

Clearfield Republican.

A WEEKLY PAPER: DEVOTED TO LITERATURE, AGRICULTURE, MORALITY, AND FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE.

Published in Clearfield, every Wednesday Morning by Daniel W. Moore & Clark Wilson.

Volume 5.

Clearfield, Pa., March 8, 1854.

Number 7.

THE GENERAL'S PLOT.

An Incident of the American Revolution.

Many an incident connected with the American Revolution, falls blank upon the page of history; and for want of proper record, many a heroic act slumbers unremembered in the dim regions of the past. We do not carry our ideas of Divine interference in mundane affairs so as to suppose that the finger of Omnipotence points the path for individuals to pursue, unless, perhaps, where they are connected with great events; but we do profess to believe that a high and supernatural power condescends to direct and influence the affairs of nations. We may trace it from the earliest records of Biblical History, down to our own time; and the hand of the deity, as visibly displayed in the destiny of modern nations as those of antiquity—most particularly in that period of our own history, when the godlike Washington, sustained and protected by that invisible Power, led our feeble but conquering people through the dark valley of oppression to the sunny plains and heights of Liberty. For any one to be convinced of this, it will be only necessary for him to trace the history of our country from the opening of the war to the establishing of peace and the recognition of our Independence.

During the occupation of Philadelphia by the British, under General Howe, the headquarters were established at the house of General Cadwalader, in Second street, a few doors below Spruce; but for the purpose of private conference, the adjutant-general had taken an apartment in a house opposite, occupied by a Quaker family, by the name of Hanah. This was a back-room in the second story. The family consisted of William and Lydia Hanah—the husband and wife—and two or three children. They had one son in the American army.

On the 2d of December, 1777, the adjutant-general came to Lydia and told her that they should be in the room by 7 o'clock that evening; that he desired she would see that there was a fire, and that he should expect the family would retire early.

This, of course, was readily agreed to; the room got ready, the fire made, and everything arranged for the comfort of the occupants; but the evident secrecy which seemed to surround all the arrangements, amazingly puzzled the womanly curiosity of Lydia; and she at once conceived a suspicion that something terrible was plotting. These suspicions she communicated to her husband, who only laughed at her apprehensions, and bade her think no more of them. Notwithstanding these objections, however, she determined to keep a watch upon their proceedings.

At this time, Washington, with his army, was lying at White Marsh, on the Wissahickon creek, about twelve miles from Philadelphia, to which place he had advanced after the abandonment of Fort Mifflin and Mercer, where several unsuccessful attempts were made by Howe to draw him into an engagement. Determining, however, that no effort should be left untried to destroy the army of the American commander, Howe, on the second of December, communicated orders to the Adjutant-General for all the troops to march out of the city on the evening of the 4th, and attack Washington by surprise. This manoeuvre was intended to be a bold one, and had its success been complete, the results are painful to contemplate.

At the hour appointed, the adjutant-general, accompanied by two other officers, took possession of their room. In a short time afterward, Lydia succeeded in getting her family off to bed; but her own curiosity being naturally excited, she framed some excuse to her husband for her absence about the house for a short time and left him. Being now alone, she took off her shoes, and with the utmost caution crept softly up the stairs to the door of the room in which were the officers, and putting her ear to the key-hole, heard the adjutant-general read the order from Lord Howe, for the night attack upon the camp of Washington. She could scarcely maintain herself, such was her agitation; and her heart beat so loudly the meanwhile that she was compelled for a moment to sustain herself by the easing of the door, lest, in her trepidation, she should fall, and thereby bring ruin upon her family, and an untimely discovery of her position by those within. As it was, she but narrowly escaped detection; and in her confusion and alarm, she had touched the latch of the door, the noise of which had attracted the notice of one of the adjutant's companions, who called his attention to it.

"Then she was obliged to listen to the following conversation, for to move at this juncture would have indeed been critical. 'Hark!' says the officer, referred to, 'we are overheard, for I am sure there's some one at the door.'" "I think not, Colonel," replied the adjutant, "it is only the wind, which you know sometimes plays merrily with the door-latches in this miserable country." "Some finger, different from the wind's tipping the latch of the door," said the Colonel, "I would not for a hundred guineas that we had been overheard."

she had been tempted to listen; then, and being well satisfied that what she said could be depended upon, he offered to reward her for her faithfulness, which she declined with a delicacy that forbade him to be importunate upon the subject.

"At any rate said he," with a smile, "allow me, in the name of the army and of the country to thank you for this excellent service; and, at the same time, permit me to say, that if a wise Providence ordains that I shall again hold my quarters in your good city, I shall take occasion to thank you more particularly in person at your own residence. In the meantime, I must bid you a good day, for as our friends, the British, intend paying a visit to-morrow, we must neglect nothing to give them a reception worthy of such distinguished guests."

Bowing Lydia out of his tent he ordered the Sergeant of the Guard to escort her to the outposts, from whence she hastened back to the mill, and with her small grist of meal repassed the British lines, and returned to the city—gaining her own house without interruption or suspicion.

Now, in the camp of Washington all was bustle. Pickets were placed, the guard was doubled, and strict orders given that no person should be allowed to go into, or from the camp, without an especial passport from the Commander. Cannon were mounted, and troops were paraded and drilled; but to all the officers the sudden change from inactivity to life was a mystery, though some were shrewd enough to surmise that the General, from some cause well founded in his own reason, had determined to attack the British in their quarters in Philadelphia, and by compelling them to evacuate, establish himself in the city for the winter—a position much more desirable than the cold and cheerless situation already contemplated—Valley Forge. However, all their surmises failed to account for the present condition of affairs; and Washington considered the secret of so much importance that he deemed it imprudent to reveal it until the last moment.

Well the evening of the 4th came, and out from the guarded and sentinelled city marched the British troops. The air was not cold for the season, and the sky was somewhat overcast and misty, affording a fine opportunity for the manoeuvring of Gen. Howe's scheme. On they marched as silently as possible, but as confident as Hercules, until they had approached within a half a mile of the American pickets, when a halt was commanded, and scouts were sent to reconnoitre.

It was now a moment of intolerable anxiety to the British officers. They had reached the neighborhood of Chesnut Hill and lay in complete silence the American army. The Adjutant saw only a few rods in advance, accompanied only by an aid, and with his night glass sought, the lines of the rebel encampment; but the darkness and the mist had grown more impenetrable, and nothing could be discerned to indicate that the enemy were at all suspicious of danger—not even a campfire could be seen, nor the challenge of the sentry heard—the silence was ominous, and so thought the Adjutant, who remarked to his aid:

"In the face of all the precautions which we have taken to secure secrecy in this movement, I can scarcely think it probable that Washington is aware of our movements; and has laid his plans to surprise us; but this unwonted silence is so oppressive—the darkness in the direction of the camp so impenetrable—that I have my suspicions."

"You will note, sir," replied the aid, "that the damp and foggy state of the atmosphere is not favorable to the transmission of sounds and sights."

"True, indeed. But one might expect to catch some whisper in the neighborhood of an encamped army, even in such a night—a murmur, even, however; but the silence here is so intense and must have a meaning in it."

"True; but perhaps your anxiety for the success of our expedition leads you to give more importance to these appearances than they deserve."

"Well perhaps it is so. Let us ride in, and then send to me Sergeant Marshall."

The two officers joined again the main body, the aid left the general, and in a few moments the latter was joined by a short muscular man, whose frame indicated the utmost hardihood, and whose face betokened almost ferocious courage.

"Marshall," said the Adjutant, addressing him briefly, "I have a hazardous service for you to perform. You must go down into the enemy's encampment and ascertain his condition. You understand that I expect. Forward, then, and bring me word in the least possible time."

Away sped the faithful Sergeant, and the Adjutant General awaited with impatience intelligence from his scouts. Not long was he kept in suspense, however, for of two parties who had been sent out, one came in and reported that the American army were already under arms—their artillery in line, and their horse posted, though waiting for an assault. Scarcely crediting the report, the Adjutant was about giving the order to advance, when from the hitherto silent camp he heard the bu-

gles sounding the assembly, the ominous roll of the drum, and the tramping of feet as regiment after regiment took position.

In a moment after, this was succeeded by the rattling of musketry, and the flash and roar of a dozen cannons. A few of the balls struck in the immediate vicinity of the general and his party, throwing the dirt into the faces of some of his men, but fortunate for them, doing no injury. The skirmishing below led the English commander to believe that his other scout-party had been intercepted; and for a moment or two he felt an extreme desire to dash forward in the darkness, with his entire force, and chastise the insolent rebels. Convinced, however, that the Americans were ready to give him a warm and gallant reception, and that any attempt to dislodge them, or attack them in position, prepared as they evidently were for him, would be fool-hardy and dangerous in the extreme, the order was reluctantly given to retreat, and the troops of the haughty British general irritated by disappointment, returned to their quarters in Philadelphia as quietly and harmlessly as they had issued from it only a few hours before, appearing as the Adjutant General afterwards expressed himself, more like a parcel of fools than a body of men who had marched out to the attack of a foe. One party of the scouts which had been sent out, had succeeded, as we have seen in rejoining the main body before it commenced its retreat; but another party of eight had been cut off—three of them having been killed by the musketry of the Americans and the rest were taken prisoners.

As for Marshall, the spy, who had been sent to penetrate the camp of Washington he was taken prisoner in the act of making his escape, and being recognized as a spy of the rank and deepest dye, as well as a spy, he was the next day tried and hung in the presence of the army.

Thus, in this instance, by the timely suspicion and warning of a woman was the annihilation of the American army prevented, and Washington saved to see the liberties of his country firmly established. No suspicion of Lydia Hanah's agency in the affair ever entered the mind of the Adjutant General; though he told her distinctly that he believed that the American General had been advised of their movements through the medium of some person connected with the house, though he entirely acquitted her of the act.

On Washington's entering the city of Philadelphia, after his evacuation by the British, he took occasion to call upon Mistress Hanah, when he again thanked her most heartily for the important service she had rendered to the country, saying that he should always remember her with kindness and affection, and promised to look after the interest of her son, who was in the army, and whom he afterwards promoted for his gallant behavior on several occasions.

"IMPRESSIONS AT FIRST SIGHT.—This subject at the supper table, was getting talked over, when the lady who presided 'over the cups and tea' said 'she always formed an idea of a person at first sight; and that idea she found was generally a correct one.'"

"Mamma," said her youngest son, in a shrill voice that attracted the attention of all present.

"What do you want?"

"I want to know," said young America, "what you thought when you first saw me?"

There was no answer to this query; but we learn a general titter prevailed, and that "Charlie" was taken into the kitchen immediately by the servant.

"Channing says, and with truth: 'The day laborer who earns, with horny hands and the sweat of his brows, coarse food for a wife and children whom he loves, is raised by his generous motive to true dignity; and though wanting the refinements of life, is a nobler being than those who think themselves absolved by wealth, of serving others. It is worthy of note, that the men and women who think most highly of themselves, and most meanly of others, are those who render back to society for the good things they enjoy, the smallest return of personal effect. The world's true benefactors, are those who serve it, humbly and earnestly, to the best of the ability God has given them. All others are but counterfeiters and pretenders.'"

"SLAVING FOR MONEY.—We pity the man who wears out his energies in the accumulation of riches, which, when amassed, he will have lost the capacity to enjoy. He finds himself at the end of his labors, a guest at his own feast, without an appetite for its dainties. The wine of life is wasted, and nothing remains but the lees. The warm sympathies of his heart have been choked by the inexorable spirit of avarice, and they cannot be resuscitated. The fountain-head of his enthusiasm is sealed; he looks at all things in nature and art with the eye of calculation; hard-matter-of-fact is the only pabulum his mind can feed on, the elastic spring of impulse is broken; the poetry of existence is gone.

Are wealth and position an equivalent for these losses? Is not the millionaire, who has acquired wealth at such a cost, a miserable bankrupt? In our opinion there is little to choose on the score of wisdom between the individual who recklessly squanders his money as he goes along, in folly and and extravagance and the false economist who denies himself the wholesome enjoyments of life, in order to swell the treasure, which, in the hardening process of scraping up, he had become too mean to spend, and too selfish to give away.

"The only national way to live, is to mix labor with enjoyment—a streak of fat and a streak of lean. There is nothing like a streaky life—a pleasant mixture of exertion, thankfulness, love, jollity and repose. The man who slaves for riches makes a poor return to that God who took the trouble of making him for a better purpose.

"PULMONARY CONSUMPTION.—Nothing more clearly indicates the imperfection of medical science than the multitude of deaths constantly taking place from pulmonary consumption. Because these are frequent no alarm is excited; but they by no means lessen the melancholy catalogue of those who are perpetually going down to a premature grave. Is it not possible to arouse a spirit of further investigation in this direction? While manifest progress is making in the treatment of most other diseases, little is achieved in regard to this slowly developed, but fatal malady. The scientific use of a stethoscope does not cure patients. There is no difficulty in predicting very nearly the exact condition of each and every part of the respiratory apparatus; but that does not constitute a remedy. Not a single advance, of real value, has been made in the treatment, beyond the employment of cod liver oil, for a long period. Either there is no disposition to undergo the fatigues of experimenting, or the resources of medicine and art are exhausted, so far as that uncontrolled disease is concerned. A better opening for bold researches was never presented, than while the expression is nearly universal, 'physicians cannot arrest or subdue pulmonary disorganization.' A distinct chair in some or all of the colleges for the study of the thoracic viscera, and the lungs in particular, in health and disease, would be an important movement, and we doubt not would lead to the happiest results.—Boston Medical Journal.

"The St. Louis Intelligencer of the 20th, says: Major Gatewood, of the Council Bluffs Indian Agency, arrived in this city yesterday, in company with sixteen Indians from the Nebraska Territory, of whom fourteen are chiefs, and two interpreters. The party are on their way to Washington city, and came so far on their journey by land. They leave on an Ohio River boat to-morrow evening. Major Gatewood, according to the Missouri papers, has induced several of the Indian tribes to consent to treaties ceding certain lands, and goes to Washington to lay the subject before the President. The quantity of land bargained for by these treaties amounts it is said, to 10,000,000 acres. The scope of countries extends from the mouth of the Great Nemaha, near the northern boundary line of Missouri, to the mouth of Iowa Creek, opposite to the south west corner of Minnesota Territory. It fronts about 250 miles on the west side of the Missouri, and is a splendid, rich limestone country.

"IT FOLLOWED HIM.—When the American flag was unfurled from its staff in Tampico, an aged Spaniard was heard inveighing, with lugubrious earnestness, against the pertinacity with which the flag had pursued his fortunes. He said, 'I was the Spanish Consul in Louisiana, when dat flag was raise, and I go to Panscicola, but soon dat flag was over me dare. I live den in de Texas, but dat flag follow me dare. Says I, I go where dat flag never come. I come to Tampico, but here is dat flag again. I believe if I go to de devil, dat same flag will follow me dare.

"The nerve which never relaxes, the eye which never blanches, the thought which never wanders—these are the marks of victory.

DYING CONFESSIONS OF WICKED MEN.

Lord Chesterfield, though a skeptic and devoted to a life of pleasure, was compelled to say near the close of his days, "When I reflect upon what I have seen, what I have heard and what I have done myself, I can hardly persuade myself that all the frivolous hurry and bustle and pleasure of the world are a reality; but they seem to be the dreams of restless nights."

Voltaire, after having spent a whole life in blaspheming the Savior, and opposing his gospel, said to his physician on his dying bed, "I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months of life."

Said Gibbon: "The present is a fleeting moment, the past is no more, and my prospect of futurity is dark and doubtful."

Hobbes said, as the last hour approached, "If I had the whole world to dispose of, I would give it to live one day."

"Oh!" cried the Duke of Buckingham, as he was closing a life devoted to folly and sin, "what a prodigal I have been to the most valuable of all possessions—time! I have squandered it away with a persuasion that it was overabundant; and now, when a few days would be worth a hecatomb of worlds, I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of a half a dozen hours."

Philip the Third, King of Spain, when he drew near the end of his days, expressed his deep regret for a worldly and careless life, in these epithetic words: "Ah, how happy it would have been for me, had I spent these twenty-three years I have held my kingdom, in retirement."

"Good God!" exclaimed the dying nobleman, "how have I employed myself? In what delirium has my life been passed!—What have I been doing while the sun in its race and the stars in their courses have lent their beams, perhaps to light me to perdition!"

"Remorse for the past," exclaimed the dying Altamont, "throws my thoughts to the future. Worse dread of the future throws them back on the past. I turn, and find no ray. Death is knocking at my door; in a few hours more I shall draw my last gasp; and then the judgment, the tremendous judgment! How shall I appear, all unprepared as I am, before the all-knowing and omnipotent God?"

"O! eternity! eternity!" cried the distracted Newport, as he lay upon his death-bed, contemplating the solemn scenes before him, "who can paraphrase on the words forever and ever?"

"FEROCIOUS ATTACK OF A WILD BEAST.—The New Orleans Crescent, of the 8th instant, gives an account of an attack upon Mr. Stephen O'Leary, the chief of police of that city, by a leopard in the menagerie of Mr. Van Amburgh: "Stephen was leaning with his left arm across the iron railing, when the leopard thrust his long muscular fore legs through the bars, and seized him by the arm, midway between the wrist and elbow, stripping the flesh clean from the bone and tendons nearly to the hand, and drawing Captain O'Leary up almost against the bars. He struck the ferocious beast with his fist, but the only reply was a fierce growl and a firmer grip of the sharp claws; his companion was not armed to meet such an emergency, but he plucked from his head a bran new and shining castor, and dealt the animal a blow between the eyes which utterly blinded and amazed him, and he relinquished his hold at the very instant when he had the captain completely in his power.

"THE FATE OF GENIUS.—Who, that has ever read the clever sketches of Forest Life, and the popular poems of Charles Fenno Hoffman, will not be pained to learn that this once gifted child of genius, and a popular American author, is now an inmate of the Pennsylvania State Lunatic Asylum, near Harrisburg.—A pitiful case of incurable insanity! Mr. Hoffman was brought herenot long since, from one of the Maryland Institutions. Although at times he appears dreadfully excited, yet a ray of reason will momentarily flit through his shattered intellect, and, as the eloquent language of a gifted soul falls from his lips and reaches the ear of the awe-stricken visitor, a tear of sympathy will voluntarily gather in his eye for the fate of the unfortunate maniac! What the cause of the malady may have been we are unable to say.—Harrisburg Herald.

"TARIFF AMENDMENTS IN CONGRESS.—The first speech of the session on the subject of the tariff was made in the House of Representatives on Thursday, by Mr. Boyce, of South Carolina. He opposed the treasury project as an unjust, unequal, and unnecessarily oppressive measure.—He opposed the 100 per cent duty on brandies, &c., as a bounty to the domestic manufacturer; and also pointed out the objections to the high duties imposed under the twenty-five per cent classification. He recommended a system of gradual reduction of the rates of duty, in proportion to the amount of revenue received, until it be reduced to the wants of the country. Phila. Argus.

"A novel case under the Maine liquor law occurred in one of the Massachusetts cities lately. A jug of rum was taken by the authorities from a man and laid up to await decision. The man claimed that under the law they had a right to seize the liquor but not the jug—that was his property, and the law said nothing of it. "The legal question" was decided by turning out the liquor and returning the jug.

"The Portland Argus says an honest poor man of that city, lately found \$200. He discovered the owner, a rich man, and returned it to him, receiving the munificent reward of a crossed four pence!—'Angels and ministers of grace defend us!'" "Married Well" means now-a-days, yoking two fools together, with plenty of money or land to justify the folly.—out of date.