animal is especially desired for the making of a tobacco pouch which the Great Spirit uses. He needs a great deal of the dried leaf to be properly supplied, but after he has had a pleasant smoke he is in a good humor and will the more readily grant favors.’ I have noticed that at the edge of the woods, before a rock which seems to be sacred, they will throw some tobacco or occasionally a pipe, as an offering. I am told that at dangerous points in every one of the lakes in this region and along the river banks, there are such holy places where the redmen cast tobacco in honor of their god. Much tobacco is also

burnt on the fire, when the Indians pray or return thanks to their god.

“The festival took place quite early in February of this year. Two white dogs, the fattest and finest looking in the village, were taken to the Council House, in front of which were two poles. There they were decorated in the most wonderful manner, with all the pretty things that the squaw mothers and daughters could furnish. The gifts of the unmarried girls seemed to have especial value. When the dog was dressed, he could hardly move, for the ribbons, beads, strips of buckskin dyed in bright colors, and, in fact, nearly everything with which the girls adorn themselves, put upon him. Then, after some incantations by the medicine men of the tribe, the white dogs were taken out and hung by their hind legs on the poles which stood in front of the Council House gate, and about twenty feet high from the ground. They were strangled, for no knife ever touches them.

“This done, a band of about forty or fifty maidens, with their wraps or blankets around their heads, each holding in her hand an ear of corn, marched round the council room to the sound of Indian music and out again. They then proceeded in a line to every house in the village and into each room, a certain number marching around the fireplace, extinguishing all the fires. When nothing was left but ashes, the trash and rubbish from each house

well cleaned out, was brought together, placed in a heap, and set on fire. The whole population of the village, from the papposes (except those asleep and hanging in the tree branches) to the chiefs and medicine men, gathered to see the blaze. When all was burning hotly, they took the two dogs from the poles and threw them on the burning heap.

"Meanwhile the principal men of the tribe, one from each long house, most honored for their character, or because they were the depositaries of the traditions and secrets, led by a chief whose special business it was to carry the brand which lights the council fires, or that which, as in this feast, begins the new year, moved slowly and solemnly around the big blaze, with the idea of getting upon themselves as much of the heat and smoke as possible.

"Then, at a certain signal, when the fire had burned low and the dogs had become a true burnt sacrifice, the chief men formed in line. One placed his hands upon the other with the idea of throwing off and out from himself, and upon and into the other one, all his sins and evil. The second man, with the same idea, slapped or laid his hands upon the third, and the third upon the fourth, and so on to the end of the line. Then the last man, who was supposed to have taken all the sins of the whole tribe into himself, went through some incantations, which soon became violent contortions. When apparently nearly exhausted, he made one final ges-

ture, by which he threw the whole burden into the fire which had burnt up the white dogs, and fell to the ground. The past record was now effaced and the gods were well pleased with the offering.

"After this, the new life for the year began. The tribe and each member made a new start. The maidens began their march again. Entering every house and room again, they relighted the fires for each family, and the routine of life commenced once more.

"There is also another festival, — one, indeed, that reminds me of our Thanksgiving.

"When the warriors start out on the war-path they are expected to be very serious and to give up foolish habits and ways. I have heard the old chiefs lecture and warn the young warriors, almost as if they were domines and the braves were in the catechism class. Each fighting man worships at one of the holy places, consecrates himself to the god, and makes an offering of tobacco, war paint, a pipe, wampum, or something that belongs to himself. He also makes a vow of chastity, while on the campaign. It is against the Indian's law to cut down any tree that gives food even to an enemy. On the march and while hunting, the braves pay great respect to the snakes, tortoises, and the animals which are their clan totems, or signs. They speak of the various animals almost as if they were relatives and talked, thought, and acted like human beings. The stories of imaginary

actions, which the old men and squaws tell the young people as what actually happened, are much like our fairy tales, or Æsop's fables.

"Several war parties have gone out and returned since I have been here, some with scalps and some without them; some coming back in full numbers, but others retracing their steps with their number diminished, having had some killed on the way. No new prisoners have come to our village, but at the end of the lake, where the great Seneca Castle is, I hear that four women and two boys have been adopted into the tribe by the widows or relatives of those killed on the war-path. Besides the negro boy here, there is a white man, a Pennsylvanian, who is kept so busy making salt for them, and is away so much, that I do not often see him. Besides selling it, they have much ceremony and many notions about salt, of which I shall tell you if I ever see home again.

"I must tell you how they plant and raise corn here. This is an old village. Many of the maize fields have been cultivated, the old men say, during ten generations. Some are almost as smooth as our own at home. When they would make new plantations, they go right out into the woods. After first making sure that the soil is rich, they chop or cut the bark down near the roots of the trees and up to where the branches grow, girdling the tree right around, or, as they say, 'scalping' it. Then, they

draw another cutting line perpendicularly down from the top to the bottom, with hatchet or knife, and strip the bark right off, leaving a white and naked trunk. Of the best and most flexible pieces of this bark, they make their canoes. Some of these are very pretty, both in their shape and decorations. I have sometimes seen a hundred of them on the Seneca Lake, which, like Cayuga, is very long and without islands, so that one can easily see what is going on at the other side.

“With the bark not used in this way, they build the walls and roofs of their houses. These are made by cutting down trees, sharpening their ends, and driving them into the ground. Poles are lashed along the side and front for walls and between the rooms, partitions, and hallway, and on these poles they fasten the bark. You would be surprised to know how comfortable these big bark houses are. Some of the single dwellings are, as I have said, built of hewn timber, for axes and hatchets seem to be plenty here.

“Almost as soon as the trees are stripped of their bark, they begin to die, and soon the leaves curl, wilt, and fall. Then the woods, that but a few days before were dark and like twilight, become very warm, full of sunlight, and, where the balsam trees are, very aromatic. The corn is planted as soon as the bark is stripped away and removed. Soon the sun warms the ground and makes the little blades

turn into stalks, which are hoed and tended by the squaws. This is the story of the first year, for in the second the trees are burned down, and in course of time the fields become quite smooth. The harvest time is always one of gayety and merriment, as well as of work. When the grain is all ripe they put it in great storehouses made of wood and bark, and these hold the crops for the winter; but the crop last year, they say, was very poor, and this spring we had none too much suppawn.

“The Indian is very superstitious, or, ought I not to say religious? He thinks that while work in the field is beneath *his* dignity as a warrior, yet that in some way the women are more easily influenced by the powers of Deity, and that a good crop depends more on them than on the men, or, as they say, more on woman’s spirit than man’s toil. So he lets the women do all the work of hoeing, planting, and tending the corn. The only young woman in the tribe who does not toil in the fields is one who has been in Canada and is the widow—for they say she was married in the church by the French priest—of an officer of Butler’s corps of rangers. He was accidentally killed near Niagara, and she came back to live with her people. She has a beautiful seal ring which he gave her. She is very kind to me.

“A very curious custom is that of ‘mothering the fields’ after the seed has been sown. All the wives

of the tribe, who hope before the harvest time to be mothers, are expected to go out at night after the seed has been planted, and walk up and down between the rows of corn, both lengthwise and crosswise, so as to surround each seed; for the Indians think this action of hers will increase the fertility of the soil and the certainty of the crop. Indeed, a chief would consider it a great calamity not to have an expectant mother go up and down the fields at least once.

“We have also orchards here of peach, apple, pear, and plum, and you would be surprised at their size. They cover many acres, and in blossoming time they look more beautiful than I can tell you. Indeed, the peach trees made me feel homesick; for I thought of our own pink-blossoming tree in our yard at Schenectady. Nothing has so brought before me the picture of my home as the blooming trees of May, and this year the prospect for a great crop of fruit is very good. The Indians always had squashes, pumpkins, and beans. Succotash is almost a daily dish in late summer and autumn, and often even in winter. Within four or five years, the Canadians and British people have distributed at Kanadasaga many seeds of other vegetables, so that we have now growing, either here or in the other villages near by, a variety equal almost to that found in our gardens at home.

"O brother dear, I am finishing and closing up this letter weeks after I began it, for the messengers from Kanedasaga have been here calling the warriors to march south on the war-path. Is the army coming? God grant it! I shall try to escape if possible. Brant is the leader, they say, but three hundred white men from Canada are with him. May we meet!

"My daily thoughts for months have been on how I might escape. Now, perhaps, my opportunity is near. I do not know what route the army will take, but I feel sure that if the destruction of the Indian villages and crops is the main object, then you will pass around the southern end of this lake, where, facing west are two rocky gorges, in one of which is a magnificent waterfall.

"Now, I have found a place in which I shall hide. It is in this gorge, and I can give you a sign by which you may at once recognize the spot. On the south face only of the rocky sides of the high precipice grows a pink flower of the primrose family, and I cannot find that it grows anywhere else in this region. It is so rare that it will be a sign and clew to my whereabouts, for though I hide I shall keep within call. It has bloomed for this year, but its leaf is easy to recognize. I enclose some specimens.

"If our army gains victory, the Indians will retreat, they say, toward Niagara. As soon as the people here begin to make ready to move, I shall

hide in the corn-fields at about the last moment, and in their hurry they will not seek me. Oh, rescue me if it be possible! If our army is beaten, or retreats, then I see no hope but of living and dying here among savages.”

CHAPTER XIII

THE PARSON'S PESSIMISM AND GIDEON'S OPTIMISM

HUMAN nature was much the same in "the times that tried men's souls" as in our own days of the Spanish War, when "embalmed beef" was in both the air and nostrils of the nation, and when various scandals connected with this name or that were bruited abroad. Our Revolutionary sires suffered from scoundrelism and mismanagement and delay also, and often the prospect seemed dark enough. To great and real disorders were added those individual and imaginary troubles that spring from bad livers and sluggish digestion. Let us look into the rough board hut set up within Fort Sullivan at Tioga Point, in which Dr. Kinnersley, the surgeon (Franklin's rival in electricity), the Rev. Dr. William Rogers, the parson, and Captain Bush, of the Continental infantry, were messing together while in Fort Sullivan.

The parson had been taking rather pessimistic views since the misfortune of the 13th of August, which we shall now describe.

On the evening of the 11th, Captain Cummings and a scout went forward twelve miles or more westward, up to the Chemung River valley, finding the large Indian village of Chemung occupied. There were sixty houses, some of them built of planks, with a council house, amid fertile fields of grain. On returning, toward noon next day, and reporting to General Sullivan, a council of war was called and a night expedition resolved on.

All the force then in camp, except two regiments, moved forward at eight o'clock in the evening. Sullivan commanded in person, Hand's light troops leading, Maxwell's and Poor's being in reserve. Through narrow defiles, in the pitchy darkness, and into foggy daylight, the army, on nearing the town, proceeded to surround and surprise it, Sullivan even throwing two regiments across the river to head off possible fugitives. At five o'clock, our men rushed from all sides into the town.

But all was silent. Not even a dog barked. The savages had evidently seen the scouts of the day before, taken the hint, and fled.

Resting the main body in this town of Chemung, General Hand sent forward Captain Bush and his company on the trail to Newtown. After a mile or so, they came to a village with fires burning, plenty of skins and blankets lying round, as if men had slept there and but recently risen, and one dog asleep. Captain Bush sent back for reinforcements, and, these

coming up, they advanced another mile, and had reached the low ground under a ridge or hill on their right.

Suddenly, from scores of 'Indians in hiding, a deadly fire was poured into Hubley's regiment. In a few moments, sixteen men had reeled and fallen to the ground. Six of the Pennsylvanians, a sergeant, drummer, and four privates, were killed on the spot. The guide, eight soldiers, an adjutant, and two captains were wounded. It looked very much like an ambushade.

But not for one moment did the Pennsylvania Continentals falter. Colonel Hubley, sending Captain Bush to attack the savages in the rear, ordered his men to charge up the hill. This they did with cheers, setting the redskins on the run at once. These were soon far away and invisible, before Captain Bush got near their rear. As usual, they bore off their dead and wounded, only blood drops here and there, and a coat and hat with bullet holes in them, telling of the effectiveness of the Continental fire.

Besides mounting the severely wounded of his command, Colonel Hubley had the corpses of his slain comrades tied on the horses that had carried provisions, and these were brought to camp and buried. The officiating chaplain, the Rev. Dr. Rogers, delivered a discourse appropriate to the sad occasion. Then Proctor's regimental band played the mournful tune, "Roslin Castle"; and there, under the leafy

aisles of the forest, under Nature's great cathedral floor, were laid to rest the brave Pennsylvanians. Here is the score of the music set to Sir Walter Scott's lines:—

Roslin Castle.

Andante espressivo.

PIANO. *mf*

The musical score for "Roslin Castle" is presented in five systems. Each system features a single melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Andante espressivo." and the initial dynamic is "mf". The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The score is arranged in five systems, each with a single melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The first system is marked "mf" and the second system is marked "p".

General Hand wished to push on to the larger Newtown, but General Sullivan thought best to halt and return.

Returning to the Indian village, the torch was applied to the sixty houses, and the whole laid in ashes. Crossing the river, the thousands of corn stalks full of ripe ears were razed by the men of Maxwell's and Poor's brigades. While at this work of destruction, prowling savages came near, and killed one man and wounded several others. After twenty-three hours of severe and continuous duty, the weary men rested in camp again near Fort Sullivan. It was this night expedition that helped to fill the parson, and perhaps the captain, with evil augury and gloomy forebodings. Certainly, as to success, it was hardly equal to Gideon's night attack on the Midianites.

The pessimistic parson, Dr. Rogers, chaplain of the Third Pennsylvania Brigade, had been ordered to duty at Wyoming, and was waiting in the fort until the boats should be ready to proceed thither. They were to load with provisions and stores, and then come back to meet the army on its return march. Let us see how he felt about the prospects of an avenging expedition, which rascally contractors had ruinously delayed, and which many of the Tories in their treason and Quakers in their principles hoped to see defeated. It was a chill evening in August, and the three gentlemen, representing medi-

cine, theology, and war, invited in Mr. John Harby and his daughter Henrietta, for a pleasant hour or two indoors, for the cool nights made shelter very agreeable, and even a fire in the morning seemed very appropriate.

It was on the evening of August 25th, after Henrietta had written her letter to Philadelphia, that the surgeon and the chaplain, feeling in a mood for mutual confidences, unbosomed themselves. They "told tales out of school"; or, shall we say, because "the cat," the commander-in-chief, was now "away," the mice felt at full liberty to gambol. At any rate, Surgeon Kinnersley, after the usual polite common-places were over, broke out at once.

"Well, chaplain, what do you think of it all? Will the army succeed, or soon come back a-fly-ing?"

"Now that you ask me, doctor, I must speak plainly. I have no hopes of General Sullivan's accomplishing anything; but let us ask the opinion of Captain Bush, and call for reasons. What think you, captain? Are the Six Nations to be crushed?"

"Well, I must confess, parson, the task is difficult, and ours is the worst equipped army for such an expedition I could imagine, for an advance into a pathless wilderness. Our men are to move with pack trains and artillery in a wild forest land, unmapped and unsurveyed, against foes which have

every resource of cunning and that can keep themselves invisible, while ready to spring like panthers at every weak spot, and able to lure even the most cautious men into ambush. I shall not be surprised if the men of our army, while being harassed and subject to loss continually, will not see a hundred Indians at any one time. I should even be willing to wager that many soldiers will come back without seeing a single redskin, unless it may be the tip of his nose or scalp-lock behind a rock or a tree!"

Both parson and doctor laughed very heartily at this, and then the medical man said: "What I worry over is the insufficiency of food and supplies. Why, think of it! They have only twenty-seven days' rations. Even suppose that the cattle do not stray off or the horses get stampeded, what can they accomplish in so short a time? The enemy will surely lure them on from their base of supplies. Even supposing they should meet with no serious mishaps, and even reach Niagara, how can they get back again without food and through a wild wilderness? In such a case, the more men there are, the more mouths to feed, the worse it will be; besides, we know that in those dreadful swamps many animals will be mired or lost, and the horses, lacking proper fodder, will have to be shot."

"Rather a dark view, doctor," said Captain Bush; "but I understand also they have hardly any

medicines or hospital stores. What if they should have two or three serious engagements, with a good many wounded on their hands, up beyond the lake country, where they will have neither boats nor wagons?"

"The case is indeed serious," said the doctor; "for they are very poorly supplied and the surgeons are very few; but what I wonder at is, how they can take cannon with them. With one or two hundred men helping with ropes behind, the wagons may possibly be drawn up and down the hills, but think of the heavy guns being pulled through the forest and over the rough face of the wild country, where there are no such things as roads. I confess that my wishes are warm, but my fears more than counterbalance. I rather look for them to come back inside of a fortnight, having given up the task as too hard."

"But the general seems to be very punctilious, and will probably hold his men together with great vigilance and care," said Mr. Harby.

"Oh, yes," said the chaplain; "that is what I am really most afraid of. The great parade and regularity which is observed must unavoidably, in the end, letting alone all other obstacles, greatly defeat the purpose of the expedition, considering the coyness and subtlety of the Indians. This firing a morning and evening gun, and thus giving the Indian notice of the approach and

whereabouts of the army, does not seem to be a good thing."

"On the contrary, parson, if you will pardon me for saying it," said the doctor, "the Indians look upon the cannon as loaded with all the 'bad medicine' in the world and the very embodiment of mystery. Hearing it in the distant forest will make them want to keep away. Mark my words, they will not want to get near a howitzer. Further, is it not humanity to the women and children that, hearing the sound, they can escape? What I fear most is that the lack of meat food, to which the men have been accustomed, will bring on disease, which will be the ruin of the army. What is the reason the salted beef is so much tainted this year? One expects more from good salt and good beef, as these certainly were when put in the casks — were they not, Captain Bush?"

"On my honor, yes. I was government inspector, and saw the meat and the salt. I cannot tell why so much of it is spoiled. Can you give me some light, Mr. Harby?"

"Why, yes," promptly answered the civilian; "the truth is, that the demand of the Continental army for salt meat rations long ago exhausted the supply of casks made of seasoned wood. Then, the coopers being mostly in the army, the raw hands had to use green wood. Now, this spoils the brine, and makes a fermenting compound which first sours and then taints the meat."

"For this reason, then," said the doctor, "our men must go hungry in the wilderness. I prophesy that within a week our men with General Sullivan will have to come to half rations. Then their patriotism will be tested. I fear a revolt, or at least a refusal to advance. It is pretty hard to be a patriot when you are hungry, and we shall see whether the Continental boys will come back having accomplished nothing."

"Well, better that, than have another Braddock affair," said Captain Bush.

"Well, gentlemen," said Mr. Harby; "since we are, from present appearances, not likely to have any battle or victory in this part of the world, let us have something from ancient history. Come, parson, can't you tell us about a Bible battle, and cheer us up a little?"

"Oh, do, domine, please," said Miss Harby, clapping her hands.

"I will, fair lady, if you will promise to decorate my fireplace with goldenrod to-morrow," said the parson, looking archly at the young lady.

"I'll do so," said she; "but you must be sure to tell about some battle that brought victory to the right side, and a great victory, too."

"I join with the young lady," said Dr. Kinersley; "tell us about something successful. We want our leader to be a Gideon."

"The allusion is a happy one," said the parson;

"and I'll turn to the book of Judges at once, for there we read how the Hebrew republics strove for their freedom."

"Yes, domine," said Miss Harby; "and about King Bramblebush, too. I once heard you preach about how the trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them, and how, after the olive, and the fig and the vine declined the honor, the bramble accepted. I declare, I have thought of that when I have seen some of these swamps we have been through on the march from Easton. But do tell us about Gideon and his victory. I never could understand about those pitchers and trumpets, and, as for lamps being inside the pitchers, how could they manage them? Imagine our Continentals bringing crockery and lamps into this wilderness."

All laughed heartily at this. "And yet, my daughter," said Mr. Harby, "I imagine that a few Indians rushing around our camp at night with fire could create a panic by scaring the horses. Do you suppose that was Gideon's idea,—by making a noise and fire to demoralize the host?"

"Come, doctor, give us all the facts in the case, as you can out of your learning," said Captain Bush.

"I shall be glad to do so," said Dr. Rogers; "for the story is well told in the seventh chapter of Judges. A great army of Midianites and Amalekites and other desert tribes had pitched

their tents in the valley by the hill of Morah. They were like grasshoppers in multitude, and their camels were without number, 'as the sand by the seaside for multitude.' Nevertheless, Gideon, the wise leader, knew that a few tried and brave men are better than a mighty host, and so he said in substance:—

“ ‘Cowards to the rear!’

“At once twenty-two thousand of his men left him and went home. He had ten thousand left, but the Divine Spirit in him told him that even these, unseasoned and conceited as they were, were too many. So, after letting them get thirsty, he brought them down to the riverside to drink. Now, in war time, vigilance is the first virtue. Certainly it is so with our General Sullivan's army. Gideon's test is a good one, even for to-day. If a man is, first of all, intent upon satisfying his selfish appetite, he will, without thinking of the wary and watching foe, fall down upon his knees or lie upon his belly at full length and put his mouth right to the water and drink greedily. That is just the moment when the enemy can take him unawares, charge upon him, or shoot him. Or, if it be a thirsty army, he can drive the mass of men, huddled together, into the stream, and drown or shoot them at leisure.”

“Isn't that the way that most thirsty men would drink?” asked Dr. Kinnersley.

“Yes, doctor, I grant you the average man would;

but the trained veterans, like our scouts or riflemen, who know that an Indian is likely to lurk in ambush especially near a spring or open water-side, would not do this. Such a man would not kneel at all. He would crouch by the river or spring side, and, without taking his eyes off from possible danger, but surveying all around him, he would dip up in his hand a little water at a time, and drink even while watching. In a word, he would never be taken unawares.

“These were the kind of men that Gideon selected, who did not bow down, like the rest of the people, but that lapped, putting their hands to their mouths. These alert and vigilant men that formed his chosen band of three hundred could carry their provisions on their backs and their trumpets with them. With such men, Gideon felt that God had already given the Midianite host into his hands.”

“But the trumpet, chaplain, was not much of a weapon, was it?” asked Captain Bush, with a pleasant smile of mild credulity.

“No, captain, I grant you that,” said Dr. Rogers; “but then, in war it is the moral as well as the physical state of the soldier that we must consider. The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. The bravest men in a panic seem good for nothing, while even delicate youth not naturally brave can be made to fight like lions under an inspiring leader.”

"Ah, yes, chaplain," said Mr. Harby; "then our artillerymen will give a good account of themselves, for the Indian has not the moral courage to face the cannon. Why, a bomb that bursts behind him scares him worse than one that explodes in front. Noise is a great part of a battle, and the Indian seems to know it, for his yells are meant to scare."

"Yes, quite true," said the chaplain. "Gideon understood well, also, how a man feels when he is only half awake. Penetrating the Midianite camp, he heard the story of the dream, how the flat sheet of barley bread rolled into the camp of Midian and completely overturned the tent. Gideon was mightily cheered by the interpretation which the dreamer's comrade gave, and went back to immediately arrange his three hundred men into three companies."

"But tell me about those empty pitchers and the lamps inside the pitchers. How funny it must have seemed!" said the young girl.

"Oh, yes!" laughed the parson; "but you must not think of a table ornament, or a stone jug, or a bedroom ewer standing in a basin, nor even a water pitcher; but picture in your mind one of those big earthen vases or two-handled jars, with a comparatively narrow neck, and a long, rounding body tapering to a point. In place of a hand lamp, think of a torch. Then imagine Gideon leading his three hundred men, each one silently holding a dark lantern —

his lighted torch inside the big earthen vase or jar, which he could smash with a single blow of the trumpet, revealing the light within. Thus, though unseen in the darkness, Gideon's band could suddenly form a scattered line of three hundred fires."

"True," said Mr. Harby; "but I do not see yet how the mere sight of three hundred torches should so frighten an army."

"Well," said the domine, smiling, "that shows our necessity of studying oriental customs. Consider the ancient way of laying out an encampment in an Asiatic country. A group of camels would be placed here, one tribe with their tents and encampment there, and each division in its appointed place; but at the headquarters, the general's tent, there would be a great torch burning. This was the invariable rule that, at the tongue of the commander-in-chief's chariot, this light should burn all night. The common soldier and subordinate officer were not allowed this mark of honor, so that when waking up at night the half-dazed soldiers would see not one torch burning, but here and there many of them, even three hundred. Such being their military habits and mental associations, would they not imagine that instead of one army attacking them, there were many of them, even a host without numbers, and that every torch represented not a soldier, but a general with a host at his back?

"At any rate, this is just what did happen. It was

at the beginning of the middle watch, just after the first had been changed, that Gideon with his hundred men came near the outside of the camp. Suddenly, with a blast that roused all sleepers, the valiant Hebrews sounded their trumpets and, smashing the earthen vases which held their lighted torches, they uttered their war-cry. Then the great host of sleeping men imagined that a multitude without number was attacking them. In a moment more, at the fresh blasts of the trumpets, their fears led them to suppose that those nearest to them were their enemies. So they either fought each other, or else fled in utter panic."

"Well, well," said Dr. Kinnersley; "that is a story well told. It shows how three hundred alert men, under a brave and resourceful commander, can accomplish a miracle. Now, I do hope that our young Continentals, led by the veteran riflemen and Sullivan, whom I trust to the utmost, will clear all New York State of its hosts of savages. They are no better than wild Arabs of the desert. It is a case of thirty-five hundred against many thousands fighting with consummate craft on their own ground; but God guard the right."

"Amen!" cried the whole party.

Evidently there was no Gideon among the Indians, or in the Tory camp not many miles westward. Several times the prowlers of the forest succeeded in killing men sent to pasture or drive in horses or

cattle; but pursuit was hardly worth while, for the savage tactics consisted in this, — to sneak, to fire, to run. All this made the Continentals eager for a fair stand-up fight, and this they were to compel the enemy to give, or fly in force.

CHAPTER XIV

JUST BEFORE THE BATTLE

THE cool nights and mornings of late August had already come, and the days of the foggy month were nearly over. The young Continentals woke up at the morning reveille, given by horn and drum, to find the dew sparkling not only on grass and leaf, but also upon their blankets, accoutrements, and stacked arms as well. Several times, in order to see clearly for marching, they had to wait till the sun was well up and the thick fog rent by the sunbeams.

General Clinton's troops had made junction with the main army on the 22d, and, after some reassignments, the permanent order of battle was formed. Colonel Van Cortlandt's regiment was ordered to act with Clinton's, and Alden's regiment was joined to Poor's brigade, while Colonel Butler's regiment, with Major Parr's corps, were included in General Hand's force of light infantry. Colonel Dubois's brace of cannon were to be left in the fort, but all of Proctor's were to go forward.

The barrels of flour were now to be taken out of

the boats, emptied, and put into bags, which were to be carried on the backs of pack horses, for from this point the river was too shallow to float loaded boats, though flat craft, put together with wooden pins instead of nails, and almost like rafts, could be pushed and hauled some miles further up the Chemung River. With plenty of water in winter and making a terrific flood in the time of the melting of the snows, the river channel in summer is for wading rather than for boat navigation. Its purpose in nature is to irrigate and drain one of the loveliest valleys in the world. The artillery must move along the river flats, have a path chopped through the forest, be rafted over streams and have corduroy roads made in the swamps and swales, all of which meant plenty of work for the axemen and pioneers.

A large division of men were at once set to work to cut up the old tent cloth to be made into sacks for the flour. All the women of the camp, some forty in number, lent their needles and fingers, and the work was kept up all night. On one day, dropping this manipulation for real soldiering, the signal gun was fired at 5 P.M. in order to form the line of march, according to the new assignments, to see how well the comrades, thus rearranged, could move and complete formations. At seven o'clock the army encamped in proper order, everybody feeling that, except in the very roughest country to be traversed,

the alignments could be kept, though a half mile of width would be necessary for columns, pack-horse trains, and flankers.

The horses and cattle, as being the more easily stampeded, formed the weakest part and must be well protected, as well as guarded against, by those who were dependent on them for rations and cartridges. Men and horses together carried twenty-seven days of soldiers' provisions; for, indeed, this was all they had. As for the horses and cattle, they must live off the country. In a word, Sullivan must conquer or return between moons.

The next day was entirely devoted to packing up and getting everything in order, although the heavy rains which fell hindered movement, but on Thursday, the 26th of August, at eleven o'clock, the great army of chastisement set forward. First of all, Major Parr with his riflemen moved ahead, examining every hilltop and valley, defile and turn of river, rock, and clump of trees, to prevent possibility of ambuscade. Then followed the surveyors and chain-bearers under Lieutenant Lodge, who measured the distances exactly. After them came the hundred or two men of the pioneer corps, skilful with axe, spade, and crowbar, who widened the path, chopped down trees, or improved the road. Sometimes they had to stop for an hour at a time and fill up the miry places, in order to give the artillery wheels and pack trains a solid basis. Two columns of the main

army then followed, between which moved the horses and cattle. On the right and left, the host was guarded by the flanking divisions commanded by Colonel Dubois and Colonel Ogden. Clinton's brigade, holding the post of honor and danger, brought up the rear.

During the days of routine life at the fort, after the army had left to go into the wilderness, a party went out after strayed horses and cattle. They succeeded in driving into the fort twenty-four cows. From living long in the forest, these creatures had become almost as wild as deer. The twelve hundred people in the fort, whose supply of visible meat provision had been reduced to five lean and ill-favored beeves, were mightily pleased. Visions of juicy beefsteaks and pot-pie danced before their eyes. Toward evening, sixty boats with the sick and wounded, and with the chaplain, took passage to Wyoming. A large detachment from the garrison went on board to work the boats down the Susquehanna, and to bring back supplies for the returning — victors?

The first march was short, and the general camp was made at the upper end of Tioga flats, only three miles distant from Fort Sullivan.

On the next day, August 27th, the army moved in the same order of march, but slowly, on account of the roughness of the country. Toward night, having arrived near the last defile, or narrows, to

be threaded that day, they saw all around Nature's table spread with a feast that would delight the soul of a vegetarian. Here were corn-fields and gardens, whence they could and did draw all the corn, potatoes, beans, cucumbers, watermelons, squashes and other "sauce" necessary for a liberal banquet.

The business of the next morning, August 28th, was to discover a ford for the artillery, pack horses, and cattle, by which the river could be crossed, so as to find, if possible, a more practicable road ; for between a very difficult defile called "The Narrows," only a few inches wide, and the high hill, there was little to choose. So Maxwell's brigade and the body of left flankers were posted to protect the artillery, pack horses, and cattle, and prevent any possible rush out of the forest by Indians who might hope to stampede the animals. The four-footed creatures crossed through the water, with the rafted guns, to the west side of the river, and moved forward a mile and a half. They then recrossed the stream, so as to get on the Chemung flats.

Meanwhile, General Poor's New Hampshire men and those of Clinton's brigade, with the right flanking division of the army, took their march over the almost inaccessible mountain on the east side of the river. It was hard work to climb, but on the top they found level land and superb oak timber. On reaching the westward slope, a magnificent panorama

burst upon their eyes. Glorious plains, rich in grass, grain, and fruit, with glittering streams of water, covered the country for twenty miles round. The broad and fertile valley was flanked on either side with glorious hills. Even the Mohawk Valley men, accustomed to one of the fairest spots on earth, broke out into exclamations of delight. They could see the river running forward and then bending round in a splendid curve, where to the westward, near Newtown, pillars of smoke rose up against the blue sky. Here they knew they would meet the enemy. The united army of men, with artillery horses and cattle in the same order as set down on paper, now moved forward, and at six o'clock encamped on the site of the Indian town of New Chemung.

Wonderful things were here to be seen. At least ten thousand bushels of corn in the ear stood on the stalk, ripe for roasting and ready to be cut and stored, while all the material for succotash, pumpkin pies, and potato salad, thousands of bushels in quantity, lay in or on the ground, ripe and ready. Evidently here was the chief storehouse and rendezvous of the enemy, the key to the frontier of New York and Pennsylvania, from which an army could always be victualled. Beside the dwelling-houses were great granaries built of stout timber, with bark walls and roofs. That they had never been occupied was proof conclusive that the food was to be stored for King George's allies.

The soldiers went rambling around after supper. Many a time was the cry "Eureka." Not only in the houses but hidden in various parts of the woods were all sorts of plunder, carried off by the marauders from the white man's settlements. Here were books and candlesticks, pokers and andirons, copper kettles, pot hooks and kitchen equipments, carpenters' tools, jewelry, combs, women's clothing and ornaments, with occasionally a chair or picture frame, linen and bedroom necessities, or broken fragments of them, which showed that the Indians had employed pack horses or canoes, and not merely their backs, to carry off the spoil of Cherry Valley, Wyoming, Springfield, and other settlements, to reward or amuse their squaws and papposes.

While the men lay around their camp-fires, a scout, who had been sent forward on Friday evening, August 27th, to reconnoitre and who was no other than Claes Vrooman, came in to report to General Sullivan. He had gone ahead as far as the ridge near Newtown, on which the battle of August 13th had been fought. A few hundred yards beyond, camp-fires were burning, and the flame or smoke could be traced far up the sides of the hill. From these he judged that there must be a thousand or fifteen hundred men. Evidently they were going to make a stand, and dispute the advance of the American army.

This was indeed the case. After the battle on the 13th, which had been fought entirely by the Indians

against our troops, the Senecas had sent a runner up to Geneva, where the British and Tories were encamped, urging their instant march, with all of Brant's Indians following. Preparations were hastened, and, on the 25th, Brant, Butler, MacDonald, and all their forces, numbering in all a thousand, of whom about one hundred out of the three hundred white men were New York Tories and the remaining two hundred, Canadian rangers and British regulars, reached the rendezvous, west of Baldwin Creek, near Newtown. With skill and cunning, they selected their ground at a place where they thought Sullivan's army must march. The only possible path seemed to be over low ground, along a narrow defile, between a ridge and the river. On this ride, they built breastworks and carried their line of timber and earthen defences up the side of the hill well on toward the top, making a wall of defence nearly a mile and a half long. The whole fortification was shaped roughly like a V, with its point eastward toward the coming Continentals, the British left resting on what is now Sullivan's Hill,—where the monument stands,—and their right resting on the ridge, which ran to the river and commanded the only ground fit for a path.

Now, in order to make theirs a masked defence, and to give no sign that anybody was behind the ridge, they took pains to have no chips from the axes or any marks of human presence on the side toward

Sullivan. There were three or four Indian houses outside the lines. These served as bastions, and enabled the enemy, by zigzagging their lines, to deliver a flank fire on an army charging the intrenchments. These log houses were not touched, nor were those of the deserted village farther up the creek. They were left standing as if recently deserted; for it was hoped that Sullivan's men, in search of plunder, would crowd into and around the houses, and be thus taken unawares. In a word, nothing on the eastern side of the intrenchments gave any sign of danger or of an enemy's presence. It was the western or inside portion that contained the hornets' nest of war.

To carry out their plan of ambuscade, they tore down the houses at Newtown, dragged the logs and poles forward, and with these built their works and fed their fires. Their idea was that Sullivan's advance, seeing no signs of an enemy, would pass around the heel of the hill and, marching in a long, thin line along the flat ground between the ridge and the river, move up the valley to destroy the Indian town. Then, by making their main body invisible inside the concealed breastwork, and posting on the hills on either side unseen parties of Indians to act as flankers, they hoped, by pouring in a heavy fire along the whole line, while the outlying parties rushed down and stampeded the pack horses, to throw the American army into such confusion as to

demoralize or cripple it, and to compel its return. In a long, thin line, extending clear up to the hilltops, both on this side of the river and across it, were parties of Indian watchers, who had signals arranged by which they could give notice of any attempt on Sullivan's part to flank them, should their plans be divined. To these hills could be summoned strong parties of picked warriors. In a word, they were ready here, where the Chemung River bends, near Elmira, to make either a Braddock's field, or to fight a pitched battle, hoping eagerly for the former.

To make assurance doubly sure, they waited before putting on the finishing touches of concealment, until the night of August 28th. Then they knew from their spies that Sullivan's army was quite near, and would be up the next day. They piled on the green boughs and brushwood, and even cut down and transplanted a large number of young trees, so as to still further hide the works and to remove the possibility of being discovered. But their landscape gardening did not avail them, as we shall see. Theirs was not the art which conceals art, for our riflemen, as wary as foxes, had eyes like eagles. These were to expose the ass in the lion's skin.

Yet had it not been for the excessive caution of Sullivan and his trusted officer, Major Parr, of the riflemen, the green boughs and young trees might

have utterly concealed the presence of a fortification, and our men have been surprised.

There was no time for preaching or worship on that sultry Sunday morning of August 29th, for no one knew what an hour might bring forth. Sullivan expected a battle before the day was over, but exactly where or when, neither he nor any of his men knew. Breakfast over, the horn blew at nine o'clock and the army moved forward, the light corps being first, marching in six columns, Colonel Butler leading the right and Colonel Hubley with his Pennsylvania Germans being on the left. Behind them came the axemen, artillerists, and cannon; after that the main army, with the pack horses and cattle in the middle. Thus slowly the great host of thirty-five hundred men advanced, the surveyors and chain-bearers measuring every rod of distance made.

After fording a stream, Parr's sharpshooters scattered themselves widely through the woods, the men craning their necks and peering into the bush. Their rifles were held in both hands, all ready to cock at any moment. Thus every man alert, the riflemen had no sooner passed over the ridge where the battle on the 13th had been fought, than they caught sight of some Indians moving about in front of them, one of whom fired. Then they all ran. This was suspicious. Going one mile farther, they saw, stretching off to their right, a large area of low, marshy ground. Between this and the little hillocks on the

left seemed just the place for an ambushade, so their vigilance was doubled. Pretty soon they started up another and larger party of Indians in war-paint. These also fired hastily and ran. This was strange. Why had not the savages hidden themselves and taken deliberate aim?

These Pennsylvania riflemen were regular bush-beaters and accustomed to start up game, whether on two or four feet. They were veterans in a hundred forest battles, where logs and stones are forts and a tree is a tower. They did not fear to move straight on, yet the signs of danger had so multiplied that Major Parr, bidding his men watch every moment, ordered a lithe young fellow to pick out a tall tree and to climb to the top, to see if anything dangerous was visible.

Like a monkey the youth shinned up a grand trunk and, clambering to the topmost limb, peered around on every side. At first he could see nothing, but, watching keenly through the forest ahead, he noticed first of all a ridge of land running down to the river, and that scores of young scrub oaks on the slope in front of it, especially between the ridge and the creek, seemed planted with astonishing regularity, in rows. Indeed, it seemed more like a young nursery than natural forest growth. This was like a piece of news. Still peering through the leafage, he discovered several Indians moving about inside of the little ridge of land and up the hillside. As the sun was

shining in their faces, he could see the great streaks of war-paint. From that he knew they were all ready for a fight, and expecting one. Very soon he noticed others likewise well smeared with gay colors, and also a tall chief with plumes of feathers on his war-bonnet. Occasionally, there was a flash of a steel weapon or brass ornament in the sunlight. By studying the landscape a little longer, he made out a zigzag line of breastworks covered with green, but none the less artificial, running down to the river on the left, and over to the mountain on the right, the angle being almost directly in front of him. In some places the defences were quite low, but here he noticed pits or holes dug, in which the enemy could lie and easily defend themselves. Facing the works, about a hundred yards this way, was a stream of water, and between the ridge and the river, that here made a great bend, was an open space on which corn was growing.

When the man came down he made his report so clearly and intelligently that Major Parr at once saw the situation in his own mind's eye. He sent back word to General Hand to bring up the light troops immediately, and also notified General Sullivan of the state of affairs. Only a few minutes were necessary to do this. Hand quickly deployed his men, forming them in line of battle this side of the creek and within three hundred yards of the works. The riflemen went forward as skirmishers, and lay under

the banks of the stream within one hundred yards of the enemy.

Inside the breastworks rapid action was necessary, for Brant and Butler at once made up their minds that their scheme had been detected. Seeing that there could be no surprise, and that they must now have a regular stand-up fight, they agreed to attempt first the tactics which had been so successful at Wyoming, Goshen, and Minisink. They would make a feint of a sortie, sending out a squad of savages who should pretend to be themselves surprised. Firing quickly and in apparent confusion, the Indians would then retreat with the idea of luring on the soldiers in pursuit, in the expectation that the Americans would rush pell-mell after them, and into the line of fire of hundreds of guns aimed by cool-headed men in ambush.

But this time Brant and Butler were not to deal with raw militia, or even with regular troops unused to Indians. They were to face the Pennsylvania riflemen. All veterans, and led by officers who were graduates in the school of forest war, they could be neither scared nor lured. So after Parr had warned his men, and Hand had given strict orders not to pursue or move forward a single foot, our riflemen were ready, and on the lookout for a little fun. They were soon to see played in opera, as it were, "the spider and the fly," while fully prepared to decline "walking into the parlor." With the winking of the

eye and even with certain gyrations of the fingers with thumb to the nose, vulgarly called "sniggle-fritz," they would greet the oncoming foes, knowing well that these were shamming fight. Yet, if Tory or Indian meant more, they were even ready for them, bullet for bullet; yes, scalp for scalp.

CHAPTER XV

THE DECISIVE BATTLE IN THE WILDERNESS

THE riflemen posted along the banks of the creek were not long kept in waiting. The enemy soon showed his old tricks. Out from the angles of the breastworks emerged a body of nearly four hundred Indians, and Tories painted like them. Leaping through the greenery and uttering wild war-whoops, they scattered themselves among the trees and on the ground, but keeping themselves well protected. It was not a rush or charge, but only the play of war with a deeper purpose underneath, and the riflemen knew it. They kept up a lively fire, which our men returned with spirit, as they lay safely protected by the banks of the creek, so that very little damage on either side was done. Suddenly one of the Americans, tired of playing soldier, and, after arrangement with his fellows, started a chorus of defiant yells, and holding out their caps as if about to move from their cover and rush forward, drew the full fire of the savages, who then, pretending to be panic-stricken, rushed back into the works, crawling, climbing, or sneaking in at various points.

The answer to this feint from the riflemen was a loud guffaw all along our line. Instead of leaping up and giving pursuit, some of the men laid their guns against the trees or on the ground, indulging in a long, loud laugh. Getting out their tobacco, they enjoyed a chew and lighted their pipes, while others looked their arms over to see if everything was in good order. Exchanging winks and jokes, and jeering at the unseen foe inside the breastworks, they invited them to come out again, but they themselves stirred not a foot. They knew well that they were well supported by the whole of the light corps near at hand. By and by a much smaller part of the Tories and savages, though jeered at, apparently attempted the same old trick once and again. Nevertheless, they kept themselves so well under cover that it was evident that this time they were trying to find out our movements and strategy. For this reason, the riflemen made it so hot for them that they could learn little or nothing, and soon crawled back into the fortifications. Thus for several hours our sharpshooters kept the enemy penned up within their works and occupied. Yet they made no change in front, nor did Hand's corps advance any nearer. After much firing and plenty of smoke, nothing of note seemed to be done.

But by this time Sullivan had made all his plans. He expected to beat the enemy and start them on the run. The only line of retreat for the allied British,

red and white, on the left was between the hill and the river up through Newtown to the northwest, toward the great plain on which the city of Elmira now stands. To head off the enemy's flight by this route, Sullivan sent Ogden's division forward on the left.

In the centre and front, beyond the riflemen along the creek and Hand's light troops just behind them, he kept Maxwell's brigade as a reserve in the rear. Ordering Colonel Proctor to post his nine guns on a piece of rising ground just over against the angle of the breastworks, so as to enfilade both lines, he had him wait an hour before opening fire, expecting to do the heaviest work of battle on the hill by a flank attack on the right. Believing that the Indians could not long stand the bombshells and grapeshot, Sullivan hoped to encircle them in their flight up the valley. For this work his main reliance was on Poor's New Hampshire men, with Dubois for support on the extreme right and Clinton's brigade in the rear. Poor's riflemen were to scatter in front to clear the woods of ambuscade and to fire as skirmishers; for Poor, like Wayne at Stony Point, hoped to gain the mountain in silence and then dash upon the enemy with fixed bayonets.

It was Sullivan's ardent hope that Poor and Dubois could make the detour in time to strike the decisive blow; but fighting a battle in an unmapped and unsurveyed wilderness is not like a game of chess,

and time is an uncertain factor. In a country thoroughly surveyed, where every road, house, barn, and windmill may be down on the map, and all distances accurately known, a general who fails to arrive at the time ordered may be courtmartialled. But in a wilderness, how can one gauge the progress of soldiers who may meet an unknown swamp? Wading waist deep in mud and water is not like tramping over an asphalt pavement.

Sullivan allowed sixty minutes for the flanking column to march around to the extreme right and up the hill, so as to strike the enemy in the rear. Had it not been for the terrible nature of the swamp, which delayed the movement of the flanking column, the battle would have resulted in a much more decisive victory. "Time and tide wait for no man," but a swamp makes men wait for it. Instead of being one hour, the flanking corps was much longer in floundering through the morass. At last the men had pulled their way through the bushes, and, crossing the creek flowing into the main stream, passing through the Indian village and then fording Baldwin's Creek proper, they formed in line of battle and began the climb of the mountain. For tired 'men on a sultry day, this meant pull and tug with much loss of breath. Yet Poor, who had already heard Proctor's guns opening on his distant left, cheered on his men. Streaming with perspiration they hurried up the hill, panting like driven stags.

Two regiments in this unknown country got somewhat farther off on the right than Poor had planned, and Dubois being still a greater distance to the right, as was proper, Colonel Reid's Second New Hampshire Regiment, on the extreme left and lower down the hill, was somewhat separated from the others by a dangerous distance, while Colonel Dearborn's Third New Hampshire, perhaps having easier ground to march on, got farther up and nearer the crest, and was considerably in the advance. It was a terribly hot day, and the ground was frightfully rough. There, at about five o'clock in the afternoon, on that Sunday of August 29th, a day most decisive in American history, we leave them for a moment, to return to the rifles, muskets, cannon, and coehorn of the main body, and the brave hearts behind them.

When Sullivan's watch told him it was three o'clock, he ordered Hand to have his men ready. They were to advance and charge immediately after the artillery should cease firing. He then gave the signal to Proctor. At once, the whole battery of nine pieces opened with a roar that seemed to rend the mountains. The two bomb-howitzers were posted in the centre and flanked by the six pounders and light guns. At first, the three and six pounders sent in solid shot, aiming at the works; but later, when the enemy were visible, the gunners, sighting their pieces carefully, poured in grape and canister. The little coehorn, kicking itself over each time after the dis-

charge, threw its bombs neatly within the angles, while the howitzers, delivering their five and a half inch shells, quickly knocked to pieces the house-bastions. Exploding within the works, the bursting bombs made it impossible for the Indians to hold together without seeking cover farther back in the woods. Even there, the idea of missiles that could not only kill you from the front but tear you to pieces from behind and on all sides, up, down, and around, was too terrifying to bear. The ripping and tearing of the tree branches above, and the explosion of bombs over their heads, sending down a rain of iron, was too much for the redman's nerves. One Indian, in later life describing his sensations, declared that it seemed constantly as if the heavens must fall flat and crush him and everybody, and he wondered every moment that they did not.

Now, there is a difference between physical and moral courage.

The savage Indian can fight bravely from under cover, especially if he can hide and slowly sneak up to his victim, or rush at him when unarmed or with empty musket. He can bear hunger, cold, and pain. He can stand the torture of his enemy without a groan. In this, perhaps, he excels the white man, at whom he laughs because his white enemy in agony shows emotion. Yet the savage Indian has not the moral courage to look into the muzzle of cannon. He cannot face an open fire, or stand in

ranks under discipline, while bombshells are bursting around him.

Brant, the chief, at first tried to hold his terrified followers together. Dressed in Indian costume, and conspicuous by the feathers in his head-dress, he brandished his tomahawk, and moved up and down among his tribesmen, cheering and encouraging them to hold their ground. Many a rifleman that day tried to bring down this proud chief. He was known throughout all the land for his intellectual ability and physical vigor. His sister, Molly Brant, had been the mate of Sir William Johnson. To have killed him would have added mightily to the reputation of a rifleman. Yet he was unhurt. He seemed to bear a charmed life, as if protected by the Great Spirit. Although his clothes were pierced, no bullet drank his blood.

Nevertheless, as Proctor's gunners stripped to their work, and poured in unceasingly a rapid fire, made more effective by the cool aiming of the officers, the slaughter was terrible. According to Indian custom, no wounded were left on the ground. Only those corpses which could not be hastily carried off were visible. Just before the battle, Butler had scores of canoes moored in the Chemung River, to bear away the wounded and, as far as possible, the dead. The witnesses on the ground after the battle testified to the grass and timber looking as though smeared with buckets of blood. The crash-

ing of the branches, the horrible sounds and odors out of the screeching and bursting iron, so unnerved the Indians that Brant saw, and Butler knew, that something must soon be done to move them to activities that would cheer them, or the day would be utterly lost. What should they do? It would be useless to make a sortie, for two brigades of alert and eager American soldiers lay in front of them, all ready for that assault which they knew would take place when the cannon ceased firing. What sign of hope was there for the British cause?

This came unexpectedly from the left flank, and in the nick of time. On the hilltop, the Indian sentinels had caught sight of the gleaming rifles of Poor's skirmishers. Waiting only for a moment, to be sure that the enemy were in force—a fact which was quickly made certain by the whole brigade's forming in line of battle after crossing the creek near the deserted Indian village at the base of the hill—they sent courier after courier to Brant, telling of this imminent danger.

Receiving this as joyful news rather than with alarm, Brant at once led off about half his warriors on the run. Reaching the slope of the nearest hill, his hope turned to exultation. Fiercer yet was his joy when, by half-naked runners dripping with perspiration, he was informed that one regiment of soldiers had got separated from the others, and were toiling, half out of breath, up the rough slope. In-

deed, they were at that moment within five minutes' striking distance. At once giving silent signal to his followers to form a semicircle, so as to enclose Reid's regiment, Brant raised a yell that was repeated from five hundred throats, until to the white men earth seemed to have opened and the forest to be suddenly populated with demons. Hot and wilted by the sultry and lifeless air, with their breath nearly spent, the New Hampshire men looked up and found themselves nearly surrounded by a force three times their number.

The prospect was gloomy enough. Had the Indians not been so sure of victory, or their nerves not been demoralized by the bombshells from which they had just fled, they might have, by their first fire, decimated the little regiment. As matter of fact, from the hill's crest they fired too high, for the most part down and over the heads of the New Hampshire boys below them.

What should Reid do? The thin line of riflemen skirmishers, who on discovering the foe began firing up hill, seemed not to check the redskins for a moment. His men's guns were empty. Their bayonets were in their scabbards. Must he retreat and fall back on Clinton's reinforcements, too far, it might be, in the rear for speedy help? Where was Dearborn? There was no chance to communicate with his superior officer, Poor, who was too far over on the right, with Indians in between.

Should he make a desperate charge against overwhelming numbers, and run the risks? For a moment, visions of their own scalps, fresh and bloody, hanging to dry in Iroquois lodges, blanched the faces of the New Hampshire lads, but only for a moment. Thought was like lightning. Decision was instantaneous.

“Fix bayonets!” rang out Reid’s order. Within ten seconds, the men had ordered arms, and the clinking of three hundred weapons, as the bayonets slid over the beads, and the slot, ring, and barrel of each musket made unity, as of a spear, was over.

Before Brant’s savages could think of reloading, came another order, “Forward, charge!”

Then, with a wild cheer, the New Hampshire men dashed ahead with the cold steel, yet against heavy odds and in fearful danger. Though they broke the redmen’s defiant front and scattered them, these quickly found shelter and began reloading and firing, and down dropped the charging Continentals, until a dozen lay helpless and bleeding. Meanwhile, the riflemen, who had moved to the right and left as flankers, kept the savages from re-forming their curving line, and made them keep their distance. Yet though the New Hampshire men, to gain their breath, stopped to load and bravely stood up to the fight, the superiority in numbers told fearfully against them. In a very few minutes, over thirty of the men

from the Old Granite State lay dead or wounded. It was still what the Dutch taught us to call a "verloren hoop" — a forlorn hope.

Just at that moment help came from an unexpected quarter.

Colonel Dearborn, with the Third New Hampshire, having reached his post farther up the hill, and missing Reid's regiment, heard firing behind him. Instantly divining the situation, and suspecting that the flankers were themselves flanked, he took the responsibility of action. "About face!" was his order. It was quickly given and superbly executed. Forward on a run, until within firing distance, and then lining up handsomely, these fresh boys from the old Granite State struck the rear of Brant's forces, very soon after Reid had ordered a charge. Here the Continentals had the heaviest musketry battle of the day. Being able to fire two volleys, they laid many a red-skin low. By this time, Clinton had hurried forward Gansevoort's regiment, while the other forces near at hand pressed Brant's in front and rear, and the proud chieftain, seeing the danger of capture, sounded the retreat.

When Butler saw the red clouds of beaten Senecas flying toward Newtown, he knew that the game was up, and had ordered his men on the run to save themselves. Soon the whole host, red and white, Johnson Greens and painted Tories, were streaming pell-mell through the town and corn-fields, and over the ford

of the Chemung. In swift canoes, the wounded were paddled up the river out of sight.

By this time, Hand's riflemen and light troops had charged with cheers, leaped over the breastworks, and were well forward in pursuit. Some of Poor's men, being around on the right and far ahead of them, tried to intercept the fugitives, but they broke with impetuosity through the thin line and escaped, though the commander of his Majesty's forces, Colonel John Butler, came very near being taken prisoner. Clinton's infantry moved forward more leisurely, burning the Indian villages both east and west of the intrenchments. At six o'clock all the army gathered at the Indian town of Newtown.

Now came the opportunity of the gallant Irishman, General Hand, of the light brigade.

"Pull out the stars and stripes, and let the Continentals give three cheers, General Hand," said the commander-in-chief. "Men, here is one of the first flags made by order of the Continental Congress. Let us salute it with a long-metre doxology of cheers. Give your orders, general."

"Ay, sir, general," said Hand; and as he sat on his horse it seemed as if the war-steed was enjoying the thrill and excitement of the moment with its master.

Then turning to the dust-stained soldiers of the regiments, all ranged in line, but with eyes flashing and eager to try their throats in patriotic vigor, General Hand cried:—

“Three times three, my gallant victors! Once for the flag, once for the Congress, and once for our commander.”

Then, pulling out from his bosom the flag made by Betsey Ross and given him by Mrs. Eyre, he led the cheering, which made the welkin ring.

Breaking ranks, camp and a rich vegetable supper were now in order.

How the battle-field looked and what the surgeons had to do was told very clearly in Claes Vrooman's letter to his father at Schenectady. At Newtown, he found quill pens, ink, paper, and apparently all the accessories of Butler's headquarters. Before the torch was applied, he had made spoil of the stationery, and part of what he wrote is as follows :—

“DEAR FATHER: We have had a great battle, and I have been in the smoke as well as under fire six hours. I never knew of so much powder burned at one time, in all my life. ‘So much mustard to so little meat’—for our butcher's bill is quite small. Parr's riflemen opened the battle, and amused the enemy all the morning in front, spoiling all their plans of entrapping our army into passing a line of intrenchments, which they had cunningly covered with green boughs and trees. While we were useful in front, without being able to accomplish much on men hidden behind breastworks, the New Hampshire men with Clinton's brigade were sent around

up the hill on the right, to strike the enemy on the flank, while the artillery was ordered up to a little rise of ground, sending bombs and round shot over our heads as we lay on the ground. There was some fighting on our flank, and, indeed, the New Hampshire boys did the hardest fighting; but Brant, thinking that his Indians might be surrounded, retreated, and Butler's forces of white men soon followed in their tracks. I have been over the ground with the surgeons and must tell you about the dead and wounded, but especially about the black prisoner, who, to my delight and joy, actually brought me a letter from your own daughter.

"She says nothing about my wife, Trintje, except that she is probably at the Tuscarora village of Coreorganel, in the valley near the southern end of Lake Cayuga."

The story-teller would add that, during the battle, Colonel Van Cortlandt was standing near a tree directing his troops. Catching sight of his well-known enemy and recognizing him, the chieftain Brant called to his side one of his favorite marksmen.

"There," said he, "is a commander of five hundred men. Aim carefully and bring him down."

The man, whose gun was empty at that moment, loaded with particular care, for the colonel, resting his hands on his sword, the point of which was on the ground, seemed not likely to stir for a minute

or two. Then, sighting his piece, and deliberately taking aim, the sharpshooter pulled the trigger. The ball struck the tree, not more than two inches above the top of the colonel's cocked hat, filling the back of his neck with fragments of bark, causing him to shrug his shoulders and bend forward to shake out the debris, but this was all. He was unhurt.

Years afterward, when Brant and Colonel Van Cortlandt sat together as guests at the same dinner in Albany, Brant asked his companion, —

“How near did a certain bullet come to your head when you were standing in front of a tree, during the battle of Newtown?”

“I should say within two inches,” was the reply.

“Well, I am not surprised,” said Brant; “for the man who fired at you that day was my best marksman, and I directed him; but now I am glad he didn't hit you,” said Brant, laughing.

CHAPTER XVI

AFTER THE BATTLE — IN THE CHEMUNG VALLEY

IT was a terribly disheartened band of beaten men that Sullivan's light-armed troops drove before them. The dead and wounded, put in light canoes, manned by the most skilful paddlers, were moved up the stream so rapidly that they were soon beyond pursuit, while on land those who were fleeing had but one idea, — the saving of their lives. Without stopping in their village at Newtown, they sped on with their women and children.

Now that the victory had been achieved, Sullivan was able to send back his howitzers and two of the heavy cannon. At this order, shouts of joy went up not only from the artillerymen and the soldiers who had to drag them, but from the pioneers who knew that there would now be less road and bridge work and haulage through the forest and the mire. Nevertheless, since they might meet with fortified towns on the way, and possibly more breastworks, the four light pieces and the little coehorn were ordered to go forward. At this order, there was not a little private

growling. One man declared that to take cannon to Canandaigua was like carrying a mountain through the forest.

But a far more serious duty now faced the army. To do without cannon was delight; to go forward lacking a good supply of meat and bread was grief. Touch a soldier in the stomach and you rouse a protest from the lowest foundations, for even an army, like a rattlesnake, moves on its belly. A man is what he has eaten. When the men were called on to make the sacrifice and enter upon short rations, some asked, "How can a man live on succotash?" For, from this time until they should return, a half pound of flour and a half pound of beef a day were to be the rule and the ration.

Nevertheless it was a question between forward with glory on half rations, or backward in disgrace on full stomachs. Though the enemy had been beaten in the field, the main purpose of the expedition, in destroying the crops and desolating Iroquoisia, had not yet been accomplished. Sullivan was not the man to turn back when his work was but half done; and the army was worthy of its commander.

It was a fine sight when, after announcement being made in general orders, and permission given to all who would not accept the reduction in rations to return, not a man retreated. All stepped forward, and from the whole Continental line went up three rousing cheers. It was a soldier's vote to "carry the war

into Africa," and live off the country. Yet it seemed easy to do this in a country where corn stalks were eighteen feet high and corn-cobs a foot and a half long. They were to pass from a succession of woods, mountains, and swamps, into a level country dotted with lakes.

How it all seemed to our young volunteer, Herman Clute, may be learned from his letter to his mother, written from Canandaigua.

"SEPTEMBER 10, 1779.

"DEAR MOTHER: I have gone through a battle, and have come out unhurt. If I had ever been told, when at home in Dorp, that so many thousand bullets could be fired by men used to guns and yet so little harm done, I should not have believed it. I find that calmly shooting at a target, on a fair day, at home, with plenty of time to take aim, is a very different thing from fighting when excited in the woods, and in a cloud of smoke, where you see an Indian dodging about one minute and find him gone out of sight the next.

"On Sunday morning, August 29th, we came to a place in the woods with a ridge of hills which had been fortified by the enemy and covered up with green stuff. When General Hand found it out, he sent word to Sullivan, who took his time and arranged the plan of battle. We had to wait several hours, while the riflemen in front along a creek kept up a lively cracking, though they could see very little to fire at.

Indeed, from about eleven o'clock until five in the afternoon, there was a tremendous amount of lead shot at us by the king's people from inside their lines, while our folks kept up the fire steadily. The New Hampshire men and New Yorkers were sent far off to the right up the hill, and they were the lucky fellows, for they were the only ones in our army that saw any real fighting. In fact, that was the one time in the battle when men got close enough to see each other's faces.

“While they were gone from us, our artillery was also playing on the enemy, and the noise was deafening. At first, I was mightily interested in seeing the red jets of fire leaping from the mouths of the guns, and listening to hear the bombs burst in the enemy's camp, for I could see nothing very far ahead of the cannon. But by and by, I got so tired of waiting, hour after hour, doing nothing and without any dinner, — for we were kept in line to be ready at an instant to charge after the artillery had stopped firing, — that I fell asleep, and so did several of the other men. Indeed, after the first excitement was over, we felt tired; but, about half past four or five, we heard what was music to our ears, — the horn sounding the order to move forward. We waded through the creek, rushed up over the intrenchments and after the enemy, whom we could see here and there in the distance through the woods and at full speed. But we never caught up with

them. They seemed to run like deer, and nearly all got away safely.

"It turned out that the New Hampshire troops and Clinton's brigade had taken so much time to get through the swamp that they were too slow, while Proctor's men were too fast. The bombshells had got in among the enemy so early that, when the retreat began, there was no one to head them off. I do not think that I saw more than four or five dead men, all Indians, lying on the ground as we passed by; but there were places where it looked as if the shells had exploded among groups and knots of men, for the trees and grass were dreadfully bloody. We could see where they had pulled off and away the dead and wounded down to the river, to get them into canoes. The doctors say that about fifteen dead Indians were found, and two Tory prisoners taken, but that only five of our men were killed and about thirty-five wounded. Yet I cannot get over it, that with all the firing in front of the breastworks, and with the hard fighting on the hill, in fact about seven hours, more or less, of shooting, so few on our side were hurt.

"I think that the Indians on the hill must have been made nervous by the bombshells, for they fired over the heads of our men down below them. On the low ground where we were, what with a half a peck of iron scattering among them every time the coehorn or a howitzer opened its mouth,

while our side was protected behind the banks of the creek, the Tories and Indians could do little to harm us. Hardly anybody on our side fronting the great works was hurt, and the killed and wounded were almost wholly among the New Hampshire men.

“I do not like the way our men act after the battle. Some of the riflemen are rough fellows. As soon as they got over the intrenchments they rushed right at the dead Indians, whipped out their knives, ran them around their foreheads and pulled off their scalps. They washed these in the creek, and now they are hanging them on sticks set near fires. The owners of these horrible relics seem to be as proud of their property as if it were jewellery. One man secured three, and another boasted that he had taken in his time twenty-seven.

“Yet this is not all. I saw two men bending over the biggest of the dead Indians, whom one of the riflemen had already scalped. While one held up the redman’s leg, another one took his knife and skinned it from thigh to ankle. Wondering what in the world he wanted to do with the hide off an Indian’s leg, he replied: ‘Why, sonny, I am going to tan it and make a pair of boots out of it. My comrade, here, has a pair of leggings made of tanned Indian, and I’m going to be up with him.’ So he skinned the other leg, and, having already stuck the scalp in his belt, walked off with his bundle of raw-

hide Scalping the redmen seems to be as common with our frontiersmen as with the Indians themselves.

“After pursuit was over, our men went round the field and found a great many packs and knapsacks, blankets, tomahawks, knives, and other things belonging to the Tories and Indians. Butler’s papers, jewellery, and coat were found and taken to the general. After they buried our men, they kindled big log fires over the top of the ground. When I asked why they did this, they said it was quite common for the Indians to dig up the dead and shoot arrows into the bodies, and they wished to hide the place of burial. I am sorry to say that some of our own men, especially those who lost relatives in the massacre, tell stories of their doing the same thing to dead Indians. Indeed, all along our march to Canandaigua, our men found fresh graves, which they usually opened. They found in them the bodies of men wounded in the battle.

“The Seneca village here, called ‘Newtown,’ was surrounded on every side with fields of corn, beans, pumpkins, squashes, and other vegetables. As we rested the next day, we had good eating. From this time forth, I suppose, we must be vegetarians, for General Sullivan in his orders showed that we could have only a half pound of flour and a half pound of meat a day. All who did not like short rations and wanted to go home could do so, but not one turned back. Indeed, all stepped forward and

gave three ringing cheers for the general and the country. Nevertheless, when we are not near corn-fields, we have to lie down hungry. Our poor horses seem to suffer worse than their masters. That night, the four heavy guns, the wounded, all the wagons, were sent back to the boats to be taken to Tioga Point.

"Claes Vrooman read me the letter which his sister in captivity had sent him by the negro boy Drusus. He was found at the far end of the battlefield and scared almost white by the effect of the bombs. Our men passed over him in their pursuit, but afterward found him and a Tory, who also had a black face. They thought the Tory was a negro, until they noticed his hair. Then, pulling open his shirt, they found he was a white man. Though our men threatened both of the prisoners, they did not hurt them. When brought into the presence of General Sullivan, the negro told how fearfully the Indians were demoralized by the bombs. Inquiring for Vrooman, he delivered him the birch-bark letter. ┘

"When, on the 31st, we again started to march, the right column went over the hills some distance from the river, but the left column and the cannon took the route by the river. Oh, what a beautiful country we did pass through! As usual, we burned all the Indian houses and cut down the corn. At a point between two streams, we came to a pretty

Indian town called 'Kanawaholla,' and up the river saw some boats full of escaping Indians. You would be surprised at the plunder which we find in those Indian houses. They were built with the help of white men, for there is a good deal of split and sawed timber in them, and not a few paint pots have been emptied on them to make them gay.

"We found many things stolen from the settlements: feather-beds, nightgowns and caps, women's and men's clothes, and chests that were filled with table ware, pewter dishes, and stuff of all sorts. I have a silver spoon fashioned at the top with the three-cross arms of Amsterdam, and marked 'A. V. C.,' and under it a sheaf of bending grain. Could this be Arendt van Curler's spoon, which has been in our family ever since his widow died? At any rate, the end is all worn off from frequent scraping out of pots of suppawn,—which the Massachusetts men call 'hasty pudding.'

"The next day, I think, was the worst marching time we have had yet. Just as down at Tioga Point we found a great farm carried on by Queen Esther, so, near the end of Seneca Lake, was the Indian town and horse-breeding place of her sister, Queen Catherine, who has two of the handsomest daughters in all the land of Iroquoisia. Her farm seems, with its fences, horses, colts, cows, calves, hogs, and chickens, more like a stock farm on the Hudson River than the abode of savages. We have often heard

of this famous woman, who is a great granddaughter of Count Frontenac, who, in 1690, sent the French and Canadian Indians on the raid that destroyed our town of Schenectady. Her husband is a famous Seneca chief, and she and he have become quite rich by breeding and selling the finest horses known in Iroquois land. I was therefore quite anxious to see her town of forty big houses, of which I had heard much.

“But before we got there, we had to go through a most horrid, thick, miry swamp, covered with water from the recent rains, terribly dark from the closeness of the hemlocks, with plenty of rocks and sloughs and swales, in which horses and men floundered dreadfully. Some of the beasts stuck fast and could not get out, and so died there. Others lost their bags of flour and boxes of cartridges. We must have crossed the little river in the swamp about twenty times. It was seven o'clock in the evening before even the advance guard got out of this Bear Swamp, which extends nine miles. On either side was a ridge of hills, along which the main column could march, but how we ever got the artillery through I do not know. To-day the pioneers are nearly dead with exhaustion, for they had to fill up many of the pools and holes full of stuff as soft as suppawn, besides bridging with corduroy a great many hollows. Our brigade got out of the wilderness about eight o'clock, but Poor's and Maxwell's did not make camp till near midnight. Many of

the men fell asleep by the way, utterly worn out, and did not join their regiments till next day.

“As for Clinton’s soldiers, being in the rear guard, they lay in the swamp all night, hungry and miserable. Vrooman tells me that this dreadful morass is the dividing line of the waters, those on one side going to the Susquehanna, and the other into the St. Lawrence. So we shall follow the streams flowing north hereafter. There is a great difference in the fog-making power of the streams, ‘according as they run toward Cancer or Capricorn,’ as our geographer Lodge says.

“Here in this swamp, especially, is where the king of bears, the messenger of the Great Spirit and the prophet of the weather, has his lair. The Senecas send a party every year in, to watch him come out. If he sees his shadow, he stays out, and there will be early spring and warm weather. If he does not, and no shadow is cast, they know it will be a backward spring, cold and raw for six weeks. So they can arrange for their crops, fishing, hunting, and war parties.

CHAPTER XVII

QUEEN CATHERINE'S TOWN AND INDIAN STAR LORE

“**H**OW the Indian dogs did howl as we approached Queen Catherine's town ! It consisted of forty houses, all large and well built, with splendid corn-fields and orchards all around it. A Dutch family lived here among the Indians, and there were plenty of feather-beds in the house, and two of their horses were in the fields. The queen's palace was a two-storied, gambrel-roofed house, about thirty feet long and eighteen feet wide. Warriors, squaws, papposes, and dogs decamped so suddenly that the horses, cows, calves, and hogs were left behind. The baggage of many of the officers being still in the swamp, some slept on feather-beds and some on strips of bark torn from the houses. The next day we hungry fellows had a banquet, for all the cattle were barbecued. No half rations of meat that day ! Some of the wild oranges were as big as common limes. We rested and feasted, burned the houses, and cut down the trees and corn. It was awful work, but, as our chaplain says, ‘ Washington is our Samuel, Sullivan our Saul, the Senecas and Tories our Amalekites ; and, if we catch Brant or

Butler, our men will make him as Agag.' Some of the Pennsylvania riflemen shouted, 'Remember Wyoming,' as they rushed over the breastworks at Newtown.

"I must tell you about an old squaw that we found here. I was walking out in the woods, and found her hidden in the bushes. She looked to be a century old, and as leathery looking as one of Domine Vrooman's tomes of Bor or Voet ; but, unlike the smooth parchment on the books, her face was puckered like an apple baked too long, as if every year since her fortieth had added a new pucker. I couldn't make her understand anything I said, though I knew Mohawk pretty well ; but I called one of Domine Kirkland's Oneida Indians, who can rattle off several of the dialects, but every time she shook her head as if she did not understand. Convinced that she was only shamming, we took her before General Sullivan, and he threatened her with punishment if she did not answer, promising her food and kind treatment if she would tell what she knew. Then she became voluble.

"She said that Butler and the old chiefs had held a council here. He had been reinforced by two hundred Niagara Indians, who wanted to fight at once ; but those who had been in the battle and under the artillery fire shook their heads. The majority were against beginning hostilities at once, but voted to wait for a good chance, after Sullivan had got well

into the wilderness. Two of the old chiefs and all the squaws were in favor of peace, yet Butler would not allow any surrender. He told the women that Sullivan would kill them all.

“Brant was moody, but defiant. He was disappointed at the non-arrival of a big band of Cayugas whom he was expecting. Fearing they might come on the trail after his retreat, Brant ordered a picture-message to be left for them near one of the holy places so well known to the Indians of the whole confederacy. One of our scouts found this and showed it to General Sullivan. I walked out to see it. On the rocks was a drawing in bright colors, showing twelve men with arrows through them. Near by was a live young sapling, with its top branches bent down and twisted around the trunk. This, alike for friend and foe, was the meaning of the double symbol, — the picture-message and the tree set for defiance: ‘We have lost the battle, in which twelve warriors were killed; but, though beaten, we are not conquered.’

“The old squaw said further that many Seneca families were mourning the death of their relatives, and that hundreds of women and children were hiding in the place about five miles away. This stirred the general at once. He started up, ordering Colonel Butler to take a regiment and the coehorn and go immediately in pursuit. Could he capture these, the whole Seneca nation might have to sue for peace

Yet, except hard marching, the expedition was useless.

“The general is a kind man at heart. He ordered a comfortable hut to be built for the old woman, and left her food enough to last for several weeks. Then her savage eyes overflowed with tears. Some of our men begrudged the old woman the keg of pork and the round of beef left her, for good meat is so scarce. We marched on the next day, and moved on through open woods and over level country. We came to a small Indian village that was a model. It was made of only one house, but this had ten fires in it, one fire to a room, showing that as many families lived under this one roof. I think you would open your eyes wide, were you to see how well furnished some of these Indian houses are. They have not only plenty of grain, but horses, cows, and wagons.

“Yet we burnt them all and cut down the corn, for the object of Congress and General Washington is to make this country uninhabitable for years to come. True, there are clean Indians and dirty ones, and some villages and the houses in them are nasty beyond description, being more like pig-pens than habitations for human beings. Usually they do not take any care to have clean water, never dig any wells, but take the water for drink or cooking right out of the lake and river.

“The next day we came to the famous Apple Town, or Kendaia, situated about a quarter of a mile from

the lake. It is the Indian town in which Mary Vrooman was a prisoner for nearly a year. Here the houses were built of hewn logs covered with bark, and some of them were well painted. Eleven of them stood on a ridge sixty rods long and twenty rods wide. The corn-fields were at some distance from the town.

“The Wyoming militiamen had been very eager to get to Apple Town, for it was out of this village that one of the most active parties in Brant’s raid on Wyoming and Nanticoke had set forth. You should have seen the soldiers rush into the place and begin at once to hunt in the bark houses for the dried scalps of their relatives, some of which they found, and at least four were recognized. Then how lustily they did swing their axes on the trees and put the torch to the houses! I tell you it was a good sight to behold. Our men drove three Indian ponies into the lake, but caught them easily.

“Among our other surprises here was our seeing a white man named Luke Sweetland rush out from his hiding-place, some distance from the town, and greet his old friends from Wyoming, some of whom he knew by name. He had been captured at Nanticoke in the raids last year and adopted into the tribe. He said that in winter he lived mostly on suppawn, and that from April until corn was fit to roast, he was nearly starved, but now he was fat, for succotash was plenty. He told Vrooman and me some-

thing about the salt-making among the Indians, which we have long wanted to know.

“Mr. Vrooman remembers that several years ago, when he was present at the blacksmith’s shop in Cherry Valley, a squaw brought a copper kettle to get a rent soldered up, which had been accidentally made in it by a slip of a tomahawk. Seeing a shining incrustation in it, he asked the squaw what the crystals were, but she made some evasive reply. Whereupon he swept some of it into his palm and putting his tongue to it, found it was pure salt. The squaw seemed displeased, and, though he plied her with questions and promises of gewgaws, she would say nothing.

“Sweetland says that these Cayuga Indians regularly sent him about twenty miles off to the salt springs, which lie in a ravine on this side of Cayuga Lake, several miles south of the northern end, and also in the flats at the lake’s end, near a big fall of water, one of three streams about two or three miles this side of Coreorganel. This salt the Kendaia people make and sell to all the savages in this part of the country. We wish they had left a store of it for us, as we shall need a good deal of salt while living on so much green food. Both lakes, Seneca and Cayuga, are full of fish, particularly salmon, trout, rock, and sheepshead, while game on land is plentiful.

“Sweetland tells us that there were many wounded

in the battle, and the savages are much cast down. They took Vrooman's sister along with them, when they retreated northward, but Sweetland thinks that his wife is still over at Coreorganel. It was at Kendaia that I received your letter, which an express had brought up from Tioga Point, where it had remained over a week. By the same messenger we heard about our own wounded after the battle. I am sorry to tell you that Colonel Dearborn's nephew, only sixteen years old, and with whom I got acquainted, because we were boys together, died of his wounds on the 22d. Although Kendaia must be an old town, for some of the trees appear to be sixty years old, yet our horses and cattle could not get any pasturage here, and many of them strayed away.

"So the next day we could not march till three o'clock, and even then the horses and cattle were not all recovered. Some time before sundown we stopped for supper and the night. Wild pea-vines grew very luxuriantly, and here our horses enjoyed them as if they were clover.

"We could see on the other side of the lake some Indians busy with horses, but they did not look like warriors. There was quite a large town, with houses and corn-fields.

"I remained a long time on the edge of the lake, watching the Indians and the horses on the other side, for something unusual seemed to be going on. Old men and squaws seemed to be trying which

was the fastest of the colts, for the animals appeared to be young horses. There were many Indian children interested and lively. I borrowed an officer's spy-glass, and, though the sun was now pretty well down in the sky and the shadows beginning to stretch long toward the east, I saw that they brought out a squaw and tied her on a white pony. They rested her body on the animal's back, her head toward the tail, and then fastened and tied her feet around the pony's neck. Whooping and yelling, the old men and squaws gave the animal's flank a whack, and off it went upon a gallop along the lake, and finally I lost sight of it, white though it was, in the woods. What could it mean? When I told Vrooman of what I saw, he seemed at first interested and then distressed, but said nothing.

"I talked to one of the friendly Oneidas, named Hanyari, a splendid specimen of a redman, about what I had seen. He was highly interested in all I could tell him.

"'It must be a case of witchcraft,' said he. 'Some squaw has been accused of bewitching a man or woman. Or, what is nearly as bad, of saying something offensive to the tribe or predicting calamity or defeat.'

"'It may be she foretold the thrashing the Senecas got at Newtown,' I suggested.

"'Quite likely. Probably the old men and squaws may have heard of the loss of some of their warriors,

and though her words may have been uttered months ago, yet even now recalled or even dreamed of, they may be the means of accusation, punishment. She will certainly starve, poor squaw.'

"From my friend the Oneida guide, I learned many of the Indian notions of witchcraft and of religion. As night fell, the stars came out one by one, covering the heavens, while Seneca Lake was spangled with reflections like jewels. Vrooman joined us and we had a talk about the stars, and the lake, and the Indian's idea of creation, which I must write down for you."

Here the story-teller must add that it was not all marching, fighting, cutting down corn-fields, or dragging artillery up and down hills that occupied our young Continentals. Some of them, students, school-masters, lovers, friends, enjoyed mightily the sight of the flowers by day and the stars at night. It was superbly clear weather during that whole month of September, 1779, and every night the glorious heavens showed the sight that never palls on the eye. On this night, by the shores of Seneca Lake, when the silver baldrick of the stars stretched its palpitating glory across the whole heavens, from horizon to horizon, Vrooman turned to Hanyari and politely asked him what the Indians thought of "the milky way," and how it originated. Hanyari was one of Domine Kirkland's warm friends. He knew

how the white men thought, but he was not wholly ashamed of Iroquois lore, and when in the mood, loved to talk freely.

"Oh," said Hanyari, good humoredly, "I'm tired of answering your questions; tell me what *you* think of it? How did the great white light come there? Why do you call it 'milky way'?"

"Well, in our story, which comes from the Greeks, there was a very stout little baby, named Jupiter, who lived a long time ago up in the heavens, and once, in a temper, spilt his milk all over the sky. But our fathers have no story of their own to tell, so you must tell me yours."

"We have not much of a story," said Hanyari; "but one of my uncles told me that this band of light was the track of the great tortoise walking across the sky. Others say it is the road which departed souls travel on to reach the land beyond the western heavens, and the lights in it are the shining foot-marks of the greater heroes."

"Have you any name for the other stars?" asked Vrooman.

"Oh, yes," said Hanyari, and his eyes brightened.

"Well," said Vrooman, "what about the north star?"

"Oh," said Hanyari, "that is the star we travel by. Since we learned some things of you white men, we call it the 'compass' star."

"Have you names of groups of stars when seen together?" asked Vrooman.