

*George Bancroft, History of the United States of America from the Discovery of the Continent N.Y.: 1886 (the author's last edition) (first ed. pub. in 1858) Vol. IV.*

## CHAPTER XI.

### EFFECTS OF THE DAY OF LEXINGTON AND CONCORD. THE GENERAL RISING.

APRIL-JUNE 1775.

DARKNESS closed upon the country and upon the town, but it was no night for sleep. Heralds by swift relays transmitted the war message from hand to hand, till village repeated it to village; the sea to the backwoods; the plains to the highlands; and it was never suffered to droop till it had been borne north and south, and east and west, throughout the land. It spread over the bays that received the Saco and the Penobscot and the St. John's. Its loud reveille broke the rest of the trappers of New Hampshire, and, ringing like bugle-notes from peak to peak, overleapt the Green Mountains, swept onward to Montreal, and descended the ocean river, till the responses were echoed from the cliffs of Quebec. The hills along the Hudson told one to another the tale. As the summons hurried to the south, it was one day at New York; in one more at Philadelphia; the next it lighted a watchfire at Baltimore; thence it waked an answer at Annapolis. Crossing the Potomac near Mount Vernon, it was sent forward without a halt to Williamsburg. It traversed the Dismal Swamp to Nansemond along the route of the first emigrants to North Carolina. It moved onward and still onward through boundless forests of pines to Newbern and to Wilmington. "For God's sake, forward it by night and by day," wrote Cornelius Harnett by the express which sped for Brunswick. Patriots of South Carolina caught up its tones at the border, and despatched it to Charleston, and through moss-clad live oaks

and palmettoes still farther to the south, till it resounded among the New England settlements beyond the Savannah. Hillsborough and the Mecklenburg district of North Carolina rose in triumph, now that their wearisome uncertainty had its end. The Blue Ridge took up the voice, and made it heard from one end to the other of the valley of Virginia. The Alleghanies opened their barriers, that the "loud call" might pass through to the hardy riflemen on the Holston, the Watauga, and the French Broad. Ever renewing its strength, powerful enough even to create a commonwealth, it breathed its inspiring word to the first settlers of Kentucky; so that hunters, who made their halt in the matchless valley of the Elkhorn, commemorated the nineteenth day of April by naming their encampment LEXINGTON.

With one impulse, the colonies sprung to arms; with one spirit, they pledged themselves to each other "to be ready for the extreme event." With one heart, the continent cried: "Liberty or Death."

The first measure of the Massachusetts committee of safety, after the dawn of the twentieth of April, was a circular to the several towns in Massachusetts. "We conjure you," they wrote, "by all that is dear, by all that is sacred; we beg and entreat, as you will answer it to your country, to your consciences, and, above all, to God himself, that you will hasten and encourage by all possible means the enlistment of men to form the army, and send them forward to head-quarters at Cambridge with that expedition which the vast importance and instant urgency of the affair demands."

The country people of Massachusetts had not waited for the call. As soon as they heard the cry of blood they snatched their firelocks from the walls, and wives and mothers and sisters took part in preparing the men of their households to go forth to the war. The farmers rushed to "the camp of liberty," often with nothing but the clothes on their backs, without a day's provisions, and many without a farthing in their pockets. Their country was in danger; their brethren were slaughtered; their arms alone employed their attention. On their way, the inhabitants opened their hospitable doors, and all things were in common. For the first night of the siege, Prescott of Pep-

perell, with his Middlesex minute-men, kept the watch over the entrance to Boston; and, while Gage was driven for safety to fortify the town at all points, the Americans talked of driving him and his regiments into the sea.

At the same time, the committee by letter gave the story of the preceding day to New Hampshire and Connecticut, whose assistance they entreated. "We shall be glad," they wrote, "that our brethren who come to our aid may be supplied with military stores and provisions, as we have none of either more than is absolutely necessary for ourselves." And without stores or cannon, or supplies even of powder, or of money, Massachusetts, by its congress, on the twenty-second of April, resolved unanimously that a New England army of thirty thousand men should be raised, and established its own proportion at thirteen thousand six hundred. The term of enlistment was fixed for the last day of December.

Long before this summons, the ferries over the Merrimack were crowded by men from New Hampshire. "We go," said they, "to the assistance of our brethren." By one o'clock of the twentieth, upward of sixty men of Nottingham assembled at the meeting-house with arms and equipments, under Cilley and Dearborn; before two, they were joined by bands from Deerfield and Epsom; and they set out together for Cambridge. At dusk they reached Haverhill ferry, a distance of twenty-seven miles, having run rather than marched; they halted in Andover only for refreshments, and, traversing fifty-five miles in less than twenty hours, by sunrise of the twenty-first paraded on Cambridge common.

The veteran John Stark, skilled in the ways of the Indian, the English, and his countrymen, able to take his rest on a bear-skin with a bank of snow for a pillow, frank and humane, eccentric but true, famed for coolness and courage and integrity, had no rival in the confidence of his neighbors, and was chosen colonel of their regiment by their unanimous vote. He rode in haste to the scene of action, on the way encouraging the volunteers to rendezvous at Medford. So many followed that, on the morning of the twenty-second, he was detached with three hundred to take post at Chelsea, where his battalion,

which was one of the fullest in the besieging army, became a model for its discipline.

By the twenty-third there were already about two thousand men from the interior parts of New Hampshire, desirous "not to return before the work was done." Many who remained near the upper Connecticut threw up the civil and military commissions held from the king; for, said they, "the king has forfeited his crown, and all commissions from him are therefore vacated."

In Connecticut, Trumbull, the governor, sent out writs to convene the legislature of the colony at Hartford on the Wednesday following the battle. On the morning of the twentieth, Israel Putnam of Pomfret, in leather frock and apron, was assisting hired men to build a stone wall on his farm, when he heard the cry from Lexington. He set off instantly to rouse the militia officers of the nearest towns. On his return, he found hundreds who had mustered and chosen him their leader. Issuing orders for them to follow, he pushed forward without changing the check shirt he had worn in the field, and reached Cambridge at sunrise the next morning, having ridden the same horse a hundred miles within eighteen hours. He brought to the service of his country courage, and a heart than which none throbbed more honestly or warmly for American freedom.

From Wethersfield a hundred young volunteers marched for Boston on the twenty-second, well armed and in high spirits. From the neighboring towns men of the largest estates, and the most esteemed for character, seized their firelocks and followed. By the second night, several thousands from the colony were on their way. Some had fixed on their standards and drums the colony arms, and round it, in letters of gold, the motto, that God who brought over their fathers would uphold the sons.

In New Haven, Benedict Arnold, captain of a volunteer company, agreed with his men to march the next morning for Boston. "Wait for proper orders," was the advice of Wooster; but their self-willed commander, brooking no delay, extorted supplies from the committee of the town, and on the twenty-ninth reached the American head-quarters with his company.

There was scarcely a town in Connecticut that was not represented among the besiegers.

The nearest towns of Rhode Island were in motion before the British had finished their retreat. At the instance of Hopkins and others, Wanton, the governor, though himself inclined to the royal side, called an assembly. Its members were all of one mind; and when Wanton, with several of the council, showed hesitation, they resolved, if necessary, to proceed alone. The council yielded, and confirmed the unanimous vote of the assembly for raising an army of fifteen hundred men. "The colony of Rhode Island," wrote Bowler, the speaker, to the Massachusetts congress, "is firm and determined; and a greater unanimity in the lower house scarce ever prevailed." Companies of the men of Rhode Island preceded this early message.

Massachusetts gained confidence now that New Hampshire and Connecticut and Rhode Island had come to its support. The New England volunteers were men of substantial worth, of whom almost every one represented a household. The members of the several companies were well known to each other, as to brothers, kindred, and townsmen; known to the old men who remained at home, and to all the matrons and maidens. They were sure to be remembered weekly in the exercises of the congregations; and morning and evening, in the usual family devotions, they were commended with fervent piety to the protection of heaven. Every young soldier lived and acted, as it were, under the keen observation of all those among whom he had grown up, and was sure that his conduct would occupy the tongues of his village companions while he was in the field, and be remembered his life long. The camp of liberty was a gathering in arms of schoolmates, neighbors, and friends; and Boston was beleaguered round from Roxbury to Chelsea by an unorganized, fluctuating mass of men, each with his own musket and his little store of cartridges, and such provisions as he brought with him, or as were sent after him, or could be contributed by the people round about.

The British officers, from their own weakness and from fear of the American marksmen, dared not order a sally. Their confinement was the more irksome, for it came of a sudden before

their magazines had been filled, and was followed by "an immediate stop to supplies of every kind." They had scoffed at the Americans as cowards who would run at their sight; and they had saved themselves only by the rapidity of their retreat. Re-enforcements and three new general officers were already on the Atlantic, and these would have to be received into straitened quarters by a defeated army. England, and even the ministers, would condemn the inglorious expedition which had brought about so sudden and so fatal a change. The officers shrunk from avowing their own acts; and, though no one would say that he had seen the Americans fire first, they tried to make it pass current that a handful of countrymen at Lexington had begun a fight with a detachment that outnumbered them as twelve to one.

The Americans, slowly provoked and long-suffering, treated the prisoners with tenderness, nursed the wounded as though they had been kinsmen, and invited Gage to send out British surgeons for their relief. Yet Percy could degrade himself so far as to calumniate the country people who gave him chase, and officially lend himself to the falsehood that "the rebels scalped and cut off the ears of some of the wounded who fell into their hands." He should have respected the name which he bore; and he should have respected the men before whom he fled.

To the inhabitants of Boston, Gage made the offer that, if they would promise not to join in an attack on his troops, and would lodge their arms with the selectmen at Faneuil Hall, the men, women, and children, with all their effects, should have safe conduct out of the town. The proposal was accepted. For several days the road to Roxbury was thronged with wagons and trains of exiles; but they were not allowed to take with them any food. The provincial congress devised measures for distributing five thousand of the poor among the villages of the interior. But the loyalists of Boston, of whom two hundred entered the king's service, soon prevailed with Gage to violate his word.

On the twenty-seventh of April the assembly of Connecticut read the vote of Massachusetts, that New England should bring into the field thirty thousand men. On the next day

they despatched two envoys to Gage to plead for peace, yet to assure him of their most firm resolution to defend their rights to the last extremity and to aid their brethren. The mission was fruitless; but in the mean time the populous colony made ready to treat with sword in hand.

In the American camp there was no unity. At Roxbury, John Thomas had commanded, and received encomiums for the good order which prevailed in his division; but Ward, the general who was at Cambridge, had the virtues of a magistrate rather than of a soldier. He was old, unused to a separate military command, too infirm to appear on horseback, and wanting in "quick decision and activity." The troops from other colonies, under leaders of their own, did not as yet form an integral part of one "grand American" army.

Of the Massachusetts volunteers, the number varied from day to day. Many of them returned home almost as soon as they came, for want of provisions or clothes, or from the pressure of affairs which they had left so suddenly. Of those who enlisted in the Massachusetts army, a very large number absented themselves on furlough. Ward feared that he should be left alone. Of artillery, there were no more than six three-pounders and one six-pounder in Cambridge, besides sixteen pieces in Watertown, of different sizes, some of them good for nothing. There was no ammunition but for the six three-pounders, and very little even for them. After scouring five principal counties, the whole amount of powder that could be found was less than sixty-eight barrels. The other colonies were equally unprovided. In the colony of New York there were not more than one hundred pounds of powder for sale.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, the scheming genius of New England was in the highest activity. While the expedition against Ticonderoga was sanctioned by a commission granted to Benedict Arnold, the Massachusetts congress, which was then sitting in Watertown, received from Jonathan Brewer, of Waltham, a proposition to march with a body of five hundred volunteers to Quebec, by way of the rivers Kennebec and Chaudière, in order to draw the governor of Canada, with his troops, into that quarter, and thus secure the northern and western frontiers from inroads. He was sure it "could be

executed with all the facility imaginable." The design did not pass out of mind.

Next to the want of military stores, the poverty of the Massachusetts treasury, which during the winter had received scarcely five thousand pounds of currency to meet all expenses, gave just cause for apprehension. For more than twenty years she had endeavored by legislative penalties to exclude the paper currency of other provinces, and had issued no notes of her own but certificates of debt, in advance of the revenue. These certificates were for sums of six pounds and upward, bearing interest; they had no forced circulation, and were kept at par by the high condition of her credit and her general prosperity. The co-operation of neighboring colonies compelled her congress, in May, to legalize the paper money of Connecticut and Rhode Island, and to issue her own treasury notes. Of her first emission of one hundred thousand pounds, there were no notes under four pounds, and they all preserved the accustomed form of certificates of public debt, of which the use was not made compulsory. But, in less than three weeks, an emission of twenty-six thousand pounds was authorized for the advance pay to the soldiers; and these "soldiers' notes," of which the smallest was for one dollar, were made a legal tender "in all payments without discount or abatement." Rhode Island put out twenty thousand pounds in bills, of which the largest was for forty shillings, the smallest for sixpence.

On the fifth of May the provincial congress resolved "that General Gage had disqualified himself for serving the colony in any capacity; that no obedience was in future due to him; that he ought to be guarded against as an unnatural and inveterate enemy." To take up the powers of civil government was an instant necessity; but the patriots of the colony checked their eagerness to return to their ancient custom of annually electing their chief magistrate, and resolved to await "explicit advice" from the continental congress.

New Hampshire agreed to raise two thousand men, of whom perhaps twelve hundred reached the camp. Folsom was their brigadier, but John Stark was the most trusty officer. Connecticut offered six thousand men; and about twenty-three

hundred remained at Cambridge, with Spenser as their chief, and Putnam as second brigadier.

Rhode Island voted fifteen hundred men; and probably about a thousand of them appeared round Boston, under Nathaniel Greene. He was one of eight sons, born near the Narragansett bay in Warwick. In that quiet seclusion, Gorton and his followers, untaught of universities, had reasoned on the highest questions of being. They had held that in America Christ was coming to his temple; that outward ceremonies, baptism and the eucharist, and also kings and lords, bishops and chaplains, were but carnal ordinances, sure to have an end; that humanity must construct its church by "the voice of the Son of God," the voice of reason and love. The father of Greene, descended from ancestry of this school, was at once an anchor-smith, a miller, a farmer, and, like Gorton, a preacher. The son excelled in diligence and in manly sports. None of his age could wrestle or skate or run better than he, or stand before him as a neat ploughman and a skilful mechanic.

Aided by intelligent men of his own village or of Newport, he read Euclid, and learned to apply geometry to surveying and navigation; he studied Watts's Logic, Locke on the Human Understanding, pored over English versions of the Lives of Plutarch, the Commentaries of Cæsar, and became familiar with some of the best English classics, especially Shakespeare and Milton.

When the stamp act was resisted, he and his brothers rallied at the drum-beat. Simple in his tastes, temperate as a Spartan, and a lover of order, he was indefatigable at study or at work. He married, and his home became the abode of peace and hospitality. His neighbors looked up to him as an extraordinary man, and from 1770 he was their representative in the colonial legislature. In 1773, he rode to Plainfield, in Connecticut, to witness a grand military parade; and the spectacle was for him a good commentary on Sharp's Military Guide. In 1774, in a coat and hat of the Quaker fashion, he was seen watching the exercise and manœuvres of the British troops at Boston, where he bought of Henry Knox, a bookseller, treatises on the art of war.

On the day of Lexington, Greene, who was then a captain, started to share in the conflict; but, being met by tidings of the retreat of the British, he went back to take his seat in the Rhode Island legislature. He served as a commissioner to concert military plans with Connecticut; and, when in May the Rhode Island brigade of fifteen hundred men was enlisted, he was elected its general. None murmured at the advancement, which was due to his ability.

On the twenty-third of April, the day after the dissolution of the provincial congress of New York, the news from Lexington burst upon the city. Though it was Sunday, the inhabitants speedily unloaded two sloops which lay at the wharfs, laden with flour and supplies for the British at Boston, of the value of eighty thousand pounds. The next day Dartmouth's despatches arrived with Lord North's conciliatory resolve, and with lavish promises of favor. But the royal government lay hopelessly prostrate. Isaac Sears concerted with John Lamb to stop all vessels going to Quebec, Newfoundland, Georgia, or Boston, where British authority was still supreme. The people shut up the custom-house, and the merchants whose vessels were cleared out dared not let them sail.

In the following days the military stores of the city of New York were secured, and volunteer companies paraded in the streets. Small cannon were hauled from the city to King's Bridge; churchmen as well as Presbyterians took up arms. As the old committee of fifty-one lagged behind the zeal of the multitude, on the first of May the people, at the usual places of election, chose for the city and county a new general committee of one hundred, who "resolved in the most explicit manner to stand or fall with the liberty of the continent." All parts of the colony were summoned to send delegates to a provincial convention, to which the city and county of New York deputed one-and-twenty as their representatives.

Eighty-three members of the new general committee met as soon as they were chosen; and, on the motion of John Morin Scott, seconded by Alexander Macdougall, an association was set on foot, engaging, by all the ties of religion, honor, and love of country, to submit to committees and to congress, to withhold supplies from British troops, and at the risk of lives and

fortunes to repel every attempt at enforcing taxation by parliament. Fourteen members of the New York assembly, most of them supporters of the ministry, entreated General Gage to cease hostilities till fresh orders could be received from the king, and especially to land no military force in New York. The royal council despatched two agents to represent to the ministry how severely the rash conduct of the army at Boston had injured the friends of the king, while the New York committee thus addressed the lord mayor and corporation of London, and through them the people of Great Britain:

"Born to the bright inheritance of English freedom, the inhabitants of this extensive continent can never submit to slavery. The disposal of their own property with perfect spontaneity is their indefeasible birthright. This they are determined to defend with their blood, and transfer to their posterity. The present maclinations of arbitrary power, if unremitedly pursued, will, by a fatal necessity, terminate in a dissolution of the empire. This country will not be deceived by measures conciliatory in appearance. We cheerfully submit to a regulation of commerce by the legislature of the parent state, excluding in its nature every idea of taxation. When our unexampled grievances are redressed, our prince will find his American subjects testifying, by as ample aids as their circumstances will permit, the most unshaken fidelity to their sovereign. America is grown so irritable by oppression that the least shock in any part is, by the most powerful sympathetic affection, instantaneously felt through the whole continent. This city is as one man in the cause of liberty. We speak the real sentiments of the confederated colonies, from Nova Scotia to Georgia, when we declare that all the horrors of civil war will never compel America to submit to taxation by authority of parliament." The letter was signed by the chairman and eighty-eight others of the committee, of whom the first was John Jay.

On the sixth the delegates to the continental congress from Massachusetts and Connecticut drew near. Along roads which were crowded as if the whole city had come out to meet them, they made their entry amid loud acclamations, the ringing of bells and every demonstration of sympathy.

On Monday the delegation from Massachusetts, with a part of that of New York, were escorted across the Hudson river by two hundred of the militia under arms, and three hundred citizens. Triumphant honors awaited them at Newark and Elizabethtown. The governor of New Jersey could not conceal his chagrin that Gage "had risked commencing hostilities." On the second of May the New Jersey committee of correspondence called a provincial congress for the twenty-third at Trenton. To anticipate its influence, the governor convened the regular assembly eight days earlier at Burlington, and laid before them the project of Lord North. The assembly could see in the proposition no avenue to reconciliation, and declared their intention to "abide by the united voice of the continental congress."

Such, too, was the spirit of Pennsylvania. "Let us not have it said of Philadelphia that she passed noble resolutions and neglected them," were the words of Mifflin, youngest of the orators who on the twenty-fifth of April addressed the town-meeting called in that city on receiving the news from Lexington. Thousands were present, and agreed "to associate for the purpose of defending with arms their lives, their property, and liberty." Thomas Paine from that day "rejected the sullen Pharaoh of the British throne forever." Each township in Berks county resolved to raise and discipline its company. The inhabitants of Westmoreland organized themselves into regiments. Reading formed a company of men who wore crape for a cockade, in token of sorrow for the slaughter of their brethren. In Philadelphia, thirty companies, with fifty to one hundred in each, daily practiced the manual exercise of the musket. One of them was raised from the Quakers; another, known as "the Old Men's," consisted of about fourscore German emigrants who had served in Europe.

The Pennsylvania assembly, which met on the first day of May, rejecting the overtures of the governor, "could form no prospect of lasting advantages for Pennsylvania but from a communication of rights and property with the other colonies." At a banquet the toast was given: "A speedy and happy issue to the present disturbances;" to which Charles Lee, over

acting his part, responded: "A speedy and general insurrection in Great Britain and Ireland." On the fifth, Franklin arrived after a voyage over the smoothest seas, and the next morning was unanimously elected a deputy to the congress; but the delegation, to which Thomas Willing and James Wilson were added, were still instructed to combine, if possible, a redress of grievances with "union and harmony between Great Britain and the colonies." Wilson was one of the first in arms, and was elected captain of a company of volunteers.

In Maryland, at the request of the colonels of militia, Eden, at Annapolis, gave up the arms and ammunition of the province to the freemen of the county. Pleased with his concession, the provincial convention distinguished itself by its moderation; and its delegates to congress determined to labor for a reconciliation.

In Virginia, on the second of May, at the cry from Lexington, the independent company of Hanover and its county committee were called together by Patrick Henry. The soldiers, most of them young men, elected him their chief, and marched for Williamsburg, on the way greatly increasing in numbers.

Alarmed by the "insurrections," Dunmore convened the council, and in a proclamation of the third pretended that he had removed the ammunition, lest it should be seized by slaves. Message after message could not arrest the march or change the purpose of Henry. Lady Dunmore retired to the Fowey man-of-war. At sunrise on the fourth the governor's messenger met Henry at New Kent, and, as a compensation for the gunpowder taken out of the magazine, paid him three hundred and thirty pounds, for which he was to account to the convention of Virginia. The sum was found to be more than the value of the powder, and the next Virginia convention directed the excess to be paid back.

Two days after the return of the volunteers Dunmore issued a proclamation against a "certain Patrick Henry" and his "deluded followers;" and secretly denounced him to the ministry as "a man of desperate circumstances, who had been very active in exciting a spirit of revolt among the people for many years past." But Louisa county, on the eighth, sent the

insurgents its thanks; on the ninth, Spottsylvania approved their prudent, firm, and spirited conduct; and Orange county, in a letter signed among others by the young and studious James Madison, a recent graduate of Princeton college, declared: "The blow struck in Massachusetts is a hostile attack on this and every other colony, and a sufficient warrant to use reprisal."

On the eleventh, Patrick Henry set off for the continental congress. Amid salutes and huzzas, a volunteer guard accompanied him to the Maryland side of the Potomac, where, as they said farewell, they invoked God's blessing on the champion of their "dearest rights and liberties."

In twelve or thirteen days the message from Lexington was borne to Newbern, in North Carolina, where it "wrought a great change." The governor, in his panic, ordered the cannon in the town to be dismounted; and, after a remonstrance made in the name of the inhabitants by Abner Nash, "the oracle of their committee and a principal promoter of sedition," he shipped his wife to New York, and fled to Fort Johnston, where a sloop-of-war had its station.

In South Carolina, Charles Pinckney, on learning the inflexibility of parliament using power intrusted to him by the provincial congress, appointed a committee of five to place the colony in a state of defence; on the twenty-first of April, the very night after their organization, men of Charleston, without disguise, under their direction, seized all the powder in the public magazines, and removed eight hundred stand of arms and other military stores from the royal arsenal. The tidings from Lexington induced the general committee to hasten the meeting of the provincial congress, whose members, on the second of June, Henry Laurens being their president, associated themselves for defence against every foe; "ready to sacrifice their lives and fortunes to secure her freedom and safety." They resolved to raise two regiments of infantry and a regiment of rangers. To this end, one hundred and forty thousand pounds sterling were issued in bills of credit, which for a year and a half did not fall in value. "We are ready to give freely half or the whole of our estates for the security of our liberties," was the universal language.

The militia officers threw up their commissions from the royal governor, and submitted to the orders of congress. A council of safety was charged with executive powers. In the midst of these proceedings Lord William Campbell, their new governor, arrived, and the provincial congress thus addressed him: "No lust of independence has had the least influence upon our counsels; no subjects more sincerely desire to testify their loyalty and affection. We deplore the measures, which, if persisted in, must rend the British empire. Trusting the event to Providence, we prefer death to slavery." "The people of Charleston are as mad as they are here in Boston," was the testimony of Gage.

The skirmish at Lexington became known in Savannah on the tenth of May, and added Georgia to the union. At that time she had about seventeen thousand white inhabitants and fifteen thousand Africans. Her militia was not less than three thousand. Her frontier, which extended from Augusta to St. Mary's, was threatened by the Creeks, with four thousand warriors; the Chickasas, with four hundred and fifty; the Cherokees, with three thousand; the Choctas, with twenty-five hundred. But danger could not make her people hesitate. On the night of the eleventh, Noble Wimberley Jones, Joseph Habersham, Edward Telfair, and others, broke open the king's magazine in the eastern part of the city, and took from it over five hundred pounds of powder. To the Boston wanderers they sent sixty-three barrels of rice and one hundred and twenty-two pounds in specie; and they kept the king's birthday by raising a liberty-pole. "A general rebellion throughout America is coming on suddenly and swiftly," reported Sir James Wright, the governor; "matters will go to the utmost extremity."

The great deed, which in the mean time was achieved in the North, was planned in Connecticut, and executed at her coast. Parsons, of that colony, on his way to Hartford, crossing Arnold, who was bound for Massachusetts, obtained of him an account of the state of Ticonderoga, and the great number of its brass cannon. At Hartford, on the twenty-seventh of April, Parsons, taking as his advisers Samuel Wyllys and Silas Deane, with the assistance of three others projected the capture of the



fort; and, without formally consulting the assembly or the governor and council, they, on their own receipts, obtained money from the public treasury, and on the twenty-eighth sent forward Noah Phelps and Bernard Romans. The next day Captain Edward Mott, of Preston, chairman of the Connecticut committee, followed with five associates. Ethan Allen was encouraged by an express messenger to raise men chiefly in the New Hampshire Grants. On the morning of the first of May the party, which had grown to the number of sixteen, left Salisbury. At Pittsfield, in Massachusetts, the Connecticut party were joined by John Brown, the young lawyer of that village, by Colonel James Easton, and by volunteers from Berkshire. At Bennington they found Ethan Allen, who sent the alarm through the hills and valleys of Vermont; and on Sunday, the seventh of May, about one hundred Green Mountain Boys and near fifty soldiers from Massachusetts, under the command of Easton, rallied at Castleton. Just then arrived Arnold, with only one attendant. He brought a commission from the Massachusetts committee of safety, which was disregarded; and the men unanimously elected Ethan Allen their chief.

On the ninth the party arrived at Orwell. With the utmost difficulty, a few boats were brought together; and eighty-three men, crossing the lake with Allen, landed near Ticonderoga. The boats were sent back for Seth Warner and the rear-guard; but, if they were to be waited for, there could be no surprise. The men were therefore at once drawn up in three ranks; and, as the first beams of morning broke upon the mountain peaks, Allen addressed them: "Friends and fellow-soldiers, we must this morning quit our pretensions to valor, or possess ourselves of this fortress; and, inasmuch as it is a desperate attempt, I do not urge it on, contrary to will. You that will undertake voluntarily, poise your firelock."

At the word, every firelock was poised. "Face to the right!" cried Allen; and, placing himself at the head of the centre file, Arnold keeping emulously at his side, he marched to the gate. It was shut, but the wicket was open. The sentry snapped a fusil at him. The Americans rushed into the fort, darted upon the guards, and, raising the Indian war-whoop, such as had not been heard there since the days of Montcalm,

formed on the parade in hollow square, to face each of the barracks. One of the sentries, after wounding an officer, and being slightly wounded himself, cried out for quarter, and showed the way to the apartment of the commander. "Come forth instantly, or I will sacrifice the whole garrison," cried Ethan Allen as he reached the door. At this, Delaplace, the commander, came out undressed, with his breeches in his hand. "Deliver to me the fort instantly," said Allen. "By what authority?" asked Delaplace. "In the name of the great Jehovah, and the continental congress!" answered Allen. Delaplace began to speak again, but was peremptorily interrupted; and, at sight of Allen's drawn sword near his head, he gave up the garrison, ordering his men to be paraded without arms. Thus Ticonderoga, which cost the British nation eight millions sterling, a succession of campaigns, and many lives, was won in ten minutes by a few undisciplined volunteers, without the loss of life or limb.

The Americans took with the fortress nearly fifty prisoners, who, as of right, were sent to Connecticut; and they gained one thirteen-inch mortar, more than a hundred pieces of cannon, swivels, stores, and small arms. To a detachment under Seth Warner, Crown Point, with its garrison of twelve men, surrendered upon the first summons. Another party succeeded in making a prisoner of Skene, a dangerous British agent; and in getting possession of Skenesborough, now known as Whitehall.

John Brown, of Pittsfield, was charged to carry to the continental congress the account of the great acquisition which inaugurated the day of its assembling. Meantime, until its advice could be known, the legislature of Massachusetts, considering that the expedition began in Connecticut, requested the legislature of that colony to take the conquest under their sole direction and care.

The movement extended itself eastward to the borders of New England. The *Canceaux*, a king's ship, lay at anchor in Portland harbor; on the eleventh of May a party of sixty men from Georgetown, too feeble to take the vessel, seized *Mowat*, its captain, and two of his officers, who chanced to be with him on shore. The officer left in command of the ship

threatened and even began a bombardment of the town. At a late hour Mowat was released for the night. The desire for revenge rankled in his veins, and infected the admiral of the station.

To the harbor of Machias a king's cutter, the *Margaretta*, convoyed two sloops, to be freighted with lumber for the army at Boston. On Sunday, the eleventh of June, the patriots of the town, aided by volunteers from Mispicka and Pleasant River, seized the captain of the sloops "in the meeting-house," and afterward got possession of his vessels. The *Margaretta* did not fire on the town, but in the dusk of the evening fell down the harbor, and the next morning proceeded on her voyage. She was pursued by Captain Jeremiah O'Brien and forty men in one of the captured sloops, and by twenty others from Machias in a schooner; and, being a dull sailer, she was soon overtaken. An obstinate sea-fight took place; the captain of the cutter was mortally wounded and six of his men were hurt, when, after an hour's resistance, the British flag was struck, for the first time on the ocean, to Americans.

The extension of hostilities to the sea had, on the seventh of June, been discussed in the congress of Massachusetts; but it was difficult for the colony to conceive itself in a state of war with Great Britain. "A war has begun," wrote Joseph Warren, from the Massachusetts congress; "but I hope Britain, after a full conviction both of our ability and resolution to maintain our right, will act with wisdom; this I most heartily wish, as I feel a warm affection still for the parent state."