University of New Mexico
UNM Digital Repository

English Language and Literature ETDs | Electronic Theses and Dissertations

5-31-1948

The American Revolution as it is Revealed in the Patriotic Plays of the Period

Floyd M. Christ

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/engl_etds

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
Christ, Floyd M.. "The American Revolution as it is Revealed in the Patriotic Plays of the Period." (1948).
https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/engl_etds/115

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Electronic Theses and Dissertations at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in English Language and Literature ETDs by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO-UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
A14429 081034

FLOYD M. CHRIST

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION AS IT IS REVEALED IN THE PATRIOTIC PLAYS OF THE PERIOD

378.789
Un30chr
1948
cop.3

A14410 200736

DATE DUE

MAY 24 '89

RECD UNM MAR -6'89

DEMCO 38-297

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION AS IT IS REVEALED IN THE PATRIOTIC PLAYS OF THE PERIOD

By

Floyd M. Christ

A Thesis

In partial fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts in English

The University of New Mexico
1948

378.789
Un30cht
1948
cop. 3

This thesis, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the Graduate Committee of the University of New Mexico in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Dean V. Nichols
DEAN

May 31 - 1948
DATE

Thesis committee

Dane H. Smith
CHAIRMAN

T. M. Pearce

Marion Dargan

XX
378.791
H130 chs
1948

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	THE REVOLUTIONARY PLAYWRIGHTS	6
III.	THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION	12
	The Intellectual Battle with England	12
	The Boston Massacre	22
	The Suffering of Massachusetts	28
IV.	THE BATTLE OF LEXINGTON AND CONCORD	37
V.	THE SECOND CONTINENTAL CONGRESS	47
	The American Faith in Congress	47
	Early Attacks on Canada	51
	The Assumption of Command by General Washington	55
VI.	THE BATTLE OF BUNKER'S HILL	61
VII.	THE DEATH OF GENERAL MONTGOMERY	81
VIII.	THE WAR IN THE SOUTH	94
IX.	THE FREEING OF BOSTON	105
X.	THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE	117
XI.	BENEDICT ARNOLD AND MAJOR ANDRE	128
XII.	THE CLOSE OF THE WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH	134
XIII.	NEUTRAL AND ROYALIST PLAYS OF THE PERIOD	145
XIV.	CONCLUSION	151
BIBLIOGRAPHY		157

129895

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the fall term of 1947-48 I completed a problems course in the Department of English in which I wrote a paper, "An Analysis of the Domestic and Foreign Influences Affecting Royall Tyler's The Contrast and the Importance of this First American Drama." The purpose of the paper was to make a comparison between The Contrast and the drama of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century England, considering particularly The School for Scandal of Richard Brinsley Sheridan. In completing my study I found that, contrary to general opinion, more domestic, social, political, and historical influences from America went into the mixture of the play than ingredients from the English comedy of manners,-a fact of importance which has been to some extent neglected in the histories of the early American drama.

Since Tyler's play reveals the social conditions and problems facing the American populace during the period between the failure of the Articles of Confederation and the adoption of the Constitution and is a rousing appeal for loyalty, unity, patriotism, and nationalism, the question naturally arose in my mind as to whether during the period between the eve of the Revolution and the adoption of the Constitution there were not other plays equally important, which commented upon or recorded social conditions and historical events in such a way as to arouse the mass of Americans to definite action.

Histories of the Revolution give little or no credit to dramas of the period as historical documents, or as instruments of political propaganda and social reform. It is time that not only the existence of these plays but also their content be made a matter of record.

In this work on The American Revolution as It Is Revealed in the Patriotic Plays of the Period, I shall deal directly with the plays which were written in behalf of the American cause. I shall present my material, not according to the order of appearance of the plays themselves, but rather according to the sequence of events of the Revolutionary Period, and only those events which are covered by the plays of the period will be discussed in detail. The study as a whole will not be based on a study of the plays as plays but rather as documents revealing specific trends, political beliefs, and historical events connected with the period.

I propose to throw more light on the history of the period and to reveal more fully the intellectual as well as the physical conflict in our struggle with Britain as it is evidenced in the drama of the time. In a running history of the Revolutionary Period, I shall enliven my account of certain specific events by the use of excerpts from propaganda plays of the era.

A brief discussion of the Revolutionary playwrights of the American cause will be followed by the story of the Revolution as it is revealed in the dramatic writings of the period. I shall deal with John Leacock's The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American

Liberty Triumphant (1776) as it touches upon the factors of the eve of the Revolution, the intellectual conflict between England and Massachusetts, the center of patriotic fervor. Mrs. Mercy Warren's The Adulateur (1773) will be used to reveal the Boston Massacre, and its effect upon the colonies, and her The Group (1775), supplemented by Leacock's play, The Fall of British Tyranny, to reveal the suffering of Massachusetts as a result of the movements of General Gage. Leacock's play, along with Hugh Henry Brackenbridge's The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (1776), reveals a picturesque account of the Battle of Lexington and Concord, as well as the effect of this American success upon the people. In these latter two plays is a revelation of the American faith in the Second Continental Congress. Leacock's The Fall of British Tyranny also gives an interesting account of the assumption of command of the American forces by General George Washington, and an account of the early attacks upon Canada. Hugh Henry Brackenbridge in his The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (1776), gives an accurate report of the American and British movements in that battle. Leacock's play in addition reveals the effect of the Battle of Bunker's Hill upon a representative American family and upon the British officers. Although Brackenbridge's The Death of General Montgomery in Storming the City of Quebec (1777) has the more accurate account of the later Canadian campaign, Leacock's play is useful in revealing the effect of the Canadian campaign upon the morale of the American Army.

Another event of interest in The Fall of British Tyranny is the private war carried on in the South by Lord Dunmore. I shall use an anonymous play, The Blockheads; or, the Affrighted Officers (1776),[1] as it treats of the freeing of Boston. Thomas Paine's A Dialogue between the Ghost of General Montgomery ... and an American Delegate ... (1776) will be used as it touches directly upon the Declaration of Independence. Andre (1798) by William Dunlap will be used in revealing the treason of Major Andre as related to Benedict Arnold. The Motley Assembly (1779),[2] Royall Tyler's The Contrast (1789), and Samuel Low's The Politician Outwitted (1788) will serve as bases for my explanation of the social and political problems facing the American people as an aftermath of the Revolution. For rounding out the discussion, the study will conclude with a general review of the neutral and the royalist plays of the period.[3]

---

[1] This play may have been by Mrs. Mercy Warren.

[2] This play is credited to Mrs. Mercy Warren.

[3] Whether these early satiric dramas were actually presented or not, one can scarcely deny the dramatic effects they produced upon the average reading audience as well as upon the key men of the Revolutionary Period to whom fell the task of making decisions as to the fate of the Americans as a group. The fact that Puritan New England, Huguenot New York, and Quaker Philadelphia were inhospitable to the theatre, not to forms of written drama, may account for the popularity of the works in reading form, while they were, to say the least, inconspicuous as texts of dramatic performances. Since most of the early satires were concerned with local individuals or situations, it was logical that they were not produced in Episcopalian Virginia and South Carolina and Catholic Maryland where play-acting was welcomed.- Arthur Hobbson Quinn, A History of the American Drama from (continued)

I am indebted to the Albuquerque Public Library for the loan of Representative Plays by American Dramatists by Montrose J. Moses, to the State Library of California for the loan of The Adulateur of Mrs. Mercy Warren, to the University of Chicago for photographing the anonymous play, The Blockheads; or, the Affrighted Officers, and The Death of General Montgomery in Storming the City of Quebec by Hugh Henry Brackenbridge, and to the University of New Mexico Library for all other research materials. I am also indebted to Miss Ruth Russell, assistant librarian of the University of New Mexico and to Dr. T. M. Pearce and Dr. Marion Dargan of the University of New Mexico faculty for their help. To Dr. Dane Farnsworth Smith of the University of New Mexico faculty I owe particular thanks for his critical help and assistance.

---

[3] Continued from page 4. the Beginning to the Civil War (New York: Harper and Brother, 1923), p. 1.

The Restoration plays presented at the theatre of Charleston (1773-1774) as listed by Eola Willis in The Charleston Stage in the XVIII Century with Social Settings of the Time (Columbia, S. C.: The State Company, 1924), p. 73, may account for the closing of the theatres by Congress to establish habits of frugality.

CHAPTER II

THE REVOLUTIONARY PLAYWRIGHTS

Prior to the middle of 1774 Americans had relied upon such British pamphleteers as Thacher, Hopkins, and Dulany to furnish them with material to combat intellectually the breaches in authority made by Parliament. Americans began to realize that these English pamphlets on which, heretofore, they had been so dependent, were of no value in coping with Parliament's right to close the port of Boston, to change the government of Massachusetts Bay, or to alter the methods of trial, and that new material would be needed. As a result, American thinkers such as Thomas Jefferson, William Henry Drayton, Alexander Hamilton, James Wilson, and others proposed the doctrine that Parliament had no legislative authority over the colonies. After Lexington and Concord there were no more substantial, reasoned arguments until Thomas Paine's Common Sense.[1]

During this period a new type of satiric writing developed, which, rather than using the old method of defense of American rights, attacked specific officials. James Otis's Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved (1764) exemplifies the defense type of writing and his attack on Martin Howard is the popular type

---

[1] Philip Davidson, Propaganda and the American Revolution, 1763-1783 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941), p. 211.

of satiric writing. The colonial governors were the subject of several of these pamphlets and dramatic writings.[2]

The origin of the dramatic satire was in New England, the starting point of the Revolution. Mrs. Mercy Warren, wife of General James Warren, sister of James Otis, wrote at least two plays: The Adulateur, dealing with events in Massachusetts from 1770-1773 (published in the Boston Gazette in installments in July, 1773), and The Group, a satire on the leading Tory figures of Massachusetts in 1775. Perhaps she was also the author of The Blockheads; or, the Affrighted Officers (1776). She was a definite stimulator of the Revolutionary leaders, keeping herself in touch with current events by corresponding with Samuel and John Adams,[3] Jefferson, Dickinson, and others. Her

---

[2] Davidson, op. cit., p. 212.

[3] It was to John Adams that Mrs. Warren submitted The Group for criticism. Later, when the play was credited to Samuel Barrett, she had Adams prove her authorship. Montrose J. Moses, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, 1765-1819 (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), p. 214. A letter from John Adams to Mrs. Warren assured her that he had cleared up the matter. John Adams, The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States; with a Life of the Author (Charles Francis Adams, editor, Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1856), X, 98-100. Mrs. Warren's pen, he felt, was effective, as the following fragments stress: ...I must entreat the favor of your sentiments and Mrs. Warren's what is proper, practicable, expedient, wise, just, good, necessary to be done at Philadelphia. Pray let me have them in a letter before I go ... Ibid., IX, 339-340; ...I have had the pleasure and the honor of several letters from you, and one from an incomparable satirist of our acquaintance ..., Ibid., IX, 354; ... My most friendly regards to a certain lady. Tell her that God Almighty (I use a bold style) has intrusted her with powers for the good of the world, which in the course of his providence he bestows upon very few of the human race; that instead of being a fault to use them it would be criminal to neglect them ... Ibid., IX, 356.

works, filled with ironical comments on the power of the British to defeat the colonists, with examples of the awkwardness of British officials, and with ridicule to the friends of the British administration in America, filled the patriots with wild joy.[4]

Very little is known about John Leacock, who is believed to have been the author of The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (1776).[5] The play is of importance, for it reveals how quickly there appeared a change in the spirit of the general public in the period preceding the Revolution. It is the first American chronicle play and is the first literary work in which George Washington appears as a character.[6]

Hugh Henry Brackenbridge, author of the two plays, The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (1776), and The Death of General Montgomery (1777), was also a writer of other literary works, a jurist, and a preacher, who did his best work when the Revolution was underway. While serving as a chaplain in Washington's army, he preached six sermons to the troops with the purpose of arousing hatred of the enemy. His

---

[4] Davidson, op. cit., pp. 193, 241; Albert Bushnell Hart, Commonwealth History of Massachusetts (New York: The States History Company, 1929), II, 316.

[5] Moses, op. cit., pp. 279-280. In attributing this play to a definite author, a difficulty has arisen in that there were three John Leacocks and a Joseph Leacock in the Colonial Records of Pennsylvania. Others feel that Colonel Thomas Forrest was the author. The importance lies not in the author, but in the work.

[6] Ibid., p. 281.

literary career was given up in preference to a law practice.[7]

Thomas Paine's claim to dramatic credit lies in his A Dialogue between the Ghost of General Montgomery, Just Arrived from the Elysian Fields; and an American Delegate in a Wood near Philadelphia, published in Philadelphia in 1776. Having completed previously his Common Sense and The Crisis, Paine made General Montgomery the speaker for arguments in favor of complete independence of Great Britain. Direct argument is again used rather than satire.[8]

Royall Tyler, playwright, lawyer, soldier, author of witty articles, sprightly verse, and autobiographical experiences, upon the request made by some friends that he write a play on manners in America, wrote The Contrast (1787). Although similar to Richard B. Sheridan's School for Scandal in style and construction, The Contrast dealt with social and political situations of great importance to the Americans of the adjustment period. His service with the armed forces made him sympathetic to the soldiers' cause. From John Adams, with whom he studied law, and to whose daughter he was engaged for a time, he received his political faith in a strong central government.[9]

---

[7] Davidson, op. cit., p. 352. A worthwhile book on works of Brackenridge is Claude Milton Newlin's The Life and Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1932).

[8] Arthur Hobson Quinn, A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1923), p. 53.

[9] Moses, op. cit., pp. 433-439.

Little information is available concerning Samuel Low, the author of The Politician Out-Witted (1789), save that he was concerned with the Treasury Department and the Bank of New York, and wrote poetry with some grace. His interest in politics may be seen in some of his poems as well as in the play itself. In comparison to Tyler's The Contrast, Low's play is against the Federal Union, and the main interest and importance of the play lies in the convictions of the two opposing fathers on the subject of the Constitution.[10]

Although Royall Tyler had written a play that was American in thought, if not in style, William Dunlap is referred to as the Father of the American Theatre. In addition to his writing a History of the American Theatre, he wrote a great number of plays, one of which dealt with a Revolutionary subject, Andre (1798). Although the character, General Washington, appears in Andre, one must realize that it was not original with Dunlap, for some time before Leacock in his The Fall of British Tyranny (1776) had made use of the character.[11]

Thus one may see how the trend in the dramatic writing of Mrs. Warren, John Leacock, Hugh Henry Brackenridge, Thomas Paine, in the direction of political reform, shifted so as to include

---

[10] Ibid., pp. 353-355.

[11] Ibid., pp. 501-506.

social reform in the writings of Royall Tyler and Samuel Low, and finally turned away from that area in the work of William Dunlap, the Father of the American Theatre.

CHAPTER III

THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

I. THE INTELLECTUAL BATTLE WITH ENGLAND

Such items of British tyranny as the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act, the Currency Act, led to the theory of "taxation without representation," the Stamp Act Congress, and such pamphlets as The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved (July 23, 1764) of James Otis, American polotician and publicist. Otis was active in the "Sons of Liberty" and "Committees of Correspondence." He was able to avoid two pitfalls into which some of his contemporaries fell: namely, expressing a distinction between external and internal taxation, and expressing the idea of the sanctity of colonial charters. Even though faced with a trial for treason, he opposed direct action. The Loyalists always believed that his entire political course and the Revolution in Massachusetts arose out of frustrated family ambition. His pamphlets had more effect upon American and English thought before 1774 than any other writings. The Sons of Liberty, of which James Otis was a member, did some violent things, such as burning the home of Thomas Hutchinson, then Chief Justice of Massachusetts. Since non-importation measures were taken on the part of America, the effect on the British merchants as a whole, naturally resulted in the

demand for repeal of the Stamp Act.[1]

George III, cherishing the hope for personal power, saw that Parliament was filled with members he could control. Since the king knew very little about American affairs, the colonies suffered. Townshend revived the argument of taxation by putting through the Townshend duties.[2]

The opposition to the duties was strong in all the colonies, but particularly in the colony of Massachusetts. The work of the agitators was easy there. The royal governor had quarreled unnecessarily with the legislature many times. Samuel Adams grew in power and introduced the idea of the Circular Letter. It was decided that the best weapon against the British duties was the non-importation agreements among the colonies.[3]

John Leacock's The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (1776) is dedicated to General Gage, Lord Dunmore, and others. This play may have been written in response to Burgoyne's The Blockade of Boston, a farce against the Americans. Since the Americans were ridiculed, Leacock felt that the least Burgoyne and others could have done was to leave them some play-

---

[1] Edward Channing, A History of the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), III, 31-79.

[2] Ibid., pp. 30-31, 81-87.

[3] Ibid., pp. 97-102, 105-106.

bills or the composition itself. This tragi-comedy is actually dedicated to them, as they appear in the scenes of the play, [4] and "have the memory of such events as Lexington, Bunker's Hill and Great Bridge stamped in large American letters on their posteriors." A religious note is struck in the Preface.[5]

At the opening of the play, The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (1776), we find ourselves at St. James in the presence of the strutting Lord Bute. John Stuart, third Earl of Bute, member of the privy council, acting prime minister under George III, proposed to create a disastrous American crisis, during the commotion of which George III should be forced to abdicate, and Bute's own kinsmen, the Stuarts, should regain power. It is at this point in the life of Bute that the play opens. Bute brags concerning the way that he was able to "bask in the grandeur

---

4 John Leacock, The Fall of British Tyranny; or American Liberty Triumphant (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), p. 290. In referring to the characters of the play, I shall use the actual names of the persons concerned. The list of Dramatis Personae follows: Lord Paramount, Mr. Bute; Lord Mocklaw, Mr. Mansfield; Lord Hypocrite, Mr. Dartmouth; Lord Poltron, Mr. Sandwich; Lord Catspaw, Mr. North; Lord Wisdom, Mr. Chatham; Lord Relition, Bishop of St. Asaph; Lord Justice, Mr. Camden; Lord Patriot, Mr. Wilkes; Bold Irishman, Mr. Burke; Judas, Mr. Hutchinson; Charley, Mr. Jenkinson; Brazen, Mr. Wedderburne; Colonel, Mr. Barre; Lord Boston, Mr. Gage; Admiral Tombstone, Mr. Graves; Elbow Room, Mr. Howe; Mr. Caper, Mr. Burgoyne; Lord Kidnapper, Lord Dunmore; General Washington; General Lee; General Putnam; and minor characters.

5 Ibid., pp. 285,287.

and power of his position." Imperceptibly, but not unsuspected, he has "guided the vehicle of state," while "greasing the wheels with the nation's gold." Since he moves the royal machine, he checks off mentally each of his enemies as inferior to him. He hopes that his ambition will not fail until he has a member of his household in the highest position. A conversation of the night before has made him certain that he holds the reigns of state and that all shall be subservient to his will.[6]

Sir James Mansfield, chief justice of the English court of common pleas, later member of Parliament, enemy of the Americans, enters and does homage to Lord Bute. The latter, in return, compliments Mansfield on his hunting up little bits of law that have been of great service to him in his work. The services of Mansfield will be well repaid if he is able to find out how to pass a royal proclamation for law. A bit of law, passed during the reign of Henry VIII is quoted as usable by Mansfield. If it succeeds, Scotch politics, intrigues, influence, impudence, shall shine in "unheard of splendor" and Bute shall have "a greater lustre than Alexander the Great." Mansfield warns Bute against being too confident concerning the matter; he should never forget that he has enemies. Through bribery and flattery, Bute is certain that he can keep them silent. In the meantime, he will make

---

[6] Leacock, op. cit., I, 1, p. 291.

Mansfield his confident and reveal a secret that he has never told a person. The inducements of a pension for life and liberty to retire soon persuade Mansfield to be secretive. Although he could never gain the throne himself because of his unpopularity, Bute could succeed in getting his nearest of kin on the throne and thus dictate to him. In order to accomplish this, America must submit. Bute warns Mansfield that he must keep his eyes open and be ready to help at anytime. Individually, Lord Bute has no fear of his enemies, but should they unite their efforts, there might be some trouble. By the shaking of the treasury keys he hopes to win all to his cause.

As for his plan, he insists that the first move will be to tax America to create an eternal enmity between the two countries. By having continually to send over ships and soldiers, England will be so weakened that when the French and Spanish fleets with soldiers arrive in the channel and Lord Bute's forces from Scotland march down, there should be no trouble in taking London and making England his own kingdom.

Mansfield argues that he might run into difficulty with the foreign troops that might be called in in an emergency. That problem could easily be solved by placing those troops under bribed officers. Besides, he could have Parliament pass a law preventing the bringing in of troops other than those of the allies, France and Spain.

Still not satisfied, Mansfield worries about the people of Ireland. Bute assures him that they will be satisfied when he gives the Catholics the right to bear arms and takes that right from the minority Protestants. Too, the clergy and church officials are not beyond bribes; thus the blessing of religion might be had for their acts. Too, he will agree to give them appointments in all the towns of America. They must make the clergy believe that their income will be increased many times by such a move. Mansfield is to announce that the Privy Council will meet that evening.[7]

The following scene consists of a soliloquy by Lord Bute, in which he expresses his utter hatred for Mansfield and yet he realizes that he must be careful for he is a very valuable man to have in this group. Charles Jenkinson, joint secretary of treasury under Bute and later leader of the "king's friends" in the House of Commons, arrives and Bute informs him that he is to tell Hutchinson, colonial governor of Massachusetts then in England, that he is expected at the meeting of the Privy Council that evening.[8]

As Bute is left alone, he remarks, "I'll listen to no overture of reconciliation from any petty self-constituted congress;

---

[7] Leacock, op. cit., I, 2, pp. 291-295.

[8] Ibid., I, 2, p. 295.

they shall submit implicitly to such terms as I of my royal indulgence please to grant." His reference was to America. He further states that he shall draw in treasure from all sections in order to make his "paradise of Scotland" become a reality.[9]

As Jenkinson returns to his master, the two enjoy a good laugh at the expense of Wilkes and his friends as they pass on the street below. The jealousy which Bute feels for Wilkes shines forth in every speech.[10] John Wilkes, idol of the English people, exhibited his true character in his liberality and sympathies for the Americans as well as the English, in his belief in the Bill of Rights, and in his faith in the Whig party to which he belonged.

The meeting of the Privy Council convenes and Bute asks the men present if they had heard of the discontent being stirred up in America by pamphlets, newspapers, and other means of propaganda. He points out the way Wilkes has been acting. Things do not go as they should and he wishes to consult with them all. Mansfield thinks that there should be no freedom of the press, but feels that America should be humbled first and then there would be time to take care of Wilkes and his men. Wedderburne, completely anti-American and anti-Whig, expresses the fact that he is in favor of blood and fire to crush the rising glories of America.

---

[9] Leacock, op. cit., I, 3, p. 296.

[10] Ibid., I, 4, pp. 296-299.

She must be conquered if half of Germany has to be hired. The Earl of Sandwich would have General Gage and Admiral Graves of the British armed forces sent to bottle up Boston. The charter of Massachusetts should be annulled, their trade stopped, and then they would give up immediately. Lord North, second Earl of Guilford, leader against the Whigs, anti-American and anti-Pitt, will know from Governor Hutchinson what he thinks of the Americans. Hutchinson explains that the Americans do not have courage, but just "emotional zeal." If there were ten Americans to one British regular, he is certain that the Americans would never face the British. Lord Dartmough, William Logge, member of the Privy Council and voter against settlement of American troubles, will not underestimate the power of the Americans because of the word of a "sycophant." Foreign aid will be required to subdue the American colonies. "Since people grow humble if punished and fierce when disregarded, " North will have the Americans brought under the "iron rod" of Britain. Bute announces that North is to put the matter before Parliament and get their consent and Dartmouth is to work to get the support of Wesley. Bute, having been left alone at the end of the meeting, expresses his contentment with himself in his successful efforts.[11]

At the opening of the second act we find William Pitt (the

---

11 Leacock, op. cit., I, 5, pp. 299-302

first Earl of Chatham), Charles Pratt (Earl of Camden), and the Bishop of St. Asaph in conversation. William Pitt, the representative of the English people, succeeded in arousing the king's opposition to him by denouncing foreign subsidies as well as stating that England should not provoke until she could act. Because of the close association between Lord Bute and George III, Pitt found that he could not govern the country with the aid of public opinion alone. Although his character was excellent, his pride overpowered his principle. Charles Pratt was at one time the chief justice of the common pleas. He was a champion of constitutional liberty, was opposed to Lord North's American policy, and was the right hand man for William Pitt. The Bishop of St. Asaph is representative of the just portion of the English church. In the eyes of Pitt, the fate of England is a sad one, for he sees wisdom, justice and religion as having flown from the country. America is "suffering for her virtue while corruption rolls in wealth in England." The Bishop realized that only one voice is answered in that day and that is the voice of pleasure. Camden sees the constitution being destroyed by Bute and his men and that gratitude has also vanished from the country. Pitt feels that if wisdom, religion, and justice were joined, there might be some hope. His efforts to bring about changes through preaching from the churches had failed. Pitt realizes that the British are going to lose much at the hand of the Americans for their power has

been underestimated. War is being preached in the churches instead of peace.[12]

The following scene finds Edmund Burke (Bold-Irishman) speaking with Wilkes. Burke, considered by many to be mad, was opposed to the policies and convictions of Lord North. Throughout his life, he worked for the Whig party. Other officials were jealous of the fact that he had worked up to a high position from that of a very low station in life. Burke feels that to encourage Spain to come in and take English property is wrong. Burke says that America will suffer for a time but that she will come out on top. Wilkes can not understand how the people of Britain could have lost all the good traits in behalf of "mammon and the golden calf, Lord Bute." Both express the fear that liberty has flown from England but swear that they will continue to do all in their power to rekindle the spark that is left.[13]

The American attitude toward Bute's move is expressed in a conversation between a citizen of Boston and a selectman. It is realized that Bute is fully responsible for conditions. Should the Americans be conquered physically, their spirits still remain free.[14]

---

[12] Leacock, op. cit., II, 1, pp. 303-306.

[13] Ibid., II, 2, pp. 306-308.

[14] Leacock, op. cit., III, 1, pp. 309-310; for a further discussion see Moses Coit Tyler, The Literary History of the American Revolution, 1763-1783 (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1941), II, 198-207.

Although Lord Bute failed to gain his desired power, he did accomplish the two main purposes of the king: namely, putting an end to the war with France, and breaking up the power of the Whig group.

II. THE BOSTON MASSACRE

The Americans showed little respect for the British troops brought from Halifax to impress them. On March 5, 1770, seven British soldiers under Captain Preston fired on a group of Americans who were irritating them. Four persons were killed and the news of the Boston Massacre spread to all parts of the colonies. The citizens of Massachusetts demanded that Preston be indicted for murder. He was tried, but was defended by John Adams, who felt that the mob was just as much to blame as the British officer. Preston was released.

Although good relations were restored on repeal of the Townshend duties, Samuel Adams continued his attack on what he felt were corrupt practices in aristocratic persons who controlled the Massachusetts government. This group seemed to him to be ably represented in the person of Thomas Hutchinson, the new Tory governor. Samuel Adams started the Committees of Correspondence which became intercolonial.[15]

---

[15] Channing, op. cit., III, pp. 119-120.

The chief play of this period is the satire, The Adulateur (1773), by Mrs. Mercy Warren. The main satire of the play is aimed at Governor Hutchinson, whom enemies accused of falsity and corrupt practices which were supposed to have been revealed in a collection of his correspondence to English men of importance, which was handed over to Benjamin Franklin and eventually published. The enemies of the governor claimed that Hutchinson, pretending to be for the cause of Massachusetts rights, had encouraged Parliament in taking away the charter of Massachusetts and of corrupting the court system of that colony.[16]

The play opens in a street in Servia (Massachusetts) where we find James Otis (Brutus) and John Adams (Cassius)in earnest conversation. Otis moans for the suffering and change in his country. Young Adams feels that if the ghosts of their ancestors realized how close to slavery their precious country had come, they would rise from the graves. They would have expired rather than see their country enslaved. Old Otis is stirred by the spirit of young Adams. The youth assures him that there are thousands of others that feel the same way. As they continue their conversation, Samuel Adams (Junius) and John Hancock (Portius) enter. Otis expresses a general plea when he says:

---

[16] Arthur Hobson Quinn, A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1923), pp. 34-35.

... The cold inactive spirit
That slumbers in its chains, -- at this I tremble.
Oh! patriots rouse. The distant braches lop'd
The root now groans -- let not the thought of power,
Ungenerous thought! freeze up the genial current
'Tis not a conquest, merely, leads to fame ----
Th' attempt enobles. Yes, the suffering patriot
Tow'rs while he bleeds, and triumphs while he dies.[17]

All the men were challenged by the strong words of Otis, and will renew their efforts in the cause of liberty. Otis closes the scene with a prayer for guidance and firmness.[18]

The scene shifts to the residence of Hutchinson. Having succeeded in becoming governor, he will now be revenged for the burning of his house and the rifling of his secrets. All their rights shall vanish and the people of Massachusetts shall curse the day that gave him birth. His sycophant crowd is exemplified by Dupe. Hutchinson tells Dupe of the way people must obey his wishes or be deprived of their pensions and offices. Although he registers no fear, the rumors about the plans of the patriots worry him considerably. He will fling "all virtue from his heart that he may see his country burn."[19]

Otis and John Adams discuss the shooting of a young boy as the crowd watched a patriotic pageant. The act was one of sheer brutality on the part of a British soldier. Otis wonders how the colonials can continue to stand by and let things like

---

[17] Mrs. Mercy Warren, The Adulateur (Boston: New Printing Office near Concert Hall, 1773), I, 1, p. 7.

[18] Ibid., I, 1, pp. 508

[19] Ibid., I, 2, pp. 8-10.

that take place before their very eyes. Young Hancock enters on the scene and is all for starting a war by plunging his sword into the British. Otis, the more reasonable man, suggests that he wait and let his passion cool a little lest he ruin the whole possibility for freedom. Otis would convince him that the British were waiting for the Americans to prove themselves the disorderly mob that they had been painted. Otis is for having the man tried properly in court, even if the court system is completely corrupt. The blame then would fall on the heads of the court. At any rate, the patriots will have revealed their sense of honor. The night before, the ghost of an ancestor had appeared to John Adams and chided him for his slowness. Having been convinced by Otis that they should wait, the patriots go to attend the funeral rite of the dead youth.[20]

Again we find Hutchinson calling in Captain Preston and asking him concerning the spirit that seems to be foaming in the hearts and spirits of the patriots at that time. He will not have it thus and orders Preston to remember that he is a soldier and that he has permission to disperse the patriots with a volley of shot.[21]

The scene shifts to the street where we find Otis turning

---

[20] Warren, The Adulateur, op. cit., II, 1, pp. 10-13.

[21] Ibid., II, 2, p. 14.

over in his mind the thought of his inability to decide what is best to be done. John Adams enters with news of the murder of an innocent child by a brutal soldier. Samuel Adams and Hancock enter with the news of the Boston Massacre itself. Revenge must be had for the slaughter of the innocents.[22] This is followed by a burial procession and a last plea for spirit and strength.[23]

A meeting is being held in a spacious hall for the purpose of deciding just what to do. Samuel Adams is for stopping the slaughter with slaughter. None of them can doubt the vigor with which they are all moved at the thought. There will be danger but that is to be expected. Otis thinks they should send a delegation to Thomas Hutchinson to demand that the soldiers go or they will take up arms and make them leave. The delegation is chosen and departs.[24]

The following scene consists of a conference between Hutchinson, who does not know how to cope with the problem facing him, and Captain Preston the other man concerned. Since the people are up in spirits it might be better that the soldiers did go, at least for the time being. At any rate, Hutchinson shall have to see the delegates.[25] On his return to his hall, there is revealed

---

[22] Warren, The Adulateur, op. cit., II, 3, pp. 14-17.

[23] Ibid., II, 3, pp. 17-18.

[24] Ibid., III, 1, pp. 19-20.

[25] Ibid., III, 2, pp. 21-22.

a contrast in his hypocrisy and the true faith of the citizens as a whole.[26]

Hutchinson's revenge shall not be ruined as long as he can get witnesses that will perjure themselves for his sake. When the court does as he wishes, there is nothing for Captain Preston to worry about. Limput, one of Hutchinson's men, swears that at court he will say that the Americans had been linked in a group before the Boston Massacre took place and it was for that reason that Captain Preston used force to break up the dangerous crowd.[27]

Hutchinson and a friend discuss the remarkable outcome of the trial and how well things were arranged. Yet, upon arrival at his own home, Hutchinson is bothered by his black deeds. He must seek out his crowd of sycophants lest he be further troubled by his misdeeds. Peter Oliver, Hutchinson's chief justice, enters and is welcomed by Hutchinson. The remainder of the act is taken up with a speech by Oliver concerning his progress and position.[28]

The opening of the last act finds Otis worried concerning events. The murderer of the child, now in prison, has given up hope of release, but Oliver comes to assure him. The last part of the act is taken up with a suggested plan of American economy

---

[26] Warren, The Adulateur, op. cit., III, 3, pp. 23-24.

[27] Ibid., III, 4, pp. 24-26,

[28] Ibid., IV, pp. 26-30.

for that is what the cause of the Americans will offer the patriots instead of wages. A final plea that the time is near at hand when Americans shall be urged to take part in a move for independence and that no person should refuse, is uttered by Otis.[29]

III. THE SUFFERING OF MASSACHUSETTS

The Tea Act passed by the British Parliament in May, 1773, resulted in the Boston Tea Party. By way of retaliation for the Boston outbreak, the British passed the Intolerable Acts of 1775. These acts were aimed as Massachusetts. The Boston Port Bill blockaded the port of Boston until such time as the tea was paid for. The Massachusetts Government Act gave more power to the governor and made the membership of the upper house appointive instead of elective. An Act for the Impartial Administration of Justice allowed royal officials, who had commited offenses in Massachusetts and elsewhere, the right of petition to be transferred to England for trial. The Quartering Act, which allowed the governor to requisition buildings for military use, affected all the colonies. The Quebec Act served to increase the anger of Massachusetts and to make her more jealous of Canada to whom greater privileges had been granted.

General Gage, who replaced Governor Hutchinson and appeared

---

29 Warren, The Adulateur, op. cit., V, pp. 31-34. Further discussion may be found in Tyler, M. C., op. cit., II, 193-194.

in Boston with four regiments of men, only served to stir the enmity of the Americans for the British to a higher pitch. Regardless of differences between the radicals and conservatives, the First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, September 5, 1774. A Declaration of Rights and Grievances was drafted and sent to the British along with a note warning of more non-importation agreements should the British fail to redress the wrongs done America. While the British argued the matter, the Americans were arming themselves and spreading revolutionary radicalism throughout the colonies.[30]

The composition of The Group (1775)[31] by Mrs. Mercy Warren, was the result of the abrogation of the charter of Massachusetts and of the appointment, through royal mandamus, of the upper members of the legislature. Since the charter of Massachusetts

---

[30] Channing, op. cit., III, pp. 84-85, 128-150.

[31] The persons satirized are in parentheses:

Lord Chief Justic Halzerod (Hazelrod)	(Peter Oliver)
Judge Meagae (Meagre)	(Foster Hutchinson)
Brigadier Hateall	(Timothy Ruggles)
Hum Humbug, Esq.	(John Erving, Jr.)
Sir Sparrow Spendall	(William Pepperell)
Hector Mushroom	(Col. John Murray)
Beau Trumps	(Daniel Leonard)
Dick, the Publican	(Richard Lechmere)
Simple Sapling, Esq.	(Nathaniel Ray Thomas)
Monsieur de Francois	(James Boutineau)
Crusty Crowbar, Esq.	(Josiah Edson)
Dupe, Secretary of State	(Thomas Flucker)
Scriblerius Fribble	(Harrison Gray)
Commodore Batteau	(Joshua Loring)
Collateralis, a new-made Judge (Sylla)	(William Browne) (General Gage)

Quinn, op. cit., p. 216.

was the most sacred possession of the citizens, they violently criticized everyone that took a position under the mandamus. It is against this group of British-appointed legislators that Mrs. Warren wrote her satire.

Although Governor Hutchinson, Tory leader, had fled to England by the time the play was written, the spiteful character ascribed to him by his enemies is retained by his brother, Foster Hutchinson. All these members, not elective legislators, had certain things in common: they were conservative; they were property holders; and finally, they were the type of officials who believed in the king's right to take away the freedom of a people.

In the first act, a series of pictures of varying degrees of intensity are presented. Mrs. Warren's attack on each man varies according to the seriousness of his crime. Sir William Pepperell and Judge William Browne, who lived off their estates quietly, she let slip by with little heavy comment. James Boutineau and Richard Lechmere she paints as representative of the group who resented British interference in the government of Massachusetts until they saw that it was going to lead eventually to a separation. Both of these men had signed in 1760, the first memorial against the officers of the crown, but had then forsaken the American cause in favor of that of the British. This change of heart is revealed by Boutineau when he says:

Monsieur: Could I give up the dread of retribution,
The awful reck'ning of some future day,
Like surly Hateall I might curse mankind,
And dare the threat'ned vengeance of the skies.
Or like yon apostate - (Pointing to Hazlerod,
retired to a corner to read Massachusettensis)
To sell my country for a grasp of Gold,
But the impressions of my early youth,
Infix'd by precepts of my pious sire,
Are stings and scorpions in my goaded breast.[32]

Her attack on Peter Oliver, Foster Hutchinson, and Thomas Flucker was due to their actions as officers of the crown. Timothy Ruggles she attacks for his cruelty and roughness, and also because he failed to sign the agreement of union when he was representing Massachusetts at the first American Congress held in 1765. Ruggles reveals his true character when he says:

Curse on their coward fears, and dastard souls,
Their soft compunctions and relenting qualms,
Compassion n'er shall seize my stedfast breast
Till streaming purple tinge the verdant turf,
Till ev'ry street shall float with human gore,
I Nero like, the capital in flames,
Could laugh to see her glotted sons expire,
Tho' much too rough my soul to touch the lyre.
...
Then let them die - The dogs; we will keep down -
While North's my friend, and George approves the deed,
Tho' Hell and all its hell-hounds should unite,
I'll not recede to save from swift perdition
My wife, my country, family or friends.
George's mandamus I more highly prize
Than all the mandates of the etherial king.[33]

---

32 Mrs. Mercy Warren, The Group (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), II, 1, p. 228.

33 Ibid., I, 1, pp. 225-226.

Peter Oliver describes himself in the following words:

> Resolv'd more rapidly to gain my point;
> I mounted high in justice's sacred seat,
> With flowing robes, and head equip'd without;
> A heart unfeeling, and a stubborn soul,
> As qualify'd as e'er a Jefferies was;
> Save in the knotty rudiments of law,
> The smallest requisite for modern times,
> When wisdom, law and justice, are supply'd
> By swords, dragoons, and ministerial nods,
> Sanctions most sacred in the pandar's creed,
> I sold my country for a splendid bribe.[34]

In the second act the scene changes to a large dining hall where the members of the group have joined to discuss the merits of the British stand. The stage directions for this act are of interest:

> The scene changes to a large dining room. The table furnished with bowls, bottles, glasses, and cards. The group appear sitting around in a restless attitude. In one corner of the room is discovered a small cabinet of books, for the use of the studious and contemplative; containing Hobb's Leviathan, Sipthrop's Sermons, Hutchinson's History, Fable of the Bees, Philalethes on Philanthrop, with an appendix by Massachusettensis, Hoyle on Whist, Lives of the Stewarts, Statutes of Henry the eighth; and William the Conqueror, Wedderburn's speeches, and Acts of Parliament, for 1774.[35]

The work of Hutchinson is referred to by Daniel Leonard. It is also pointed out that patriotism is useless. General Gage, who appears in the third scene is drawn in rather a favorable light in comparison to the others. Nathaniel Thomas offers to give his house as a barrack for troops. At this offer General Gage wonders,

---

[34] Warren, The Group, op. cit., I, 1, p. 225.

[35] Ibid., II, 1, p. 227.

for he feels that Thomas should wish to protect his wife and family from the corruption with which they would come in contact on the part of the soldiers. The attitude of General Gage toward the rash steps of the British is revealed when he says:

> Sylla: And shall I rashly draw my guilty sword,
> And dip its hungry hilt in the rich blood
> Of the best subjects that a Brunswick boasts,
> And for no cause, but that they nobly scorn
> To wear the fetters of his venal slaves!
> But swift time rolls, and on his rapid wheel
> Bears the winged hours, and the circling years.
> The cloud cap'd morn, the dark short wintry day,
> And the keen blasts of roughened Boreas' breath,
> Will soon evanish, and approaching spring
> Opes with the fate of empires on her wing.[36]

As a soldier, however, General Gage must obey the orders given him. The play closes by rousing strong feeling against all figures and groups working against the liberty of the people.[37]

The suffering of Massachusetts is further discussed in John Leacock's The Fall of British Tyranny (1776). In Boston a citizen and a selectman converse. The citizen cannot understand why England treats the colonies as she does. There seems to be no gratitude shown for the help the Americans gave to the British in the French and Indian War. The selectman feels that there is a good point in the blockade; it will be the means of stamping out the desire for luxury that has been seizing Boston

---

[36] Quinn, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

[37] Ibid., pp. 42-46. Further summary of the play may be found in Tyler, M. C., op. cit., II, 194-207.

for some time. Nevertheless the citizen is glad that the colony has plenty of the necessities of life. Since Massachusetts does have plenty of these necessities, England must feel that the colony also has unknown riches that might well be taken to England. The selectman hopes that the people will not forget the harm done them in the Boston Massacre by Captain Preston and his few men; he is, however, confident that England could never overcome their spirit. Both the citizen and the selectman realize that there must be no passive feeling or slavery will result, and that their faith must be placed in the Continental Congress.[38]

In another scene a minister enters and bids the citizen and selectman good morning, although he does not know how long that privilege shall be theirs. The news of the arrival of ships and soldiers in the port had been passed on to them, but the minister brings news of the abrogation of the charter of Massachusetts, a fact which they had not as yet heard of. He mentions the religious plan that Lord Bute has set on foot to establish Catholicism in all the colonies. The minister expresses his faith in the cause of liberty and assures all that if they participate in the establishment of freedom they will be blessed. If they should die in the attempt, their souls shall be immortal. He sends forth the two men eager to arouse their sleeping friends

---

[38] Leacock, op. cit., III, 1, pp. 309-310.

to renewed efforts for liberty.[39]

Another scene takes place in a street in Boston, in which we find a Tory and a Whig in conversation. The Whig states that he thinks it was wrong to let the British arm Boston while they stood by. He is certain that it is to cut off communication between the town and the country that the British have made the move. The Tory gives the British the benefit of the doubt and claims that the Whig's fears are groundless. The Whig wonders what the British claim they are protecting the Americans from, for such is the claim made by them. His faith in the possibility of petitions is small. He advocates the use of arms to protect the American rights. The Tory registers great surprise at this suggestion, for the strength of the British is far superior to that of the colonies. The Tory would rather take matters through a legal channel than be rash about it. The Whig, however, has no faith in that means when the devil sits as judge. The Tory is accusedof destroying every bit of thought that would tend toward patriotism in the Americans. The Whig also says that the Tories terrify the ignorant with wild tales as to the power of the British in order to undermine American morale.[40]

A brief passage from Brackenridge's Battle of Bunker's-Hill

---

[39] Ibid., III, 2, pp. 310-312.

[40] Leacock, op. cit., III, 3, pp. 312-314.

(1776) refers to the plan which the British used against suffering Massachusetts. It occurs in the speech of Warren when he says:

> At first, they deem'd our charters forfeited.
> Next, our just rights, in government, abridg'd.
> Then, thrust in viceroys, and bashaws, to rule,
> With lawless sovereignty. Now added force,
> Of standing arms, to secure their sway.[41]

---

[41] Hugh Henry Brackenridge, The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918, V, 1, p. 257.

CHAPTER IV

THE BATTLE OF LEXINGTON AND CONCORD

Having made up their minds not to bow to the king, the people of Massachusetts established a Provincial Congress which assumed all the governmental powers. The fear of General Gage and of the Parliamentary Act which was to provide for the remodelling of the charter of the colony, instead of preventing, encouraged the people to support the Congress. Boston was unable to do much in the way of aiding the Massachusetts colonial government, since it was the center of British control, but the other communities heeded the request by the Congress to prepare to defend themselves and to acquire and store the necessary military supplies and equipment for carrying out such a defense.

Certain sections of Massachusetts defied General Gage to the extent that "minute men" were drilled on the village greens. Although General Gage did not wish to make an improper step and thus cause a conflict, he felt that it was his duty to seize the American military supplies at Concord and to arrest and imprison, if possible, Samuel Adams and John Hancock as arch-conspirators.[1]

---

[1] Carl Becker, The Eve of the Revolution, A Chronicle of the Breach with England (Allen Johnson, editor, The Chronicles of America Series, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920), XI, 228-229; Sir George Otto Trevelyan, The American Revolution (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1926), I, 286.

On the night of April 18, 1775, Boston patriots noticed British military forces moving toward ships. Dr. Joseph Warren, confident that he knew the destination of the troops, sent William Dawes and Paul Revere to notify the communities of Lexington and Concord.[2]

On entering Lexington at dawn, the British were surprised to find an armed company of American militiamen under the command of Captain John Parker, prepared to impede the British advance. Since the Americans were sadly outnumbered, fifty against a thousand, the British demand that they disperse was complied with by Captain Parker, but in spite of his order from some section, American or British, a shot was fired, and a battle ensued which cost the lives of some eight American soldiers.[3]

The accomplishment of the British mission at Concord was a simple one, for there they spoiled some flour, knocked the trunnions off three iron guns, burned a heap of wooden spoons and trenchers, and cut down a liberty pole. In order to prevent the Americans from causing them any trouble, a hundred regulars were left at Concord bridge. These were attacked by the Americans and forced to retreat to the main body of the British in Concord. The Americans hesitated to press on since war had not been declared, and

---

[2] Becker, op. cit., p. 229.

[3] Ibid., pp. 229-230; Hicks, op. cit., pp. 136-137.

there had been no report save from Lexington. On the departure of the British from Concord, however, time enough had elapsed to arouse the patriots from far and near, and what would have been a British retreat turned into a rout.[4]

It is interesting to note that Trevelyan accounts for the retreat in that the British troop was composed of men from many regiments and that the leader was poor at unifying the group. If aid had not come from Boston, the entire group might have been annihilated, for a strong force of Americans almost caught up with them. There were 247 British as compared with 88 Americans killed. Lord Percy, who was to have been at Lexington at eleven in the morning, came at two in the afternoon.[5]

The long awaited war had commenced and communities about Boston were the scenes of gatherings of New England militiamen who were willing to give their all and lay siege to the city of Boston. Assurances came from all parts of the colonies that Massachusetts would not lack their support.

In The Fall of British Tyranny, or, American Liberty Triumphant (1776), one finds General Gage extremely confident of the success of the project aimed at through the use of Colonel

---

[4] Trevelyan, op. cit., pp. 286-287; Hicks, op. cit., p. 137.

[5] Becker, op. cit., p. 230; Trevelyan, op. cit., pp. 288-290.

Smith and his men. He hopes to have the excellent company of Samuel Adams and John Hancock that evening, at which time he will present them with "iron ruffles" and will have them entertained in the proper British manner in the apartment of the Major Provost. The officer with General Gage cannot realize how the two Americans could refuse such a courteous invitation.[6]

A messenger enters and informs the general that Colonel Smith was defeated and is retreating. It comes as a complete shock and seems quite incredible that Britons should turn their backs before Rebels, and that Rebels should put the Britons to flight. His mental complacency and calmness completely shattered, General Gage seems extremely uncertain as to the next required move. The messenger asks that reinforcements be sent lest the retreating British regulars be surrounded. The officer, who is still present with General Gages, takes the logical step in asking that Gage draw off a detachment, form a brigade, and send for Lord Percy. The general becomes the brunt of ridicule since he says that the officer knows better what to do than he. A deep dread of the Americans seems to enshroud him as he wonders how they dared fire on the king's men. Filled with fear, he seeks the favor and protection of his guards and begs them to remain near him at all times. It seems quite

---

[6] John Leacock, The Fall of British Tyranny (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), III, 4, p. 314.

apparent that the fear of General Gages is more for his own person that that of the British cause, for his optimism at the opening of the scene turns to utter dejection and dread of retribution. The fluttering of his heart, he attempts to convince himself, is from anxiety for the welfare of the men, not fear, but he fails miserably to convince himself. By way of finding a ray of hope, he makes the decision to go forth, well surrounded and protected by his guards, to a hill of Boston from whence he may gain a glimpse of something that will cheer him and bolster up his courage.[7]

From a hill overlooking the field of battle, General Gage, and the officer of the guards, and the guards themselves all are eager to gain some hopeful glimpses. General Gage, too cowardly to watch for himself, has the officer relay to him what he sees. One can sense the feeling of courage, through power and holding the upper hand, surging back into the veins of Gage as fortune seems to favor the British. The officer rebukes him for asking God to give Lord Percy courage, for he feels that since Percy's ancestors were courageous, so must he be. Gage, however, significantly answers that his ancestors, too, were courageous. The guards are amused by the fear of their superior and decide that he is " a chimney corner general," "an old granny." At the announcement by the officer that the British are in full retreat with the possibility that Percy's artillery may have been lost,

---

[7] Leacock, op. cit., III, 4, pp. 315-316.

Gage sinks low and is sure that all is lost. Again the officer steps in and suggests that they can cover the retreat and help when the returning regulars arrive. The cringing general bids him go, gathers his guard about him, offers them bribes of "sour-crout and porter" to remain near him, and realizes that his glory is gone and his honor stained.[8]

After the defeat and flight of the regulars, the scene shifts to a section near Lexington where we find two shepherds, Roger and Dick, discussing the skirmish and the actions of the British in general.

Roger tells how early one morning while looking for his sheep, a cloud of dust caught his eye and thinking that his sheep might be in danger, he went to investigate. Instead of finding his sheep, he found a group of ravenous British wolves. Recognizing Roger as a shepherd, the British regulars, in hope of gaining spoils, sought to follow him, but having a start on them and knowing the by-ways, he escaped them. The British continued on their way to Lexington, robbing and plundering as they went along and singing in ridiculous mimickry the favorite tune of the Americans, "Yankee Doodle." Roger thought that perhaps they were singing to decoy the flocks, for the sheep as well as the shepherds were fond of the tune. A bit of yokel humor and exaggeration

---

[8] Leacock, op. cit., III, 5, pp. 316-317.

enters and Dick interrups the tale of Roger. Realizing, however, the importance of the story, he asks Roger to continue the tale. In continuing the story Roger refers to the Americans as the innocent sheep which at Lexington Green were attacked by British wolves. A play on the emotions of the people is offered in his description of the desecration of local churches. It is interesting to note that this unlearned shepherd is able to place the blame for the situation on one Lord Bute, who having ravaged and plundered England and Ireland until they could stand no more, would turn to bleed America.[9]

As a result of the treatment of Concord by the British, the ire of the general populace was aroused. Although the skirmish does not become a scene in a drama, it is, nevertheless, vividly described in the somewhat stilted words of Roger and Dick:

> Roger. Our numbers increasing, and arm'd with revenge, we in our turn play'd the man; they, unus'd to wounds, with hideous yelling soon betook themselves to a precipitate and confused flight, nor did we give o'er the chase, till Phoebus grew drowsy, bade us desist, and wished us a good night.
>
> Dick. Of some part of their hasty retreat I was a joyful spectator, I saw their tongues lolling out of their mouths, and heard them pant like hunted wolves indeed.
>
> Roger. Did you not hear how their mirth was turn'd into mourning? their fury into astonishment? how soon they quitted their howling Yankee

---

[9] Leacock, op. cit., III, 6, pp. 317-320.

Doodle, and chang'd their notes to bellowing? how nimbly (yet against their will) they betook themselves to dancing? And he was then the bravest dog that beat time the swiftest, and footed Yankee Doodle the nimblest.

Dick. Well pleased, Roger, was I with the chase, and glorious sport it was: I oft perceiv'd them tumbling o'er each other heels over head: nor did one dare to stay to help his brother - but, with bloody breech, made the best of his way - nor ever stopped till they were got safe within their lurking holes -

Roger. From whence they have not the courage to peep out, unless four to one, except (like a skunk) forc'd by famine.

Dick. May this be the fate of all those prowling sheep-stealers, it behooves the shepherds to double the watch, to take uncommon precaution and care of their tender flocks, more especially as this is like to be an uncommon severe winter, by the appearance of wolves, so early in the season.[10]

The scene closes with a long song, the general tone of which is that of ridicule of such individuals as Lord Bute, Lord North, and Lord Mansfield.

Although The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (1776) does not deal directly with the Battle of Lexington and Concord, references of noticeable importance are made to it as having affected in a definite manner both the spirit of the Americans and the British.

The effect of the American success on the morale of the American soldiers is revealed in the lines of General Putnam:

---

[10] Leacock, op. cit., I, 6, pp. 320-321.

These sons of slavery dare not advance,
And meet in equal fight our hostile arms.
For yet they will remember LEXINGTON,
And what they suffer'd on that rueful day,
When wantoning in savage rage, they march'd
Onward to CONCORD, in a firm array,
Mock music playing, and the ample flag
Of tyranny display'd; but with dire loss
And infamy drove back, they gain'd the town,
And under cover of their ships of war,
Retir'd confounded and dismay'd. No more
In mirthful mood to combat us, or mix
Their jocund music with the sounds of war.
To tempt no more unequal fight with men,
Who to oppose dire arbitrary sway,
Have grasp'd the sword: and resolute to brave
Death in a thousand dreary shapes, can know,
In the warm breast, no sentiment of fear.[11]

The rout of the British had an important effect not only upon the regulars but also upon the officers. The cowardice and extreme dread of revenge by the Americans on the part of General Gage is revealed, as in The Fall of British Tyranny (1776), for he asks that Heaven protect them, meaning himself in particular, from the rage of the Americans. It is his belief that if Mr. Bute and Mr. Dartmouth were present at the time, they would feel the situation in the same way.[12] Prior to the announcement that Bunker's Hill had been intrenched by the Americans, General Gage says that the British must attack but that it would be necessary

---

[11] Hugh Henry Brackenridge, The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), I, 1, p. 248.

[12] Ibid., IV, 1, pp. 255-256.

to allow a day in which to bolster up the morale of the men.[13]

General Burgoyne, a British officer, although he does not fear the Americans because of their success at Lexington, realizes that their victory there not only has affected the British morale but also has bolstered up the courage of the Americans to such an extent that they pushed intrenchments on Bunker's Hill. The British loss in the Lexington and Concord affair, though a relatively small one, had served to make the Americans insolent.[14]

---

[13] Brackenridge, op. cit., II, 1, p. 252.

[14] Ibid., IV, 1, pp. 254-255.

CHAPTER V

THE SECOND CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

I. THE AMERICAN FAITH IN CONGRESS

As the news of Lexington and Concord was spreading to all parts of the American colonies, the delegates to the Second Continental Congress were going to Philadelphia, where they began their work on May 10, 1775. Since directions had been given to the Colonial governors to prevent the election of such delegates to this body, the members had been chosen by means of irregular revolutionary conventions in the colonies and were representative of the more radical elements of society.[1]

Peyton Randolph, the former president, was re-seated but eventually replaced by John Hancock. The Congress, almost immediately on its convening, was called upon to approve an act of offensive warfar on the part of Benedict Arnold. Although in the minds of the majority, independence was out of the question, at least for the time being, a resistance to British armed force was another matter, and as a result, from day to day Congress passed resolutions which tended to make civil war a matter of inevitability. They

---

[1] Edward Channing, A History of the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), III, 161-162.

appointed George Washington as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. The soldiers that were blockading Boston were taken into the continental service. This selectiong of a commander-in-chief was pressed by John Adams who felt that it would unite the South to New England's wealth. The Congress also published a "Declaration setting forth the Causes and Necessity for taking up Arms." This document represented the feelings of the majority concerning the British treatment of American property rights. Once their rights had been restored, the Americans would be willing to lay down their arms. Congress also wrote a petition to the king and referred to it as the "Olive Branch."[2]

There are various references to the work of the Continental Congress as well as to the opinion of the general public toward it.

In The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (1776), the dedication to the Goddess of Liberty is in the form of a plea to the Second Continental Congress:

> Hail! Patriots, hail! by me inspired be!
> Speak boldly, think and act for Liberty,

---

[2] Channing, op. cit., III, 162-163; John Fiske, The American Revolution (John Fiske's Historical Writings, New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1902), X, 155-160; Claude Halstead Van Tyne, The American Revolution 1776-1783 (Albert Bushnell Hart, editor, The American Nation: A History, New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1905), IX, 39, 41-42; Edmund Cody Burnett, The Continental Congress (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), pp. 69-78.

United sons, America's choice band,
Ye Patriots firm, ye sav'ours of the land.
Hail! Patriots, hail! rise with the rising sun,
Nor quit your labour, till the work is done.
Ye early risers in your country's cause,
Shine forth at noon, for Liberty and Laws.
Build a strong tow'r, whose fabric may endure
Firm as a rock, from tyranny secure.
Yet would you build my fabric to endure,
Be your hearts warm - but let your hands be pure.
Never to shine, yourselves, your country sell;
But think you nobly, while in place act well.
Let no self-server general trust betray,
No picque, no party, bar the public way.
Front an arm'd world, with union on your side:
No foe shall shake you - if no friends divide.
At night repose, and sweetly take your rest;
None sleeps so sound as those by conscience blest;
May martyr'd patriots whisper in your ear,
To tread the paths of virtue without fear;
May pleasing visions charm your patriots eyes;
While Freedom's sons shall hail you blest and wise,
Hail! my last hope, she cries, inspired by me,
Wish, talk, write, fight, and die - for LIBERTY.[3]

The Patriots referred to are the members of the Continental Congress.

The general attitude toward the Congress is revealed in the conversation between a Citizen and a Selectman of Boston:

Selectman. Would all American were so zealous as you.- The appointment of a general Continental Congress was a judicious measure, and will prove the salvation of this new world, where counsel mature, wisdom and strength united; it will prove a barrier, a bulwark, against the encroachments of arbitrary power.

Citizen. I much approve of the choice of a congress; America is still young, she will be to it

---

[3] John Leacock, The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), p. 288.

> like a tender nursing mother, she will give it the paps of virtue to suck, cherish it with the milk of liberty, and fatten it on the cream of patriotism; she will train it up in its youth, and teach it to shun the poison of British voluptuousness, and instruct it to keep better company. Let us, my friend, support her all in our power, and set on foot an immediate association; they will form an intrenchment, too strong for ministerial tyranny to o'erlap.

Selectman. I am determined so to do, it may prevent the farther effusion of blood.[4]

In a later scene in the play, a Tory is requested to explain what he thinks the British are intending to do since they had taken possession of Castle William and fortified Boston. He is not able to explain the situation but will wait and hope:

> Tory, Nay, sir, I know not their business; - let us yet bear with them till we know the success of the petition from the Congress; - if unfavorable, then it will be our time.[5]

To this hope on the part of the Tory, the Whig, to whom he has been speaking, expresses his lack of faith in petitions in general.

Hugh Henry Brackenridge's The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (1776) is dedicated to Richard Stockton, a member of the Continental Congress from New Jersey. In this dedication Brackenridge expresses his fervent wish:

> ... that the Ruler of the Universe may Crown with Success, the Cause of FREEDOM, and speedily relieve our bleeding Country in whose Service YOU have distinguishedly exerted YOUR eminent Abilities, by assisting HER Deliberations in

---

[4] Leacock, op. cit., III, 1, p. 310.

[5] Ibid., III, 3, p. 312.

the grand Council of the Empire.[6]

II. EARLY ATTACKS ON CANADA

Commissioned by Massachusetts, Benedict Arnold started a move to capture Ticonderoga and Crown Point. These two forts were of strategic importance, for they guarded the approaches from Canada to the Hudson River and contained stores of ammunition, much needed by the American forces. Connecticut also sent out a party of "Green Mountain Boys" under Ethan Allen to accomplish the same mission. Allen's expedition was overtaken by Arnold's, but when Allen's troops refused to recognize his Massachusetts commission, Benedict Arnold volunteered to join them. Their surprise attack on Ticonderoga on May 10, 1775, was successful although not a blow was struck. At the same time Crown Point surrendered to Seth Warner.

The Second Continental Congress was faced with several questions that must be answered. If Allen demanded Ticonderoga's surrender "in the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress," did he have the right to do so? His commission was from Connecticut. There was hesitation on the part of Congress to approve Connecticut's placing a garrison in Ticonderoga or Crown Point, disagreement because of Arnold's and Allen's disputed

---

[6] Hugh Henry Brackenridge, The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), p. 244.

efforts, bore evil fruits.[7]

In The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (1776) the early attacks on Canada are described by General Prescott and another British officer. The scene is placed in Montreal in the earlier part of the Canadian campaign.

General Prescott, having just received information from a savage concerning the progress of the campaign, announces that the rebels successfully took Ticonderoga and Crown Point, marched immediately to besiege St. Johns, arrived there, and closely invest it. There seems to be little doubt in his mind that Montreal will be visited next by the rebel mob. The officer seems shocked and alarmed that the campaign is progressing so rapidly. General Prescott, however, assures him that the Yankee dogs will find the British prepared. The Americans, elated by their false hopes, must be checked at any cost.

A scouting officer, who enters with Colonel Allen and other prisoners, announces that they are from a scouting party of the American army besieging St. Johns. In the estimation of General Prescott the rebel prisoners are not worthy of being hanged. Colonel Allen corrects him and says that he should have said it

---

[7] Channing, op. cit., III, 171-175; Fiske, op. cit., X, 152-155; Van Tyne, op. cit., IX, 40-41, 46; John D. Hicks, The Federal Union, A History of the United States to 1865 (New York: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1937), pp. 138-139, Burnet, op. cit., pp. 67-69.

scarcely would be worth his while to attempt to do so. At this sign of insolence General Prescott becomes interested in the identity of the young officer. When he finds that the prisoner is Colonel Allen, who took Ticonderoga, he is determined to punish them severely for daring to oppose the British troops and to disobey the laws of Lord Bute. General Prescott is confronted with the counter charge that Lord Bute is the rebel since it is he who attempts to destroy the laws of the land, not the Americans, who mean to support them and defend the property rights against the tyranny of Lord Bute and his parliament. By such talks the prisoner must know that his punishment will become more severe. This warning should serve as a reminder to the prisoner that his life lies in British hands. Colonel Allen, baring his breast, pleads that the other prisoners be released, and offers for their freedom his own life, but General Prescott is not moved to accept any such rash offer. Although Colonel Allen feels that his conscience is now free, he, nevertheless, fears a more ignominious death.[8] On being taken away by the guards, Colonel Allen delivers a speech particularly characteristic of American patriotism and devotion to cause:

> Be glutted, ye thirsters after human blood - Come, see me suffer - mark my eyes, and scorn me, if my expiring soul confesses fear - Come, see and be

---

[8] Leacock, op. cit., V, 1, pp. 340-342.

> taught virtue, and to die as a patriot for the wrongs of my country.[9]

The scene shifts to a dungeon where the prisoners are brought. Colonel Allen cannot understand their being brought to and confined in such a place, with its complete lack of light. The officer, in spite of his personal distaste for the task, must carry out General Prescott's orders.[10] An expression of the torture of Allen's soul escapes him as he says to his fellow prisoners:

> Ye dear, ye brave, wretched friends! - now would I die for ye all - ye share a death I would gladly excuse you from - 'Tis not death I fear - this is only bodily death - but to die noteless in the silent dark, is to die scorn'd, and shame our suff'ring country - we fall undignify'd by villains' hands - a sacrifice to Britains' outcast bloodhounds - This, this shakes the soul! - Come then, ye murderers, since it must be so - do your business speedily - Farewell, my friends! to die with you is now my noblest claim since to die for you was a choice deny'd - What are ye about? - Stand off, ye wretches.[11]

As was ordered, Colonel Allen is clamped in irons. Colonel Allen, in order to bring out the contrast in treatment of prisoners by the British and Americans, dwells at some length on the subject by asking the officer if this is the treatment he is to receive for the lenity he showed the British prisoners. The question arises in his mind as to whether it offends the British to know

---

[9] Leacock, op. cit., V, 1, pp. 342.

[10] Ibid., V, 2, p. 342.

[11] Loc. cit.

that British prisoners, held by the Americans, were treated with friendship, generosity, honor, and humanity. A threat leaves his lips that sometime the British shall rue the day of this rash move. While chained to the damp floor of the dungeon he will pray for the success for the cause for which he had previously fought. Although the officer seems moved, he has orders that must be carried out. Lest a feeling of bitterness remain, Allen forgives the guards and tells them to carry out their orders. The scene closes with the spirit of the following lines:

> Oh! my lost friends! 'tis liberty, not breath,
> Gives the brave life. Shun slav'ry more than death.
> He who spurns fear, and dares disdain to be,
> Mocks chains and wrongs - and is forever free;
> While the base coward, never safe, tho' low,
> Creeps but to suff'ring, and lives on for woe![12]

III. THE ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND BY GENERAL WASHINGTON

On June 16, 1775, the day before the Battle of Bunker Hill, the Second Continental Congress selected George Washington as Commander in chief of the American Army. When the realization struck him that he had been chosen to fill that high office, Washington, who was present at the meeting, rose and said in all gravity:

> Since the Congress desire, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service and for the support of the glorious cause. But I beg it may be remembered by every

---

[12] Leacock, op. cit., V, 2, pp. 342-343,

> gentleman in the room that I this day declare, with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honoured with.[13]

Having refused to take any pay for his service, he did say that he would keep an accurate account of his expenses and if, at the successful close of the war, Congress wished to reimburse him, they might.[14]

The Second Continental Congress was especially wise in selecting George Washington to fill this all important post, for although only half educated he had "common sense lifted to the level of genius." When he decided on a course, he followed it, "single-minded." He was just; he was firm; and he was patient. There was no rashness or caprice that could be attributed to him. He was able to accept great responsibility and to cope bravely with unpopularity and deceitfulness. His devotion to the American cause for liberty was unceasing although he was "often anxious, but never despondent." "Defeat is only a reason for exertion," he wrote. "We shall do better next time." This unfailing spirit along with his adeptness at military administration did much for the success of American liberty.[15]

A week after having been made Commander-in-Chief, he set

---

[13] Fiske, op. cit., X, 160.

[14] Loc. cit.

[15] Van Tyne, op. cit., IX, 42-44.

out for Philadelphia and arrived at Cambridge Common on July 3, where he took command of his army. This army consisted of some 16,000 men stationed around Boston, and to it Congress added another 3,000 during the month of July. Although excellent in spirit, the army was poorly equipped and lacked discipline, no doubt because of the dissatisfaction of the officers in charge. A period of reformation was essentially necessary, and Washington was quick to put it into practice.[16]

Although faced with many problems, Washington found two situations which were extremely pressing: the British must be forced to leave Boston, and the colonies must be protected from British invastion from Canada. Because the Americans lacked a navy, a land move to some neighboring hills must be made in order to drive the British from Boston. The New England colonies had sent small expeditions of their own into Canada, but the New England governors were demanding that a part of Washington's army be sent to Canada to prevent a British invasion from that area. Washington's wise refusal to act on the advice of the governors cause him to be accused of inattention to public duty. The prudence of his refusal to break up his army and thus risk defeat in small groups, however, was proved by the fate of the independent expeditions sent to Canada by various colonies.[17]

---

[16] Fiske, op. cit., X, 160-161.

[17] Loc. cit.

Although Washington had not sanctioned the moves into Canada by Benedict Arnold and Colonel Allen, for he was not at that time Commander-in-Chief of the army, he was, nevertheless, extremely anxious about them and interested in the outcome. During this earlier part of the attack on Canada we find in The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant, George Washington depicted in his camp at Cambridge awaiting news from the campaign and planning his move to free Boston. General Lee and General Putnam are with him. The officers are informed by General Washington that the reports from northward are good: Ticonderoga, Chamblee, St. Johns and Montreal belong to the Americans. Although suffering from severe cold, fatigue, and lack of provisions, Arnold had succeeded in penetrating into Canada as far as Quebec, and General Montgomery was in full march to join him. General Lee feels that Arnold and his handful of men dared beyond mortal strength:

> ... Their courage smil'd at doubts, and resolutely march'd on, clamb'ring (to all but themselves) insurmountable precipices, whose tops, covered with ice and snow, lay hid in the clouds, and dragging, provisions, ammunition, and artillery along with them, by main strength, in the dead of winter, over such stupendous and amazing heights, seems almost unparalleled in history! - 'tis true, Hannibal's march over the Alps comes the nearest to it - it was a surprising undertaking, but when compar'd to this, appears but as a party of pleasure, an agreeable walk, a sabbath day's journey.[18]

---

[18] Leacock, op. cit., V, 3, p. 343.

General Putnam feels that posterity will stand amazed at the heroes of the new world and that the spirit of patriotism should blaze to such a height that all should be willing to brave fatigue and dangers to serve their country. Lee is confident that the British would not have dared the same move regardless of the number of Hanovarians, Hessians, Russians, Cossacks, and others whom they use. The rejoicing is great in the heart of Washington to know that the Americans were well received by the Canadians, and by the Indians, who were impressed with the hardships with which the Americans had been confronted. This friendship of the Canadians and Indians along with the joining of their forces by General Montgomery should, in the mind of General Lee, serve to inspire the Americans with new ardor. Not quite as optimistic as the others, General Putnam hopes that Heaven will be kind.[19]

A messenger arrives to bring letters and to inform General Washington that General Montgomery has joined the forces of Arnold. Having read the letters from Arnold and Montgomery to his two officers he continues:

> ... I am well pleased with their contents -- all but the behavior of the haughty Carleton - to fire upon a flag of truce, hitherto unprecedented, even amongst Savages or Algerines - his cruelty to the prisoners is cowardly, and personal ill treatment of General Montgomery is unbecoming a General - a soldier - and beneath a Gentleman - and leaves an indelible mark of brutality - I hope General Montgomery, however, will

---

[19] Leacock, op. cit., V, 3, pp. 343-344.

not follow his example.[20]

General Lee expresses a like hope but hot-headed General Putnam insists that if someone bruises his heel, he will break one's head, for it is only fair to retaliate. There is an insistence that Putnam be good natured and see the situation through. The stubborn general, however, continues to insist that it is high time to retaliate for Carleton's treatment of Colonel Allen and General Gage's behaviour. At some future date, General Putnam hopes to have Carleton at school at Cambridge (the American camp) where he shall be taught some good manners. Lee assures him that Carleton would be too clever to allow that, and at the present time things are too uncertain to make a forecast. General Putnam is forced to agree but does not wished to be laughed at forever. We leave the generals at this point as they wait for further news, and as they work out plans for the freeing of Boston.[21]

---

[20] Leacock, op. cit., V, 3, p. 345.

[21] Loc. cit.

CHAPTER VI

THE BATTLE OF BUNKER'S-HILL

Both the English and the Americans realized that the only way that the British might be driven from Boston would be for the Americans to gain control of some of the hill-tops of Dorchester or Charlestown. Because he had received reinforcements of troops and officers including General Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton, General Gage decided to have his men move out and take possession of the dangerous hill-tops. The Americans, however, who seemed to anticipate this move, sent Colonel Prescott to seize Bunker's Hill in Charlestown.

Having set out in the evening of June 16, 1775, the group of men pressed on past Bunker's Hill to Breed's Hill which they began to fortify immediately. Although this hill provided a better view of Boston, it left them open for attack from the rear, and would leave them cut off by the British in case the Americans were forced to retreat.

The British realized the simplicity of the move to the rear, but their contempt for the Americans caused them to decide on a frontal attack. The stupidity of such a move was realized when the regulars were repulsed twice and only succeeded in the third attempt when the ammunition of the patriots was exhausted

and they were forced to retreat at a cost of many lives. The actual military victory went to the British, but the more important moral victory went to the Americans. The ghastly thing about the whole battle lies in the fact that so much life was taken unnecessarily.[1]

Hugh Henry Brackenridge's The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (1776) gives quite a complete picture of the battle itself as well as the effects that it had upon the morale of the American and British troops.

At the opening of the play, we find Generals Warren, Putnam, and Gardiner in the camp at Cambridge discussing the relative positions of both sides. General Warren is impatient with the necessity of inactivity while loved ones are suffering in Boston. The hostages held by the British in the town are suffering because the Colonials are unwilling to surrender. Many Americans felt that the patience on the part of the Colonials signified cowardice. The treachery of General Gage, the British commander, is revealed in the lines:

> ... For not fond mothers or their weeping babes-
> Can move the hard heart of relentless Gage.

---

[1] Edward Channing, A History of the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), III, 164-170; John Fiske, The American Revolution (John Fiske's Historical Writings, New York: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1902), X, 160-172; Claude Halstead Van Tyne, The American Revolution 1776-1783 (Albert Bushnell Hart, editor, The American Nation: A History, New York; Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1905), IX, 32-33.

Perfidious man! Who pledg'd his oath so late,
And word of honour, that yielding him their arms,
They should receive permission to depart,
And join once more their valiant countrymen;
But now detains as hostages these men,
In low damp dungeons, and in gaols chain'd down
While grief and famine in their vitals prey.[2]

General Putnam is forced to admit that he has felt the same way and yet he realizes that odds are against the Americans. The British, he feels, are afraid to attack because of the strong memory of the rout at Lexington and Concord, the higher morale of the American troops, and the fact that there is no sentiment of fear in the hearts of the patriots.

The feeling of General Gardiner is that the situation is almost impossible:

... But well thy mind,
Sage, and matur'd by long experience, weighs
The perilous attempt, to storm the town,
And rescue thence, the suff'ring citizens.
For but one pass to that peninsula,
On which the city stands, on all sides barr'd.
And here what numbers can supply the rage,
Of the all devouring, deep mouth'd cannon, plac'd,
On many a strong redoubt: while on each side,
The ships of war, moor'd, in the winding bay,
Can sweep ten thousand from the level beach,
"And render all access impregnable."[3]

General Warren has to admit that an attempt at a venture

---

[2] Hugh Henry Brackenridge, The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), I, 1, p. 247.

[3] Ibid., I, 1, p. 248.

like that would be impossible. The blame for the situation he places upon the shoulders of the Americans who kept back their swords in hope of peace when the British were fortifying Boston. He wonders what would happen if a chosen few were to take a strategic hill and raise batteries to annoy the British fleet, and if in some hour of darkness, a band of men were to pierce their fleet and in swift boats cross the narrow tide and fire on their unguarded ranks and wither them.

> ... Low humbl'd, when the dawning light,
> Saw all his host dead men: So yet I trust,
> The God of battles will avouch our cause,
> And those proud champions of despotic power,
> Who turn our fasting to their mirth, and mock
> Our prayers, naming us the SAINTS, shall yet,
> Repay with blood, the tears and agonies,
> Of tender mothers, and their infant babes,
> Shut up in Boston.[4]

General Putnam begs that the favor of Heaven be with them in the venture they plan. Gardiner must choose 700 gallant and skilled men and intrench Bunker's Hill. When the day arrives, the other forces were to join united arms to prevent the foe from crossing the narrow tide to regain the hill.

There is in the heart of Gardiner the realization that it will cost many lives, yet he feels that it is the cause of God. He makes a vow that he will not sheath his sword again until they have taken Bunker's Hill and it has tasted "blood of many

---

[4] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., I, 1, p. 249.

slain."[5]

The scene shifts to Boston and a meeting of the British generals. General Burgoyne sums up the position of the British troops in his first speech:

> How long, brave gen'rals, shall the rebel foe,
> In vain arrangements, and mock siege, display
> Their haughty insolence? - Shall in this town,
> So many thousands of Britannia's troops,
> With watch incessant, and sore toil oppress'd,
> Remain besieg'd? A vet'ran army pent,
> In the inclosure, of so small a space,
> By a disorder'd herd, untaught, unofficer'd.
> Let not sweet Heav'n, the envious mouth of fame,
> With breath malignant, o'er the Atlantic wave
> Bear this to Europe's shore, or tell to France,
> Or haughty Spain, of LEXINGTON'S retreat.
> Who could have thought it, in the womb of time,
> That BRITISH soldiers, in this latter age,
> Beat back by peasants, and in flight disgrac'd,
> Could tamely brook the base discomfiture;
> Nor sallying out, with spirit reassum'd,
> Exact due tribute of their victory?
> Drive back the foe, to Alleghany hills,
> In woody valleys, or on mountain tops,
> To mix with wolves and kindred savages.[6]

General Gage, confident that this paradox would dissolve itself, describes the valor of the Americans as being fired with the zeal of fiercest liberty, and having no fear of death that can stop their rage. A powerful factor in the favor of the Americans lies in the fact that the clergy with the Bible, prayers, and exhortations bear up the American fortitude by saying that those

---

[5] Ibid., I, 1, pp. 249-250.

[6] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., II, 1, p. 250.

who die in the cause will walk in Heaven with the spirits of the just. Gage feels that now British soldiers must admit, as the regulars from the experience at Lexington did, that the Americans were not the untrained herd that the British had painted them to be.

In Howe's estimation that picture should never have been painted for Burgoyne should have remembered the support that the British received from the Americans in such places as Louisburg, Canada, and Havannah. Although his information was not first hand, his reports had come from his brother who had commanded some New England men at the time of his death in battle and who was remembered by the erection of a costly monument to his honor, paid for by these same New England men. Grief had entered the heart of Howe, for he somehow did not wish to take up arms against the men his brother had loved. His wish is that the lot had fallen to some other general rather than himself. Since, however, he is a soldier, he realizes that it is his duty to wipe the defeat at Lexington out of the minds of the British soldiers and to eradicate the optimism that it created in the Americans.

Howe is confident that the flow of reinforcements from England will add new vigor to the Royal Arms and allow them to crush the rebellion while it is still in its infancy. It is his belief that an appeal to the pride of the British regulars and a stress placed on the possibility of continued ridicule of the

British by the Americans will arouse the troops to renewed efforts.

Bowing to Howe'd judgment and skill in arms, General Gage asks that one day be used for bolstering up the courage of the men through offers of bountiful reward from the property confiscated from the Americans. He then explains the plan:

> ... Let first,
> Brave Howe, and Clinton, on the western point,
> Land with the transports, and mean time Burgoyne,
> With the artillery, pour sharp cannonade,
> Along the neck, and sweep, the beachy plain,
> Which lies to Roxborough, where yon western stream,
> Flowing from Cambridge, mixes with the Bay.
> Thus, these AMERICANS, shall learn to dread,
> The force of discipline, and skill in arms.[7]

Having arrived at Bunker's Hill with his seven hundred men, Gardiner boosts their spirits by telling the patriots that they are a selected group and that they are to show that they were not chosen in vain. Having outlined the fortifications, they are to commence work so that at day break:

> Then gallant countrymen, should faithless Gage,
> Pour forth his lean, and half-starv'd myrmidons;
> We'll make them taste our cartridges, and know,
> What rugged steel, our bayonets are made of;
> Or if o'er charg'd with numbers, bravely fall,
> Like those three hundred at Thermopylae,
> And give our Country, credit in our deaths.[8]

In Boston, General Gage wonders why he can't have tran-

---

[7] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., II, 1, pp. 252-253.

[8] Ibid., III, 1, p. 253.

quility and peace of soul when he knows:

> Fair honour, waits on thee, renown abroad,
> And high dominion, o'er this Continent,
> Soon as the spirit, or rebellious war,
> Is scourg'd into obedience ...[9]

He can not quite understand how the suffering of the hostages should affect him when the mighty cause of George and Britain is at stake, for in protecting this cause he has the right to use the iron rod to exact submission. Why should he worry what they call him so long as he accomplishes his purpose and yet he says:

> ... Was that a gun,
> Which thunders o'er the wave? - Or is it guilt,
> That plays the coward, with my trembling heart,
> And cools the blood, with frightful images.
> O guilt, thy blackness, hovers on my mind,
> Nor can the morning dissipate their shades.[10]

Then an announcement is made by him concerning the arrival of morning over Bunker's Hill.

General Burgoyne enters with the announcement that the rebels, grown insolent from their success at Lexington, had ruined the British plan of attack, for the night before they had pushed intrenchments on the top of the hill. A ship-boy on mast duty had reported it, but he has also reported that there was only one small regiment there. Although he feels no fear of

---

9 Ibid., IV, 1, p. 254.

10 Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., IV, 1, p. 255.

trouble, Burgoyne asserts that speed is essential in preventing increased confidence on the part of the rebel troops. A reference is made that the rebels are still at work for the sound of the shovels may be heard.[11]

At the order of Howe that a ship sail up the narrow bay and prevent assistance from reaching the 700 rebels, Burgoyne and Howe leave with the realization that the Americans are to be sacrificed to the "god of Britain's glory." General Gage reveals his fear and dread of the American rage and wishes that Lord Bute and Mr. Dartmouth could have a taste of the situation. They they would pity his infirmity.[12]

Howe in his rallying talk to his men stresses the fact that it is their duty to crush the ingratitude of the Americans, for the British having established these colonists and having protected them from the French and Indians. He bolsters their courage with the fact that the Americans are outnumbered, and the promise of reward of property and even high estate. With the words, "George our soverein and Britannia's arms" they charge.[13]

On Bunker's Hill, where the colonial troops are assembled, General Warren appeals to his men:

---

[11] Ibid., IV, 1, p. 255.

[12] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., IV, 1, p. 255.

[13] Ibid., IV, 2, pp. 256-257.

Three thousand, 'gainst seven hundred, rang'd this day,
Shall give the world, an ample specimen,
What strength, and noble confidence, the sound
Of Liberty inspires ... [14]

The pride of the soldiers is aroused by reminding them that America is self-made and that no credit is due to Englad. Warren outlines the four steps of progress on the part of the British to take away their rights: (1) charters forfeited, (2) rights in government abridge, (3) viceroys sent to rule them, (4) now force. He hopes that a remembrance of the Boston Massacre will stir the men to extra effort. The Americans might have lived under British oppression but Heaven forbade it.

... These are the men,
Who in firm phalanx, threaten us with war,
And aim this day, to fix forever down,
The galling chains, which tyranny had forg'd for us,
These count our lands and settlements their own,
And in their intercepted letters, speak,
Of farms, and tenements, secured for friends,
Which if they gain, brave soldiers, let with blood,
The purchase, be sealed down. Let every arm,
This day be active, in fair freedom's cause,
And shower down, from the hill, like Heav'n in wrath,
Full store of lightning, and fierce iron hail,
To blast the adversary. Let this ground,
Like burning Aetna or Vesuvius top,
Be wrapt in flame - The word is, LIBERTY,
And Heaven smile on us, in so just a cause. [15]

Gardiner in bringing his men up to the engagement gives the following advice:

---

[14] Ibid., V, 1, p. 247.

[15] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., V, 1, p. 258.

Fear not, brave soldiers, tho' their infantry,
In deep array, so far out-number us.
The justness of our cause, will brave each arm,
And steel the soul, with fortitude, while they,
Whose guilt hangs trembling, on their consciences,
Must fall in battle, and receive that death,
Which, in high vengeance, we prepare for them.
Let then each spirit, to the height, would up,
Shew noble vigour, and full force this day.
For on the merit, of our swords, is plac'd,
The virgin honour, and true character,
Of this whole Continent: and one short hour,
May give complexion, to the whole event,
Fixing the judgment whether as base slaves,
We serve these masters, or more nobly live,
Free as the breeze, that on the hill-top, plays,
With these sweet fields, and tenements, our own.[16]

He then asks the sons of Massachusetts-Bay, New Hampshire, and Connecticut if they will be driven from their lands to live with the Indians or till the soil for the British or will they give their all in fight.[17]

Sherwin arrives to announce to General Gage the British loss and to ask for a thousand men. Gage, much frightened and having made up his mind to find a safe hiding place, leaves the next move up to Burgoyne. Burgoyne, in turn, places Clinton in charge of the thousand men and warns him to hurry lest the affrighted British regulars refuse to climb the hill again.[18]

Warren, mortally wounded, makes a plea to his men:

---

[16] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., V, 2, pp. 258-259.

[17] Ibid., V, 2, p. 259.

[18] Ibid., V, 3, pp. 259-260.

... But O my Countrymen, let not the cause,
The sacred cause of liberty with me
Faint or expire. By the last parting breath,
And blood of this your fellow soldier slain,
Be now adjur'd, never to yield the right,
The grand deposit of all-giving Heaven,
To man's free nature, that he rule himself ... [19]

Nothing should be satisfactory save the driving out of the British. Actually his men should rejoice at his death, for he will mingle with the great who had stood against tyranny. As he dies he says:

... Fight on, my countrymen, be FREE, be FREE.[20]

The reinforcements landed, the order is given to burn Charlestown that they may climb the hill under the cover of the smoke. General Howe in rallying his troops attempts to encourage them in three ways: (1) The many ships of war are on the British side; (2) Clinton's reinforcements will make them outnumber the Americans and necessitate only the casting of a stone by each regular to enable them to take the hill; (3) The smoke from burning Charlestown will cover their advance. The attempt is necessary as a chance to wipe out the inglorious day of the Battle of Lexington and Concord.[21]

Gardiner points out to the Americans how an evil cause can unman the spirit, and strike down the soul, as was illustrated in the British. The death of Warren must be avenged by the destruction

---

[19] Ibid., V, 4, p. 260.

[20] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., V, 4, p. 261.

[21] Ibid., V, 5, pp. 261-262.

of a whole British regiment. He closes with the words:

> ... God is our Aid,
> Give them full scope, to just revenge this day. [22]

General Howe attempts to rally his troops on the Bay Shore after being repulsed for the second time. His defeat is humiliating, but he calls upon his British troops to rally:

> Back to the charge, once more, and rather die,
> Burn'd up, and wither'd on this bloody hill,
> Than live the blemish of your Country's fame,
> With everlasting infamy, oppress'd.[23]

Since the Americans were hindered by a lack of ammunition and unless the British were afraid of the very aspect of the Americans, no reasons existed as to why the British should not succeed in the third attempt. They must return and rescue honor even if their men must be driven by their own officers:

> Let some brave officers stand on the rear,
> And with the small sword, and sharp bayonet,
> Drive on each coward that attempts to lag,
> That thus, sure death may find the villain out,
> With more dread certainty, than him who moves,
> Full in the van, to meet the wrathful foe.[24]

Gardiner is desperately wounded and is borne off the field by two soldiers. Not willing to give up the fight, he wishes to be taken to a surgeon that his wounds may be bound and to allow his return to battle. His soul he would render up if he could

---

[22] Ibid., V, 6, p. 262.

[23] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., V, 7, p. 262.

[24] Ibid., V, 7, p. 262.

fight for a few moments longer.[25]

General Putnam takes over command of the hill as he says to the American Army:

> Swift-rising fame, on early wing, mounts up,
> To the convexity of bending Heaven,
> And writes each name, who fought with us this day,
> In fairest character, amidst the stars.
> The world shall read it, and still talk of us,
> Who, far out-number'd, twice drove back the foe,
> With carnage horrid, murm'ring to their ships.[26]

The Americans must receive the attack once more to avenge the death of Warren and the wounding of Gardiner:

> ... Let every piece
> Flash, like the fierce-consuming fire of Heaven,
> And make the smoke, in which they wrap themselves,
> "A darkness visible." - Now once again,
> Receive the battle, as a shore of rock
> The ocean wave. And if at last we yield,
> Leave many a death, amidst their hollow ranks,
> To damp the measure, of their dear-bought joy.[27]

The Americans are forced to withdraw because of the lack of ammunition and men. Richardson, a young officer of the British army announces with a loud cheer that the day belongs to the British. Clinton admits that the victory is theirs but says that the price was too great. Some fifteen hundred men had been killed and wounded. The fire from the American muskets was so great that it

---

[25] Ibid., V, 8, p. 263.

[26] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., V, 9, p. 263.

[27] Ibid., V, 9, p. 264.

seemed that Heaven was on the side of the Americans and wished to prevent the British from taking the hill. Whole ranks of men had been mowed down and even after Warren had been killed and annumition run low, they fought with stones and boulders. After Gardiner had been wounded, the left wing gave way and General Putnam had to withdraw with the men, many of whom were slain in attempting to get back to safety. The horror of the day was to him unparalleled.[28]

Lord Pigot lists the British casualties in officers as Abercrombie, Pitcairs, Sherwin, as well as all but seventeen of the Welsh fusileers, all of the grenadiers save a few.

> ... Should ev'ry hill by the rebellious foe,
> So well defended, cost thus dear to us,
> Not the united forces of the world,
> Could master them, and the proud rage subdue
> of these AMERICANS.[29]

Howe accounts for the valor of the Americans in terms of their British ancestry but cannot account for the state of mind of the Americans who chose to spend that valor in the fantastic cause of liberty. Warren, says Howe, shall receive an honorable burial to show the British troops how much they loved, even in the foe, true worth and noble fortitude.

Burgoyne entering from Boston describes the battle as seen by a multitude of people from chimney-tops and steeples of Boston.

---

[28] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., V, 10, pp. 264-265.

[29] Ibid., V, 10, p. 265.

The fire from the Americans atop the hill, the fire from the ships, and the men charging under the cover of the smoke constituted a scene as spectacular as the burning of the town. Such a panorama might not be encountered again until the end of the world.[30]

"The Epilogue, written by a Gentleman of the Army, Supposed to be spoken immediately after the Battle; by Lieutenant Colonel Webb, Aide-de-camp to General Putnam" is a plea for continued effort toward freedom:

> ... Is FREEDOM master'd by our late defeat,
> Or HONOUR wounded by a brave retreat?

There is a play on the emotions for the loss of loved ones. A description of the plundering of the bodies, and the refusal of Christian burials to the fallen were to serve to stir up hatred for the British. Although the spirit of Warren had soared above, his blood still remained on earth and demanded vengeance. There was no fate that would not be too kind for the British:

> ... The sword is drawn, in peace no more to rest,
> Till justice bathes it in some tyrant's breast.
> Honour my weapon with the glorious task,
> And let me stab, 'tis all the boon I ask.
> Kind pow'rs, beneath your all-protecting shield,
> I now unsheathe my sword, and take the field
> Sure of success, with this sweet comfort giv'n,
> Who fights for FREEDOM, - fights the cause of HEAV'n.[31]

---

[30] Ibid., V, 10, pp. 265-266.

[31] Brackenridge, Battle of Bunker's-Hill, op. cit., p. 268.

"An Ode on the Battle of BUNKERS-HILL. Sung and Acted by a Soldier in a Military Habit, with his Firelock, &c. In the Same Measure witha Sea Piece, Entitled the 'Tempest'" relates in song form the scenes of the battle itself as well as the aftermath of it in mourning. Although a defeat, nevertheless, patriotic souls felt that it could not be compared to the thousand victories to come.[32]

In The Fall of British Tyranny: or, American Liberty Triumphant (1776), there is not only a reference to and description of the Battle of Bunker's Hill but also two matters of interest are brought to light.

On the morning after the battle Clarissa, wife of General Warren comments on the beauty of the morning in comparison to the day before:

> Such a scene of war - of tumult - hurry and hubbub - of horror and destruction - the direful noise of conflict - the dismal hissing of iron shot in volleys flying - such bellowing of mortars - such thund'ring of cannon - such roaring of musketry - and such clashing of swords and bayonets - such cries of the wounded - and such streams of blood - such noise and crush of houses, steeples, and whole streets of desolate Charlestown falling - pillars of fire, and the convulsed vortex of fiery flakes, rolling in flaming wreaths in the air, in dreadful combustion, seemed as tho' the elements and whole earth were envelop'd in one general, eternal conflagration and total ruin, and intermingled with black smoke, ascending, on the wings of mourning, up to Heaven, seemed pitiously to

---

[32] Ibid., pp. 269-272. For further summary see Moses Coit Tyler, The Literary History of the American Revolution 1763-1783 (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1941), II, 211-218.

> implore the Almighty interposition to put a stop to such devastation, lest the whole earth should be unpeopled in the unnatural conflict ...[33]

She then reveals a foreknowledge that all may not be well for her.

A Neighbor (a spectator of the battle) enters and begins to relate the events of the battle. Clarissa, impatient, cuts him short each time. He does tell of the valor of Warren and the withstanding of the attack but finally reveals the fact that not only Warren but her son and brother were also killed. The news being too much for her, she faints, whereupon another Massachusetts woman has the opportunity to reveal the situation of the family as being typical of others concerned with the Revolution:

> ... A dreadful loss! a most shocking scene it was, that brothers should with brothers war, and in intestine opposition meet, to seek the blood of each other, like dogs for a bare bone, whoso oft in generous friendship and commerce join'd, in festivals of love and joy unanimous as the sons of one kind and indulgent father, and separately would freely in a good cause spend their blood and sacrifice their lives for him.[34]

The blame, according to the neighbor, should be placed upon General Gage, whom he refers to as Cain. Mrs. Warren interrups his comments by regaining consciousness and announcing that all she has left is meditation on the virtues of the lost men:

Eager the patriot meets his foe

---

33 John Leacock, The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), III, 7, pp. 324-325.

34 Leacock, op. cit., III, 7, p. 327.

With full intent to give the fatal blow;
The cause he fights for animates him high,
His wife, his children and his liberty:
For these he conquers, or more bravely dies,
And yields himself a willing sacrifice.[35]

The effect that the Battle of Bunker's Hill had on the British is revealed in a council of war held in Boston after the battle. General Gage had hoped that with reinforcements of men and three accomplished and experienced generals the rebels might be crushed and that he might return to England as a hero and gain laurels for himself. Howe informs him that he need not worry about gaining laurels in respect to victories in America. Howe is ridiculed for having claimed, on landing in America, that all he needed was a little elbow room to suppress the rebels. Burgoyne is ridiculed for having hoped to live in luxury surrounded by entertainment. Lord Percy seems to be pleased with the whole situation for it releases him from some of the ridicule he received at Lexington. He claims that Howe and Burgoyne "had to dance harder than he, and had to pay the fidler too." Clinton is finally able to settle the argument between the offended generals and Gage. Burgoyne accuses Gage of being joyful over the whole affair because he had three generals to share the ridicule with him this time. Again the quarrel bursts forth, but Graves settles it by stating that a quarrel might lead to outright fighting within the group which would destroy their

---

[35] Ibid., III, 7, p. 328.

purpose.

When Gage asks what they are there for, all generals are shocked, for they realize that he does not even know himself. He does make the revelation that in his estimation any further attempt against the Americans at the time would be useless. They discuss the battle and loss of men. Gage finally decides that they must act on the defensive for the winter period. Graves does not feel that it is possible to prevent their stomachs from raising civil war. He feels that their plight would make marvelous material for the American papers. Gage informs them that he intends to be recalled during the winter and that he will lay the problem before the Parliament. Burgoyne decides that he will also be recalled since there is no entertainment in America and he is not used to the colonial bill of fare. Graves says that the council should be referred to as the "council of famine," not war. Since it is late, the meeting is adjourned until nine o'clock the next morning when Gage hopes that the generals will have made up their minds what they should do. Graves closes his remarks with an accusation that Gage has been hording supplies and excellent stolen food stuffs and he wishes that he would share it with his generals. Nothing of any importance was accomplished save talk.[36]

---

[36] Leacock, op. cit., IV, 7, pp. 336-340.

CHAPTER VII

THE DEATH OF GENERAL MONTGOMERY

When Ticonderoga and Crown Point fell to the Americans, Congress felt that the way to Canada was open. It authorized Richard Montgomery and Benedict Arnold, with separate commands, to push farther north into Canada. When in November, 1775, Montreal had been taken by Montgomery, he marched to join forces with Arnold in an attack on Quebec. The attack proved fatal for Montgomery was slain along with many others. The winter siege also proved useless. It had been hoped by Congress in authorizing the commands to Montgomery and Arnold that the French might help the Americans. The disappointment was great when they revealed little or no interest. The British were so ably commanded by Sir Guy Carleton that Montreal fell and Arnold was forced back to Crown Point. Although the attack on Canada failed in its main point, it did, however, divide Howe's army into two parts, and thus deprived him of the force necessary for the conquest and occupation of the Middle States in 1776; and the attempt to reunite the two parts of his army in 1777 brought about the first great disaster to the British. It also aroused in the mass of American people a desire to make a more serious attempt at breaking with the British Empire. The event itself

influenced the authors of a number of the dramatic pieces of the time.[1]

At the time when Hugh Henry Brackenridge had written The Death of General Montgomery in Storming the City of Quebec (Brackenridge Academy, Maryland, 1777) he was chaplain in the American Army. The dedication of the work is to Thomas Mifflin, Esquire of Pennsylvania. In the introduction it is stated by Brackenridge that the publication of the drama at that time might be of more help to the American cause than if he waited until after the danger had passed.[2]

After a somewhat lengthy prologue that discusses the factors leading up to the campaign, we turn to the opening scene in which Montgomery is found in conference with Arnold. Since the night is dark and snow is falling, Montgomery feels it is wise to wage their attack on the city of Quebec on the third hour after midnight. By tomorrow it is hoped that the British and savages will have been driven from the city. The Americans in particular are

---

[1] Edward Channing, A History of the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), III, 242-243; John Fiske, The American Revolution (John Fiske's Historical Writings, New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1902), X, 196-199; Claude Halstead Van Tyne, The American Revolution 1776-1783 (Albert Bushnell Hart, editor, The American Nation, a History, New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1905), IX, 46-47.

[2] Arthur Hobson Quinn, A History of the American Drama to the Civil War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1923), pp. 52-53.

bitter because of a ceremony held by the British in Quebec. An ox was killed and the Indians were allowed to taste the blood which represented the blood of a citizen of Boston. At this time the Indians made a vow that they would not lay down their arms until a real citizen of Boston had been sacrificed. The ox was then roasted and eaten. The Continental Congress wished that this story be spread about to arouse the Americans. Arnold had heard the story and realized that such tribes as the wild Onandago, the fierce Outawae, the aged Hurons, Mohawks, Oneidas, Shawnees participated in the ceremony and now fought with the British against the Americans. He assures General Montgomery that all his men have been with him before and are tried and true. The order to attack will be received with joy by them. The praises of the men who come from all parts of the colonies, as far south as Virginia, and after fighting in Massachusetts took to Canada's cold climate, fall from the lips of Montgomery. Some of the great hardships undergone are related by Arnold. The men, now camped on Abraham's heights, await the general's orders. Since the American cannonade has proved useless, an attack is necessary. Arnold's greatest hope is that the city shall be theirs. Montgomery goes over the plan very carefully. Livingston is to go to the main palace gate and thus gain the attention of the British. The main force at the same time will storm the lower town. The general himself will pass along the precipice and Arnold will attack at the

conflux of the St. Charles and St. Lawrence Rivers. His hopes are high for victory. All in Arnold's power shall be done to see that Montgomery's orders are carried out.[3]

The scene shifts and we find Montgomery in conversation with Macpherson, his aide-de-camp. The general has been thinking that they are fighting on the same ground on which the great Wolfe lost his life. Although he has no faith in superstition, Montgomery has a premonition that it may be the end for him too. His feeling as to death extends so far as to include Macpherson among the slain. Even though their bodies die, their souls shall live immortal. When he had entered the service Montgomery had contemplated death as his lot. Macpherson feels likewise, but hopes that if he does die, he will be remembered as a hero on equal standing with a hero of the Battle of Lexington and Concord. He is given messages to deliver to Colonel Campbell and Livingston.[4]

Montgomery contemplates death, fears it not, but does dislike the idea of leaving his wife and family. All must, nevertheless, be resigned to the will of Heaven. His wife, children, and friends he leaves in the protection of God.[5]

---

[3] Hugh Henry Brackenridge, The Death of General Montgomery in Storming the City of Quebec (Norwhich: J. Trumbull, 1777), I, 1, pp. 11-15. (Reproduced by photography by the University of Chicago.)

[4] Ibid., I, 2, pp. 15-16.

[5] Brackenridge, The Death of General Montgomery, op. cit., I, 3, p. 17.

As a new act opens Cheeseman, fearing that death may also be awaiting him, has worn his neatest clothes and carries a purse of gold to take care of his burial expenses. Perhaps his burial will suit his appearance. If they must die, Macpherson hopes that they will be "wept for by the people" and "written about by the bards." They take a final farewell of each other.[6]

In the following scene, Burr, an aide-de-camp to Montgomery, tells Macpherson that he likes the idea of the attack and wishes to be near the general who is always at the lead in the thickest of the battle. One should be glad to fight for such a cause. Macpherson recounts how his old father had encouraged him to take the sword against the British lest slavery be the fate of the colonies. The ingratitude of the British for aid received of the colonists during the French and Indian War must be kept fresh in the minds of the men.[7]

At the opening of the third act we find Captain Hendricks, Oswald, and the Chaplain, the Reverend Samuel Spring, talking together. Oswald is certain that no miracles will take place. The Chaplain assures them that God can change situations and cause events to happen. He presents the innocent with reward and the wicked with punishment. At this statement Oswald rejoices for

---

[6] Ibid., II, 1, pp. 17-19.

[7] Ibid., II, 2, pp. 19-21.

[8] Brackenridge, The Death of General Montgomery, op. cit., III, 1, pp. 22-24.

for surely the British will receive their just reward. The British must be punished for the scorn and rage of the king and his parliament. As to the events of the hour, the Chaplain will not say, but he is certain that the American cause will win in the end. Hendricks, as the others, will accept fate but he does wish that he might see home once more. Oswald and the others must go to join Arnold and the group to scale the wall.[8]

Having joined Arnold and the scaling party, Hendricks is informed that he is to remain and guard the camp. The young officer begs that someone, who would rather be allowed to remain behind, be put in charge and he be allowed to go into battle. Arnold reconsiders and will allow Hendricks to go with him into battle and will give him an opportunity to reveal his true worth as a leader by placing some men under his command.[9]

The scene shifts to the position of Montgomery's men. Colonel Campbell awaits orders from the general. A little time must elapse, but in the meantime they all should think of the wrongs done them, especially the inhumanity of George. Montgomery feels that the feeling of hatred on the part of the British for the Americans might just as well have been a feeling of love and and respect. At any rate the hearts of the men must be stirred to

---

[8] Brackenridge, The Death of General Montgomery, op. cit., III, 1, pp. 22-24.

[9] Ibid., III, 2, p. 25.

a fighting pitch.[10]

Arnold speaks to his men, complimenting them on their bravery and urging them to make a supreme effort in the task ahead.[11]

At the same time General Montgomery stresses the fact to his men that this attack on Quebec is more important than Ticonderoga, Chamblee, St. Johns, Crown Point, or Montreal; for it may mean adding Canada to the thirteen states. The French, he feels, would be glad of it for their hatred for the British is as great as that of the Americans. If the Americans show the courage that the justness of the cause should instill in them, they should be avenged for the ill treatment by the British. Again a reference is made to the killing of the ox and the Indian blood ceremony. Since a prayer must be offered first, the Chaplain is summoned. He prays that the Lord change the idea of the British as to the attempt to enslave the colonies. He also begs that forgiveness be granted for the American sins, lest the shadow of their sins cast a shadow on the success of that day. A plea is made that power be given to each heart. Montgomery places his faith in God and will march, without the chaplain, who also wishes to bear a sword. Whether or not Montgomery will allow it, the Chaplain will go into battle. Permission is, however, granted and

---

[10] Brackenridge, The Death of General Montgomery, op. cit., III, 3, pp. 26-27.

[11] Ibid., IV, 1, pp. 27-28.

Montgomery refers to the chaplain as the "aide-de-camp of God," to the Americans.

A messenger arrives and discloses that a deserter from the Americans had informed the British of the American plan of attack. The general hopes, now even more than before, that grace may be on their side. The guide advises them to go along the precipice and along the redoubts. They proceed in a march, but Montgomery wonders why his men stop. He decides to go to the front and lead. Burr is to remain and take care of the troops while Montgomery leads the attack on the first redoubt. The Americans are chided for their slowness. The post falls and the second barrier stormed, but the general does not get the speed from his men that he desires. He decides he must talk to them lest they be forced to suffer ignominy. The "crucial juncture" has been reached and he will go to the advance to see that it is carried to a successful conclusion. Cheeseman is skeptical of the general's making this move lest his great value be lost. He is thanked for his remarks and concern but because of the backwardness of the troops, the general feels that he must take the lead. Death to him would be more acceptable than ignominy.

Burr feels Heaven should be wrapped in clouds at Montgomery's death. The officer clasps the slain general to his bosom in the hope that some of the great blood would stain his clothes that he might take it back with him to the colonies to

arouse them to avenge his death. The corpse must not be left for the British. On glancing about him he finds Macpherson and Cheeseman are slain. The chaplain persuades the young officer that the slain are beyond the power of tyrannical hands. The present problem of importance is to make their own escape. An obscure form appears on the battlefield and Burr begs it to "shed a tear for the slain." The ghost of General Wolfe comforts the young officer and tell him that "from this battle shall spring the idea of separation." One great council would be the ideal way to pool the strength of the thirteen colonies when that separation does take place. As a punishment for their crimes, the British should be struck from the continent.[12]

At the beginning of the final act Arnold explains to his men that the taking of the city of Quebec will furnish the American forces with much needed ammunition and supplies. In the ensuing battle Arnold's ankle is shattered and he is carried from the field. Morgan, taking over for Arnold, encourages the men by speaking of the success with which Montgomery must have met the British. The soldiers will drive on. Young Hendricks is placed as commander of a group of riflemen and ordered to charge. Oswald announces that the barrier is theirs but that a great number had been slain. Captain Lamb orders that the wounded, even the

---

12 Brackenridge, The Death of General Montgomery, op. cit., IV, 2, pp. 28-29.

British, be cared for immediately. The surgeon and his men obey. Captain Hendricks offers to give one hundred Continental bills to the man who first scales the wall and places the flag of thirteen blue and ivory stripes there. While uttering this offer he is shot by the British. The weight of Hendrick's death lies heavy on Oswald's heart.[13] To add to the grief, Colonel Maclean of Montgomery's force announces the death of the general. Things seem to be quite hopeless.[14] Major Meggs announces that they are surrounded by the enemy. Captain Lamb, still for fighting, orders that guns be brought up and the attack opened again.[15]

Carleton appears on the wall with the slain body of General Montgomery and warns them that continued death shall rain on them until they surrender. They can never hope to take the city. Captain Lamb is brought to reason and the terms of surrender are made. He does hope that the day will be avenged. Peace is offered by Carleton. Although he is not a coward, Oswald realizes that any further fighting will be futile. Morgan sounds an important note in the play when he announces his hope that they will be treated as prisoners in a Christian country.[16]

---

[13] Brackenridge, The Death of General Montgomery, op. cit., V, 1, pp. 39-41.

[14] Ibid., V, 2, p. 42.

[15] Ibid., V, 3, pp. 42-43.

[16] Ibid., V, 4, pp. 43-45.

The scene shifts and we find the American prisoners in British hands. Carleton, who had promised peace and fair treatment, declares that three Americans from Boston must be given to the Indians for sacrifice. Not only shall the three Boston men be given to the Indians for sacrifice, but the rest of the Americans shall grace the ceremony with their own howling. The captives are refused death, for the words of the soldier Carleton were meaningless. Since some of the Americans are still blocking one part of the wall, Carleton thinks that it would be wise to countermand the order of sacrifice lest some of the British prisoners suffer the same fate at the hands of the Americans. If the Americans can be routed from the one area, he will enjoy nothing more than seeing the Boston men die by the flames of the savages. If the Americans persist in disobeying the orders of the British government, they may expect even worse treatment. Morgan expresses the hope that "the British shall be confined to the shades of hell" for their torture and many wrongs.[17]

The effect of the Canadian campaign on the staff of the American Army is recorded in John Leacock's The Fall of British Tyranny (1776).

---

[17] Brackenridge, The Death of General Montgomery, op. cit., V, 5, pp. 45-50. For further summary see Moses Coit Tyler, The Literary History of the American Revolution 1763-1783 (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1941), II, 218-224.

Washington, having assumed the command of the American forces and initiated various plans for rejuvenation, receives at the camp at Cambridge a messenger with news from Canada. The messenger was unable to get letters from the generals lest he be captured. His verbal message is that when Montgomery and Arnold met, they joined forces and demanded that Carleton surrender. He refused and fired on the flag of truce. General Montgomery, seeing that their cannons were having no effect on the city, decided to attempt to storm it. The enemy were warned by the deserter from the American Army and although the Americans took the first barrier, in attempting the second, Montgomery and others were killed. General Putnam can not help but feel it an injustice that Montgomery could have died without a reward. Somehow he senses that all did not go well. The messenger continues his message by saying the one next in command withdrew the men in good order. Colonel Arnold in the meantime supported by Captain Lamb's company of artillery, successfully attacked and won a British battery. Colonel Arnold, wounded in the leg, succeeded in crawling to the hospital, although under constant British fire. Arnold's men pressed on but were attacked from the rear, and thus surrounded by British they were forced to surrender. The treatment that the prisoners will receive at the hands of Carleton worries General Putnam. General Lee considers it as a matter of fate, today conquerors, tomorrow prisoners. General Washington asks the

messenger about the treatment of prisoners. All he can report is that according to rumor, they are treated humanely. The army, says the messenger, is drawn to a spot two miles from the city where they await orders and reinforcements. The burial of Montgomery on January 2, 1776, was reported as one worthy of a general of his standing. Washington, having placed the tired messenger in capable hands, makes plans for the necessary move.[18]

The following scene discovers a meeting of the American generals. General Washington prepares to send a messenger to Congress. The repulse in Canada may be just a reprieve. At any rate, reinforcements must be sent. Quebec must fall. General Lee feels heavily the loss of Montgomery but is certain that "from the ashes of the dead new heroes shall spring." The glorious death in the cause of the Americans should stir them all to new effort. The British ruler and parliament, seeing that the conquering of the colonies is impossible, now turns to bribes to make them submit. All three generals have drawn their swords, never to sheath them again save in the hearts of British, until the American cause is triumphant.[19]

---

[18] John Leacock, The Fall of British Tyranny (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), V, 3, pp. 345-348.

[19] Ibid., V, 4, pp. 348-349.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WAR IN THE SOUTH

Lord Dunmore, royal governor of Virginia, increased his already intense unpopularity among the Virginians by dissolving the assembly for sympathizing with Boston and the general suffering of Massachusetts. In spite of this closing of the assembly by the governor, it met later the same evening and resolved against the use of tea and also proposed an annual congress of the colonies. The Virginian delegates to this congress were to be chosen by a convention called without a royal warrant.

Dunmore realized the danger of a general arming of the Virginian patriots to carry out the orders of the illegal Committees of Correspondence, and he made an attempt on his part to suppress the rising patriotic fervor. In spite of his efforts the convention met March 20, 1775, and heard, among other things, Patrick Henry's burst of oratory, a general call to arms.

As a result of this move Governor Dunmore ordered the removal of the powder from the magazine at Williamsburg. The servants of the palace were armed in case of a threat to the Dunmore household. The patriots did make an attempt to storm the palace and caused Lady Dunmore and her daughters, who had been confined to the palace for some time, to flee to Yorktown

and to board a British man-of-war.

The governor remained, promised to pay for the powder, and called an assembly in May, 1775, for the purpose of deciding on a conciliatory plan. The hope for such a plan was destroyed when the people became enraged at learning of a trap which had been laid at the magazine to kill anyone who attempted to get the powder. The patriot mob surrounded the palace and Dunmore found it wiser to escape to a British man-of-war where he called the loyalists to him as well as whatever enlistments he could gain. To retain any sizeable force he found it necessary to rely on threats and offers of bounty. The province was declared to be in a state of war.

Virginians, who favored independence, were in the minority until November, 1775, when Lord Dunmore issued the proclamation of a state of war, which offered, also, freedom to negroes and indented whites who would enlist in the task of "reducing the colony to its proper sense of duty." It was hoped by the governor that as a result of this proclamation the rebels would be forced to disperse that they might protect their families and personal proerty. The proclamation failed in its purpose because of the pleasant relationship between the master and the slave, but it did serve to enrage the general public not only in Virginia but elsewhere.

By using armed ships Dunmore ravaged the shores of the river, until a force of some size was defeated at Great Bridge. Having heard that a band of Virginia rebels planned to sieze Norfolk,

Dunmore threw up a rude fort at Great Bridge on the south approach of the town. On December 9 after fifteen minutes of fighting in which Dunmore saw sixty-one of his men fall and not one Virginian, he fled for refuge to the Liverpool, a British man-of-war, and thus left Norfolk to the rebels.

In retaliation for this disgrace, January 1, 1776, he burned the city of Norfolk. The brutal scene of women and children running from burning homes amid the cannon fire from the governor's fleet caused not only the increased desire of Virginia for independence but also aroused a general patriotic fervor throughout the colonies.

Prior to this time, Virginia had been sceptical when Congress had asked that each colony form a government of its own, independent of England. On May 6, 1776, a meeting of the convention in Virginia was held to consider the matter. On May 14, it was decided to instruct the Virginia delegates at the Congress to propose that Congress declare the United Colonies free and independent States. At the same time, it was decided to establish a new state government of its own.[1]

---

[1] A. G. Bradley, Colonial Americans in Exile, Founders of British Canada (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1932), pp. 98-102; John Fiske, The American Revolution (John Fiske's Historical Writings, New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1902), X, 209-213; Margaret Burnham Macmillan, The War Governors in the American Revolution (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), pp. 22-25, 27, 79; Claude Halstead Van Tyne, The American Revolution 1776-1783 (Albert Bushnell Hart, editor, The American Nation: A History, New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1905, IX, 59-61.

A portion of John Leacock's The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (1776) is a vicious satire on Lord Dunmore and his attempt to wage his own little personal war at the expense of the South.

Lord Dunmore is represented as being on board a British man-of-war anchored near Norfolk off the shore of Virginia. As the scene opens, a boat appears rowing toward the ship. A sailor hails the Boatswain and a moral attack is launched against Lord Dunmore[2] by the Boatswain who explains that these men are for Dunmore's inspection providing he is quite finished with his two doxies. The sailor expresses a deep dislike for the blacks, but since their arrival is due to an order by Dunmore, there is nothing that he can do but grumble.[3]

The scene shifts to a position near the stateroom of Lord Dunmore. The Boatswain, on being told by the servant that his Lordship can not be disturbed, threatens the servant with bodily harm if he does not obey and summon him. In the mind of the Boatswain it would be better if Lord Dunmore were to station the

---

[2] Lord Dunmore is represented in the play by the character, Lord Kidnapper. This tag-name is particularly suitable for it refers to Dunmore's means of strengthening his forces by kidnapping slaves.

[3] John Leacock, The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), IV, 1, p. 328.

servant at the masthead instead of using him for a pimp. While the Boatswain is thus brooding Lord Dunmore enters and asks what he wishes, to which the Boatswain replies that he has a shipload of recruits. Lord Dunmore is delighted, thinks he means soldiers from Augustine, and desires to know what regimentals they wear. The Boatswain, who seems to have little fear of his Lordship, explains that they wear mourning, as black as can be. The enthusiasm previously revealed by Dunmore diminishes as he orders the blacks to be brought on deck where later he will look at them. The Boatswain is convinced that these new recruits will add an aroma to the already pervading scent of the scrapings of Newgate and Tyburn. Lord Dunmore appears to be amused but agrees that it is work that must be done by someone. In his forward manner of speaking the Boatswain tells his superior officer that he realizes that his Lordship hopes for a reward for relieving English taxes by taking the riffraff from the English prisons. Once he tires of waging his own war, Dunmore can easily sell the remainder of the prisoners as slaves in the West Indies.[4]

As Lord Dunmore returns to his stateroom, the Boatswain comes on deck, pipes, and orders the men to help the blacks on board. As the negroes enter, he announces that his Lordship will be on deck as soon as he has finished some business in his stateroom. The low morale of the sailors is revealed in the next group

---

[4] Leacock, op. cit., IV, 2, pp. 328-329.

of speeches. The first sailor supposes that they will have to give up their hammocks to the negroes and come up on deck to sleep in the snow. If the negroes come near, the second sailor is going to kick them through port-holes. The Boatswain tells them not to be angry, for he will try to get his Lordship to go south to a warm climate and get more black regulars, where they could be had for a hogshead or two of New England rum. A revelation of the condition of these British sailors comes in the speech of the first sailor who says that for his part he would gladly go to hell rather than to stay there in the cold; for he feels that even the devil is better off during the winter than they. Any southward voyage would please the second sailor rather than stay where they are with "no fire, nothing to eat or drink, but suck our frosty fists like bears, unless we turn sheep-stealers again, and get our brains knocked out."[5] It appears that the Cook, now that he has nothing to do, is feeling too important. The Cook dislikes cooking for the blacks, but since there is no food, he has little occasion to worry. The Boatswain feels that the Cook does not know when he is well off. The blacks, no doubt, will be scattered over the mess among the Tories. Feeling that the Boatswain is doing him an injustice, the Cook brags of his former position on boar a seventy-four gun ship. The little quarrel is continued by the

---

[5] Leacock, op. cit., IV, 3, p. 330. This seems to refer to the general thievery on the part of the British but may refer specifically to the Lexington and Concord affair mentioned elsewhere in the play.

joking Boatswain who ridicules the Cook's pride and huge lies. Thoroughly aroused in spirit, the Cook will have them know that he will no longer cook for scape-gallows, convicts, Tory dogs, and run-away negroes; he will resign his commission first. On and on the Boatswain drives the suffering Cook but warns him that he must cease to say that his Lordship is harboring run-away slaves or he will get a "coat of slush and hog's feathers for Christmas." This statement finds the Cook at a loss for words until the Boatswain tells the cook that he was only joking. Play-time being over, the Boatswain pipes to have the boat made fast alongside.[6]

Lord Dunmore comes up on the quarter-deck to inspect the blacks. He asks them whether they wish to enlist. Cudjo,[7] spokesman for the blacks, assures him that all twenty-two of them are run-aways and wish to enlist. Dunmore convinces them that their masters had no right to keep them slaves but that he will make them free. Cudjo tells him that they come from Hampton and Norfolk but that his own master was Colonel Thompson. In order to make an example, Dunmore christens him Major Cudjo Thompson and tells him that he will make him a greater man than his master. The other blacks, if they are good, will also become officers.

---

[6] Leacock, op. cit., IV, 3, pp. 330-331.

[7] Cudjo, no doubt, is a tag-name derived from cudgel or force. These negroes were forced into enlisting by promises as well as threats.

When they have served Lord Bute for a time they will be given money, clothes, and will be as free as the whites on board. (This freedom would be little if any since most of the whites are prisoners from English prisons or institutions.) Thanks is offered by Cudjo, whose large mouth becomes the brunt of cruel remarks. His Lordship will have the Cook take the blacks to be fed. Rations being exhausted, the Cook knows not how to solve the problem; the mouth of one negro alone is large enough to breed a famine on board ship. The sailor agrees with him whole-heartedly. Tomorrow the blacks are to have guns with which they may shoot their masters. Cudjo assures Dunmore that they will do as he wishes. (This is definite satire, for the relationship at that time, although not later, between the master and the slave was a shining example of pleasantness compared to the starvation conditions on board the British man-of-war. Perhaps, too, this may have served as a bit of warning to people considering enlisting on the British side.) The negroes are complimented on their bravery and tomorrow they shall begin military training, progressing as rapidly as possible. The sergeant is warned that at nights the rifles are to be taken from the negroes and guarded lest the negroes rise and cut the throats of the Tories.[8]

The sergeant and the Boatswain are convinced that it would

---

[8] Leacock, op. cit., IV, 4, pp. 331-333.

be better for them if they had the weight of the negroes in beef; then the Cook would not be proud and lazy. The condition of these new recruits is ridiculed as the sergeant says that he supposes this hell-cat troop, when trained, will be reviewed in Hyde Park. The Boatswain would put the Cook or the Chaplain with his dirty gown in charge of these troops. The Cook, unable to take a joke, will have nothing to do with them.[9]

In the following scene one finds Lord Dunmore, Captain Squires, and the Chaplain of the ship in conference. Lord Dunmore is convinced that the blacks will add strength to the Tories.

This is satire, pointing out the fact that the British cause did not have enough appeal or worth to the British forces to see that the cause was carried out. Not only had the Britain hired foreign soldiers to do his fighting but now was turning to the negroes for aid in increasing his strength.

The promise of emancipation would make the blacks brave and would greatly intimidate the rebels. In his way of thinking, internal enemies are worse than open foes. The Chaplain is introduced to satirize the part that religion played in the British side in contrast to the part it played in the American Army. Dunmore does not think of the war in terms of religion but rather as a grand manoeuvre in politics: servant against master, rebel

---

[9] Leacock, op. cit., IV, 5, p. 333.

against rebel. His Lordship's observation, in the eyes of religion, is truly scriptural for a house divided cannot stand. If they can burn all the possible towns and manage to last out the winter, the spring will bring supplies from England. With Colonel Connolly's plan, the British will succeed in driving the rebels into a pen like hogs. The Chaplain would have them gathered like chickens, but Captain Squires warns his over-confident companions of the hawks, the rifle-men. His Lordship realizes that one is not safe as long as these hawks are around but he will stay hidden and let others do the dirty work. The rebels, no respecter of persons, would just as soon kill him as not. The impudence of the rebels had grown to such a degree that he was unable to get a roasting pig. The situation will not remain in such a state for long. The following speeches of the Chaplain and Dunmore reveal the philosophy and religion of the English forces:

> Chaplain. I hope that we shall get something good for our Christmas dinner - so much abstinence and involuntary mortification, cannot be good for the soul - a war in the body corporal is of more dangerous consequence than a civil war to the state, or heresy and schism to the church.
> Kidnapper. Very true, parson - very true - now I like your doctrine - a full belly is better than an empty sermon; preach that doctrine; - stick to the text, and you'll not fail of making converts.
> Chaplain. The wisest of men said, there is nothing better than that a man should enjoy that which he hath, namely, eat, drink, and be marry, if he can.[10]

---

[10] Leacock, op. cit., IV, 6, pp. 334-335.

At the conclusion of these speeches the Chaplain and his Lordship sing a vulgar song,at the end of which Dunmore decides to go take a nap, since the Captain can warn him if anything of importance arises. Meanwhile, the Chaplain, who does not see why they should not only starve, but also die of thirst, sends for two bottles which he will share with the Captain.[11]

---

[11] Leacock, op. cit., IV, 6, p. 335.

CHAPTER IX

THE FREEING OF BOSTON

During the autumn and winter of 1775 George Washington had initiated a system of good training, and by the spring of 1776 he felt that the Americans could drive the British from Boston. On the night of March 4, 1776, the Americans moved out and fortified Dorchester Heights. The American cannonade from Somerville, East Cambridge, and Roxbury kept the British occupied. When the dawn revealed to General Howe the fortifications on Dorchester Heights, he sent men by boat to attack the Americans before the fortifications became too strong. A storm, however, drove the British back, and by the time it had cleared enough to try again, they were certain that the fortifications were impregnable and the decision was made to abandon Boston. An agreement between the British and Americans provided that the British might leave unharmed if they left Boston as it was. The British sailed from Boston for Halifax, leaving the city to its rightful owners.[1]

---

[1] Edward Channing, The American Revolution 1761-1789 (A History of the United States, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), III, 176-178; John Fiske, The American Revolution (John Fiske's Historical Writings, New York: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1902), X, 199-202; Claude Halstead Van Tyne, The American Revolution 1776-1783 (Albert Bushnell Hart, editor, The American Nation: A History, New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1905), IX, 48-49.

A prose play which is vigorous and coarse but particularly effective as a satire of the flight of the British from Boston is The Blockheads, or the Affrighted Officers (1776). It was at first believed that Mrs. Mercy Warren was responsible for the work but internal evidence would tend to refute that belief. It is known, however, that it was inspired by General Burgoyne's farce, The Blockade of Boston which ridiculed the patriot army when blockading the city.

The opening scene is in a conference room.[2] General Howe, in consulting with his officers, comments on the state of affairs. He considers it a pretty state when British generals and British generals and British troops, the terror of the world, become mere "scare-crows to themselves." How deceived they were when their high expectations of conquest were crushed. Now they find themselves "confined within the bounds of three miles, wrangling and

---

[2] The characters as given by the author, together with the "key" written in the copy in the Clothier Collection of the University of Pennsylvania are as follows:

	Dramatis Personae		
Captain Bashaw	A------l	(Graves)	
Puff	G------l	(Howe)	
L--d Dapper	L--d P---y		
Shallow	G------t	(Grant)	Officers
Dupe	Who you please		
Meagre	G------y	(Gray)	Refugees
Surly	R------s	(Ruggles)	and
Brigadier Paunch	B------e	(Bratels)	Friends
Bonny	M------y	(Murry)	to the
Simple	E------n	(Eaton)	gov't.

Arthur Hobson Quinn, A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1923), p. 47.

starving among themselves." Grant, another British officer, feels the alternatives are cursed. Should they be murdered by venturing out or by staying in be starved? If they venture out the American riflemen "pick them off like partridges." Admiral Graves of the British fleet insists that they cease their wrangling and work on a definite plan. Every night brings the Americans closer. If a move is not made soon, he will bid them all farewell and they may sail with him if they like. Something may even happen to the British fleet, for the Americans seem to have been granted the power of miracles, and then take advantage of their opportunities. A move must be made to dispossess the Americans of their fortifications or the British may not only be starved but murdered. Lord Percy, another British officer, on the other hand feels that being captured by the Americans would be worse than murder or starvation, for it would mean facing their congresses and committees. The Americans would be more dread victors than a tribe of furies just released from the underworld. If some move is not made, it will be too late. Howe agrees that the Americans must be driven from Dorchester Heights, which they had fortified the night before. The men must be rallied and sent in attack. It would seem to Howe that there would be more of a possibility of scaring the Americans to death by means of the ghostly British soldiers than to defeat them in actual battle. They may even think the ghosts of their forefathers are coming to battle against them. He pities the poor

miserable state of the soldiers and yet blames it on fate but says that there is nothing to do but to laugh or pity each other.

Lord Percy feels that their being penned up would be a more suitable topic for the writing of Churchill than his description of Scotland. In that work the flies and insects are pictured as starving,but here in Boston the flies die of starvation. He no longer holds a grudge against the flies and insects that have bitten him to find nourishment in his blood, for later they died of starvation and lie by the thousands around his chair. His case he feels is like that of the prodigal son who was dying of hunger while many of the hired servants of his father had bread. Grant, another British officer, says that their case is now so deplorable that his diet consists of "hard crusts and rusty bones." These delicacies do not agree with his digestion. "His teeth are worn to stumps, his lips are swelled like a blubber-mouthed negro's, his jaw bone has been set a dozen times, dislocated by chewing hard pork." Howe realizes that they are well acquainted with each other's hardships but that was not mending the condition. An attempt must be made to drive the rebels from their hill lest the British become the guests of Adams and Hancock. Lord Percy will be in command of the attacking force. Their spirits should be kept up, for there is nothing else to feed on, although it is a "poor dish for a greedy appetite." Lord Percy agrees that some move must be made, for their

honor is at stake.[3]

The scene shifts to a room with refugees and friends of the British government. Ruggles, a Tory, feels that there is nothing more wretched than their present fate for they are vagabonds and outcasts without friends. They fled to Boston for protection and have found little there, for their British friends are as miserable as they. They were cajoled into their present situation by that cursed Hutchinson, who pleased them with pensions, posts of honor and profit, but who fled and left them. Having forsaken his dwelling and left his family to be cared for by friends, if there were any, Ruggles had come to Boston to throw himself on the mercy of the British who seem to be unable to help him. What money had had he let out to the British on poor security and thus had been reduced to wretchedness and misery. He curses his ambition and wishes that he had remained loyal to his countrymen. His former farm animal friends would be better company than these "British poltroons who stalk the streets of Boston with shining swords at their sides but who are afraid to use them." Eaton, another Tory, realizes that they have only themselves and their ambition to blame, for that ambition has caused "the substance to flee and leave them a mere shadow of grandeur." He expresses the fact that he is ashamed of "his company of ghosts and harlots." One is almost tempted to

---

[3] (Anonymous) The Blockheads; or, the Affrighted Officers (Boston: Queen Street, 1776), I, 1, pp. 3-5 (Reproduced by photography from the Fred W. Atkinson Collection of the University of Chicago).

throw oneself on the mercy of his own countrymen. The idea of facing committees and courts of inquiry, however, terrifies him. This makes him decide that he shall never submit to the American miscreants. Gray agrees with him; for pride is their only "cordial," there being nothing to eat. Their pride he feels is poor nourishment. "The sumptuous dish of expectation of relief was too soon exhausted." He complains not only of their personal treatment but the treatment of their wives and families. His honor and profit are gone and abuse and ruin have taken their places. Instead of bowing to the great; he should have tended his farm, and instead of counting the revenue of the country; he should have counted the sheep in his own flock. Bratels, another Tory, had hoped for British strength and reinforcements, but he had seen the British take refuge in American cottages. Gray, however, is going to keep up his spirits and hope for the best; it may be the opportunity to try their loyalty on the "touchstone of affliction." At any rate they must act like men; then reward is sure to come. Their dejected countenances are a disgrace to the British cause. Ruggles, a Tory, loses his temper and says that "loyalty and deliverance are pleasing words when used with propriety but they are maimed with often handling." The Tory Eaton agrees and adds that "loyalty is only a court watchword to entrap men and then fleece them of their prosperity.

---

4 The Blockheads, op. cit., I, 2, pp. 5-7.

In the next scene we find Tabitha, the daughter of Eaton the Tory, determined to win Lord Percy regardless of her father's dislike for the redcoats. The title of Lady pleases her and Lord Percy will take her to England once the campaign is over. Dorsa, her Tory friend, believes in the philosophy of "making hay while the sun shines" and agrees with Tabitha in wishing that she too had a young spark. All the correspondence between the two lovers shall pass through the hands of Dorsa. When Dorsa tells Tabitha that Lord Percy labors under the disgrace of inability, Tabitha is a bit suspicious but is quick to assure Dorsa that she will marry him to get position and means. Dorsa closes the scene by saying that she would rather be married to her grandfather.[5]

The following scene finds Eaton, the Tory, moaning over his fate. Although he would rather be back on the farm where meals were good, his wife would not have these lovely ladies and gentlemen look down upon them as farmers. Besides she has grown to hate the vulgarity of the farm. He assures her that she will be even more sickly before the problem is settled. If he were only well fed, he might be able to bear the ridicule. His fortune is gone, either stolen by the rebels or loaned to the British government and lost by that means. His new office from the British will fail to bring in any money. The wife tells him to stop his

---

[5] The Blockheads, op. cit., II, 1, pp. 8-9.

worrying for he should be willing to sacrifice for the position of his wife and daughter. If she had her way, she was going to have Tabitha introduced to some Englishman of worth and hope for a marriage and that Tabitha will take them to England with her. At any rate he should forget the farm; it is "suitable for yankees only." Eaton, not thinking that his wife is serious, says that she will not receive any support from him in her"prudish ways." She retorts that if he does not support her,someone else will. The scene is closed with a warning to her to beware.[6]

The scene shifts to a garden where we find Tabitha and Lord Percy preparing to elope. Although her father is still against her meeting with Lord Percy, she is determined to run off and be married to him. Just as they are leaving, her father appears, but Lord Percy draws his sword and the father retreats.[7]

A short scene follows which reveals the conditions of the soldiers as a whole. The discontent of the British regulars is pointed out in one soldier's remark that they would much rather fight for a "good pudding than for the cause."[8]

Back in the British consulatation room we find General Howe talking with his officers. Heaven and earth seem to be against

---

[6] The Blockheads, op. cit., II, 2, pp. 9-11.

[7] Ibid., II, 3, pp. 11-12.

[8] Ibid., II, 4, p. 12.

them. One thing must be decided and that is whether they shall attempt to take the hill again or shall they leave the city. Grant asks them if they want to see another Bunker's Hill. To him his life is of more esteem than his honor. He would rather throw himself on the mercy of the sea than be an American prisoner. Nobody with common sense would venture out of the entrenchments. Lord Percy feels that such hordes of men would scare Hannibal. They must retreat while the sea is still at peace. Dupe, another Tory, remarks that it would be an excellent time for Burgoyne to write another farce. Dupe says he certainly is not going to risk his head for the whims of Lord North. The ministry and parliament could come over and carry out their own silly acts as far as he is concerned. He is not in favor of trying the ability of the Americans at man-killing. If he had a nagging wife, which he does not have, Grant would be willing to risk his life in the attack but being happily married, he is going to seek a place of safety. Anyone, however, who wishes to go out will be wished the best of luck. Since he remembers the Americans from the Battle of Bunker's Hill, Howe is for immediate retreat. They all are quick to agree.[9]

Gray, the Tory refugee, cannot believe that the British are preparing to leave the city to the American rebels. The courage of the British soldiers has turned into the fear of "old women."

---

[9] The Blockheads, op. cit., III, 1, pp. 12-14.

The attempt on the part of Lord Percy to attack the hill was a mere sham. If once he were able to get rid of his British connections, Gray would never again depend upon a broken reed. So long as the British eat, they shall too, and for this reason he is ready to follow them. He feels that the British owe it to him. Eaton, the Tory, plans to remain behind and pilfer the town as the general had so ably taught them to do. Gray does not like the idea of following a bunch of cowards or throwing himself on the mercy of his countrymen. Yet, since he does have a little money left, he will follow them, cowards or no cowards. Bratels, their Tory companion, warns them that the general has informed them to get ready and that the whole city is in confusion.[10]

Eaton relates to his wife the garden scene in which he ran away from the sword as the true British do. He is afraid for his daughter, who has become debauched. His wife is in favor of taking the trip to Halifax where they shall be rid of the vulgar Americans and can live in ease and luxury. The wife is teased about sea-sickness and warned that it will not be the trip that she thinks it will. The scene closes with Eaton's cursing his fate: being married to an old fool and doomed to chase after a pack of cowards.[11]

The following brief scene takes place in a barrack. A

---

[10] The Blockheads, op. cit., III, 2, pp. 14-16.

[11] Ibid., III, 3, pp. 16-17.

British soldier wishes that Lord North were there to see his wonderful troops in all their confusion. The reinforcements sent served only to fill the gaps made by the Battle of Bunker's Hill. Another soldier states that it will not be a pretty story for the annals of the English. The best troops of the British as well as the navy were present and yet they were forced to leave the city. While the British fleet was in the neighboring waters, the privateers had stolen the much needed food required in Boston. Not one act redounded to the British honor or profit. The towns burned were towns that were unprotected. Another soldier pictures the frightened generals and the general confusion of the blocked streets. He wishes that someone were there to make a satire of the situation. Burgoyne could not have had a better opportunity. The last soldier describes the conditions onboard the ships as being similar to a litter of pigs. A woman speaks and says that the Tories deserve the torture of inconveniences onboard the ships and curses them and the government they represent. She calls for huzzas for America.[12]

The play concludes with the following:

Your pardon first I crave, for this intrusion,
The topic's such it looks like delusion.
And next your candor, for I sware and vow,
Such an attempt I never made 'till now,
But constant laughing at the desp'rate fate,
The bastard sons of Mars endur'd of late.

---

12 The Blockheads, op. cit., III, 3, pp. 17-19.

Induc'd me thus to minute down the notion,
Which put my risibles in such commotion.
By yankees frighted too! oh dire to say!
Why yankees sure at red-coats faint away!
Oh yes - they thought so too - for lack-a-day,
Their gen'ral turn'd the blockade to play,
Poor vain poltroons - with justice will retort,
And call them blockheads for their idle sport.[13]

The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (1776) by Hugh Henry Brackenridge closes with a speech given by General Washington on his entering the town of Boston. He describes the welcome of the city and begs that all the tears may be wiped away save those of happiness. He wishes that the buildings smile and the street run down with joy. He does suggest that thanks be offered to Heaven for the aid given them in their cause. "All the soldiers were the bridegrooms to fair joy that day." A song follows the speech. It reveals the rising spirit of the American force and its confidence that the British shall be driven out no matter where they try to establish their lines.[14]

---

[13] The Blockheads, op. cit., p. 19. For further discussion see Moses Coit Tyler, The Literary History of the American Revolution 1763-1783 (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1941), II, 207-208.

[14] Hugh Henry Brackenridge, The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), pp. 273-276.

CHAPTER X

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

June of 1776 saw the year of war terminate in a deadlock. Not only were the Americans repulsed in their attack on Canada, but the British also had been unsuccessful in attempting to gain a foothold in the colonies by capturing Wilmington and Charleton in the Carolinas. American opinion had, however, not remained immobile, for the formerly persistent sentiment that the conflict was a civil war on the part of the American colonies to maintain their rights in the British Empire gave way. George III refused the petition for redress of grievances, refused to listen to Burke and Pitt, who were sympathetic to the Americans, branded the Americans as rebels, and began to hire foreign troops to assist the British in carrying on an intensive war with the colonies. New forms of government had taken the places of the old colonial governments. Since the Americans were suffering from lack of trade without much possibility of their trade being restored with Great Britain, they had to look elsewhere for trade, and only as an independent country could they make the necessary treaties to restore American commerce to its former position. Too, foreign aid would be necessary to carry out the war; and since France, the enemy of Great Britain and the one most likely to give the colonies aid,

would not consider helping them to redress old grievances they would perhaps help them if independence were asked.

At the most opportune time, January, 1776, Thomas Paine brought forth his pamphlet, Common Sense, which stated in simple but effective language the American case for independence. Although the logic and wordings of the pamphlet were not beyond criticism, they appealed to the average man and served to increase the sentiment for liberty and independence.

In the Congress itself as early as April, 1776, there had been exhibitions in favor of independence: the Carolinas worked for liberty, and Virginia had seceded from the British Empire. As early as June 10 a vote was requested but it was postponed until July 1 when the debate on independence was reopened and a tentative vote was taken. This tentative vote revealed only nine states in favor of independence. When the final vote was taken on July 2, 1776, however, it was revealed that all the states save New York were in favor of independence and she gave her vote of independence later. After certain deletions from the document of Thomas Jefferson were made, it was adopted on July 4, 1776 as the Declaration of Independence. Two weeks later it was transferred to parchment and all signatures placed thereon.

The signing of the Declaration of Independence was not without its evils for as many as 50,000 Loyalists turned to fight on the side of the British. Too, there was no political unity in

the colonies except for the loose alliance provided by the Articles of Confederation, an emergency government adopted by the Congress but not capable of continued service after the war ceased.[1]

Thomas Paine's pamphlet, Common Sense, did not only influence the readers directly through contact with the document but also through references made to it in other works such as the dramatic writing of the period.

In John Leacock's The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (1776) one finds Mr. Peter Buckstail presenting the Prologue to the play in which he explains the progress of the plot, scenes, and makes a plea that:

> Blest Continent, while groaning nations round
> Bend to the servile yoke, ignobly bound,
> May ye be free - nor ever be opprest
> By murm'ring tyrants, but a land of rest!
> What say ye to 't? what say the audience?
> Methinks I hear some whisper COMMON SENSE.
> Hark! what say the Tories? - Silence - let 'em speak,
> Poor fools! dumb - they haven't spoke a word this week,
> Dumb let 'em be, at full end of their tethers,
> 'Twill save the expense of tar and feathers:
> Since old Pluto's lurch'd 'em, and swears he does not know
> If more these Tory puppy curs will bark or no.[2]

---

[1] Edward Channing, A History of the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), III, 198-206; Merle Curti, The Roots of American Liberty (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), pp. 14, 18-19; John Fiske, The American Revolution (John Fiske's Historical Writings, New York: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1902), X, 204-231; Claude Halstead Van Tyne, The American Revolution 1776-1783 (Albert Bushnell Hart, The American Nation: A History, New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1905), IX, 66-85.

[2] John Leacock, The Fall of British Tyranny; or American Liberty Triumphant (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), p. 289.

The various actors are summond forth and the prologue concludes with the following plea to the audience:

> We will be free- or bravely we will die,
> And leave to Tories tyrants' legacy,
> And all our share of its dependency.[3]

A final plea long the same line is offered by Mr. Freeman in the closing Epilogue:

> Since tyrants reign, and lust and lux'ry rule;
> Since kings turn Neroes - statesmen play the fool;
> Since Parli'ment in cursed league combine,
> To sport with rights that's sacred and divine;
> Destroying towns with direful conflagration,
> And murder subjects without provocation!
> These are but part of evils we could name,
> Not to their glory, but eternal shame.
> Petitions - waste paper - great Pharoah cries,
> Nor care a rush for your remonstrances.
> Each Jacobite, and ev'ry pimping Tory,
> Waits for your wealth, to raise his future glory:
> Or pensions sure, must ev'ry rascal have,
> Who strove his might, to make FREEMAN a slave.
> Since this the case, to whom for succour cry?
> To God, our swords, and sons of liberty!
> Cast off the idol god! - kings are but vain!
> Let justice rule, and independence reign.
> Are ye not men? Pray who made men, but God?
> Yet men make kings - to tremble at their nod!
> What nonsense this - let's wrong with right oppose,
> Let's act in earnest, not with vain pretence,
> Adopt the language of sound COMMON SENSE,
> And with one voice proclaim INDEPENDENCE.
> Convince your foes you will defend your right,
> That blows and knocks is all they will get by't.
> Let tyrants see that you are well prepar'd,
> By proclamations, sword, nor speeches scar'd;
> That liberty freeborn breathe in each soul!
> One god-like union animates the whole![4]

---

[3] Leacock, op. cit., p. 289.

[4] Leacock, op. cit., p. 350.

Just about the time that the Second Continental Congress appointed a committee to draft a Declaration of Independence, Thomas Paine had printed in pamphlet form A Dialogue between the Ghost of General Montgomery just arrived from the Elysian Fields; and an American Delegate, in a wood near Philadelphia (1776). In this purely imaginary dialogue between the ghost of Major-General Richard Montgomery, who fell in battle before Quebec on December 31, 1775, and an American delegate to the Continental Congress, Thomas Paine expanded the idea he had advanced in Common Sense that "nothing but independence, i. e., a continental form of government, can keep the peace of the continent and preserve it inviolate from civil war." This pamphlet was very useful in answering the arguments of Tories and conservative Whigs against independence.[5]

The ghost of General Montgomery is welcomed by the delegate, who registers surprise but not fear. Since the ghost still loves liberty and America, and the study of the future greatness of the American Continent forms the larger share of his happiness, he feels it necessary to appear on earth to carry out an important errand, to warn the Americans against listening to terms of conciliation from the British. Because the times are trying, the delegate will be happy to receive instructions that concern public affairs.

---

[5] Thomas Paine, A Dialogue between the Ghost of General Montgomery just Arrived from the Elysian Fields; and an American delegate in a wood near Philadelphia (Philip S. Foner, editor, The Complete Writings of Thomas Paine, New York: The Citadel Press, 1945), II, 88; Arthur Hobson Quinn, A History of The American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1923), p. 53.

Suppose, however, that the conciliatory terms should be just and honorable, what then? To Montgomery that is impossible, for how can Americans expect such terms from a king who has branded them as rebels, after parliament has resolved to support the king in carrying on a war against the colonies. "No offer from England would come except PARDON, which was an insult to the cause, for who but a ROYAL CRIMINAL offered to pardon the virtuous freemen fighting in defense of human rights." This argument of honorable terms has given the general a new reason for rejoicing in his death, for he would rather have it said that he died by the king's vengeance than that he lived by his mercy.[6]

The delegate feels that the destructive consequences of the war with England, should it be continued, are not being considered. General Montgomery thinks only of the destructive consequences of slavery. "The calamities of war are transitory, but the calamities of slavery are permanent!" It is his interest in human welfare that causes Montgomery to urge against reconciliation with Great Britain, for should reconciliation take place, there is nothing to prevent the American colonies from being a battle field every time the king has a quarrel with one of the colonies or with a European power.[7]

A feeling of fear seizes the delegate as he realizes that

---

[6] Paine, op. cit., p. 88.

[7] Paine, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

the general advocates independence, permanent liberty, peace, and security to the American colonies, for it would mean placing the colonies in a situation similar to that in which they found themselves in 1763. For his part, Montgomery would lament the day in which he offered his life were the colonists again to acknowledge British sovereignty. Who would make restitution for the losses suffered already in the war? Surely some "other hand than the British that had shed American blood could hold the sceptre of government."[8]

The delegate feels that a distinction must be made between the king and his ministers. To Montgomery, however, the king is responsible for all the measures against the Americans and the bad company of his ministers does not serve as an excuse for his actions. He feels that Americans fail to recognize that the crown is responsible for the corruption of the parliament and the venality of the nation.[9]

The delegate displays a pacifistic attitude of compliance to British demands. He feels that the distance and charters will protect the American colonies from the influence of the crown. This argument is refuted by the statement that the distance would only render the danger to the colonies more imminent, and the ruin more permanent and that charters are no restraint against the lust for

---

[8] Paine, op. cit., p. 89.

[9] Ibid., pp. 89-90.

power. Should the colonies be willing to accept conciliatory terms, the only purpose of the administration would become the reduction of American representation.[10]

The arguments of the delegate are not without grounds, for he claims that should the colonies become independent, trade would suffer a terrific blow and domestic wars develop as certain colonies seek superiority. Montgomery's reply is typical of the writing of lines as a whole:

> General Montgomery. As I now know that Divine Providence intends this country to be the asylum of persecuted virtue from every quarter of the globe, so I think your trade will be the vehicle that will convey it to you. Heaven has furnished you with greater resources for a navy than any nation in the world. Nothing but an ignorance of your strength could have led you to sacrifice your trade for the protection of a foreign navy. A freedom from the restraints of the acts of navigation I foresee will reduce such immense additions to the wealth of this country that posterity will wonder that ever you thought your present trade worth its protection. As to the supposed contentions between sister colonies, they have no foundation in truth. But supposing they have, will delaying the independence of the colonies 50 years prevent them? No - the weakness of the colonies, which at first produced their union, will always preserve it, 'till it shall be their interest to be separated. Had the colony of Massachusetts Bay been possessed of the military resources which it would probably have had some 50 years hence, would she have held out the signal of distress to her sister colonies, upon the news of the Boston Port Bill! No- she would have withstood all the power of Britain alone, and afterwards the neutral colonies might have shared the fate of the colony of Canada. Moreover, had the connection with Great Britain been continued 50 years longer, the progress of British laws, customs and manners (now totally corrupted) would have been such that the colonies would have been prepared to welcome slavery. But

---

[10] Paine, op. cit., p. 90.

> had it been otherwise, they must have asserted their independence with arms. This is nearly done already. It will be cruel to bequeath another contest to your posterity.[11]

The delegate expresses his dread of the danger from all innovations in governments. Innovations, Montgomery explains, are dangerous only when they shake the prejudices of a people; but he feels that there are few prejudices to be found in the American colonies in favor of the old connection with Great Britain. The only persons interested in such a connection are those in offices of influence.[12]

The ghost would have the Americans heed the advice of Montesquieu who says that "nations should form alliances with nations as unlike to themselves as possible in religion, laws, and manners, if they mean to retain their own constitutions." Dependence upon the crown only serves to increase the power and influence of the king. The people of Great Britain alone are benefited by our trade, and this trade they could have after the colonies are independent.

The anger of Montgomery is aroused at the declaration that the Americans have many friends in both houses of parliament, for he feels that "the ministry has many enemies in the parliament who connect the American cause with their clamors at the door of

---

[11] Paine, op. cit., pp. 90-91.

[12] Ibid., p. 91.

administration." He specifically attacks Lord Chatham, the Marquis of Rockingham, Mr. Wilkes, the Duke of Grafton, and Lord Lyttleton.[13]

True, as a result of the independence of the colonies, they might become a commonwealth, but the general does not recommend to the delegate any new form of government. Surely a people who have successfully defended themselves against the strongest of world powers could not lack the wisdom necessary to contrive a perfect and free government. He does say, however, that monarchy and aristocracy have been the vehicles of slavery in all ages and that they should be avoided by the colonies.[14]

The colonial governments, the delegate feels, will lack force and authority if independence is won. Montgomery points out that the resolves of the Continental Congress were better carried out than any royal edicts, even though individual colonial governments were concerned.[15]

In response to the delegate's argument that the Declaration of Independence would lessen the number of friends and increase the the rage of the enemies in Britain, General Montgomery closes the play with this advice to him:

---

[13] Paine, op. cit., p. 91.

[14] Ibid., pp. 91-92.

[15] Ibid., p. 92.

General Montgomery. Your friends (as you call them) are too few - too divided - and too interested to help you. And as for your enemies, they have done their worst. They have called upon Russians-Hanovarians-Hessians-Canadians-savages and Negroes to assist them in burning your towns - desolating your country - and in butchering your wives and children. You have nothing further to fear from them. Go, then, and awaken the Congress to a sense of their importance, you have no time to lose. France waits for nothing but a declaration of your independence to revenge the injuries they sustained from Britain in the last war. I forbear to reason any further with you. The decree is finally gone forth. Britain and America are now distant empires. Your country teems with patriots- heroes- and legislators, who are impatient to burst forth into light and importance. Hereafter your achievements shall no more swell the page of British history. God will not excite the attention of all Europe - of the word - nay of angels themselves to the present controversy for nothing. The inhabitants of heaven long to see the ark finished, in which all the liberty and true religion of the world are to be deposited. The day in which the colonies declare their independence will be a jubilee to Hampden-Sidney-Russell-Warren-Gardiner-Macpherson-Sheeseman, and all the other heroes who have offered themselves as sacrifices upon the altar of liberty. It was no small mortification to me when I fell upon the Plains of Abraham, to reflect that I did not expire like the brave General Wolfe, in the arms of victory. But I now no longer envy him his glory. I would rather die in attempting to obtain permanent freedom for a handful of people, than survive a conquest which would serve only to extend the empire of despotism. A band of heroes now beckon to me. I can only add that America is the theater where human nature will soon receive its greatest military, civil, and literary honors.[16]

---

16 Paine, op. cit., pp. 92-93.

CHAPTER XI

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND MAJOR ANDRE

On abandoning Boston, it was the intention of General Howe to strike a blow at some strategic point. As a result the British attacked New York City. Washington almost caused a disaster by leaving Boston to defend New York; after the American defeat at Brooklyn Heights, Washington's men, only through the aid of fog and the slowness of the British were able to escape.

Although the winter brought a dwindling in the number of his men, Washington was able to strike hard at Trenton, December 28, 1776, and at Princeton, January 3, 1777. In retaliation, Howe planned two major moves against the Americans. The first was accomplished in his taking of Philadelphia, Washington having met defeat at Brandywine and Germantown. The second move, invasion through the Lake Champlain-Hudson Valley route, ended in the surrender of General Burgoyne to the Americans at Saratoga, October 17, 1777. This surrender helped bring about the alliance with France. Although the Spanish refused to make a formal alliance with the United States, Spain did enter the war. Holland, hoping to win supremacy in the American trade, also harassed Great Britain until she declared war on her. This European conflict aided the Americans immensely.

The Americans spent the winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge.

The next spring saw General Clinton replace Howe, and the British succeed in gaining New York City. Also of importance was the frontier fighting on the part of George Rogers Clark, which led to the war in the west.[1]

From 1778 to the close of the war all the important battles took place in the South. The victories fell first to the British and then to the Americans. Finally at the Battle of Guilford Court House, March 15, 1781, although the Americans were defeated, Cornwallis gave up the attack and retired to Wilmington. Even so, conditions at the American camp of Washington were dark. The hardest blow to American morale came from Benedict Arnold's treason.

Benedict Arnold, having suffered a wound in the Battle of Quebec, was thereafter given only minor posts and commissions. It was while seeking increased forces to use against the British that he met Elizabeth Deblois in Boston and became her suitor.[2]

Arnold's resentment was aroused when junior brigadiers were promoted over him. He was promoted major general but his seniority was not restored. On July 17, Arnold sent his resignation to Congress and withdrew it when General Washington asked

---

[1] Edward Channing, A History of the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), III, 210-236, 241-273, 279-303.

[2] Carl Van Doren, Secret History of the American Revolution (New York: The Viking Press, 1941), pp. 151-157.

him to command the northern troops. An attempt was made in Congress to restore his seniority but it failed. Later, however, his seniority was restored.[3]

By placing Arnold in command in Philadelphia, Washington had thought that he had given to Arnold a post worthy of his rank and merit. He felt also that it would save Arnold from friction with other officers. Charges, however, were brought against Arnold concerning his actions at Montreal. The charges were denied. His debts and financial set-backs increased. His love for Margaret Shippen resulted in a marriage. Finally, the council of Philadelphia demanded that Arnold be court-martialed on several counts such as favoratism for Tories, and other issues.[4]

About June 1779, Arnold offered his services to the British. During several postponements of his trial, Arnold was bargaining with the British. As a result of the trial Arnold was reprimanded.[5]

Arnold, in continuing his negotiations with the British, sought to get command of West Point that he might surrender that post to the enemy, which was to be under the command of John Andre, Adjutant General. For this treasonable act Arnold was to receive 20,000 pounds. A plan was made for Andre to meet Arnold. The

---

[3] Van Doren, op. cit., pp. 157-166.

[4] Ibid., pp. 166-193.

[5] Ibid., pp. 193-257.

secret agent of the British and Arnold met at Dobbs Ferry. On the return to the British ship Andre was captured and although many Americans liked him, he was tried and executed for treason. Arnold fled to the British but sought to prove the others innocent.[6]

Although William Dunlap borrowed internationally in order to write his drama, we still find a reflection of American nationalistic currents of the period in his Andre (Park Theatre, Boston, March 30, 1798). Although the play deals somewhat sympathetically with a British officer and spy, there are definite passages with actions and speeches of patriotism. Dunlap's treatment of Washinton, who dominates the play in all parts, is particularly commendable. Washington is pictured as having great patience and understanding, as is revealed in his treatment of Bland when Bland renounces the cockade.[7]

There are specific statements of patriotic feeling of importance, which are incisively characteristic of the period:

> General. ... O patriotism!
> Thou wondrous principle of godlike action!
> ...
> 'Tis this alone which saves thee, O my country!
> And, till that spirit flies these western shores,
> No power on earth shall crush thee.[8]

---

[6] Van Doren, op. cit., pp. 257-370.

[7] Allan Gates Halline, American Plays (New York: American Book Company, 1935), p. 46.

[8] William Dunlap, Andre (Allan Gates Halline, American Plays, New York: American Book Company, 1935), I, 2, p. 55.

M'Donald. ... Tho' all powerful Europe league against us,
And pour in arms her legions on our shores;
Who is so dull would doubt their shameful flight?
Who doubt our safety, and our glorious triumph?[9]

Although Bland is interested in the liberty of Andre, he is also concerned with the liberty of his own country:

Bland. ... O grant that thus may fall
All those who seek to bring this land to woe!
All those, who, or by open force, or dark
And secret machinations, seek to shake
The Tree of Liberty, or stop its growth,
In any soil where thou hast pleased to plant it.[10]

Seward goes further and hopes for complete political and cultural independence and isolation:

O, would to heaven
That in midway between these sever'd worlds
Rose barriers, all impassable to man,
Cutting off intercourse, till either side
Had lost all memory of the other![11]

The nationalism in Andre (1798) is more open-minded and more generous of the enemy than that in The Contrast (John Street, April 16, 1787) for we find Andre, the British spy, portrayed in a sympathetic light. Bland, having been won to Andre by his mercy while a British prisoner, wishes his release. Andre attempts to prevent Bland from renouncing and deserting the American cause

---

[9] Dunlap, op. cit., III, 3, p. 65.

[10] Ibid., I, 1, p. 54.

[11] Ibid., II, 2, p. 59.

by expressing hatred for the "cursed disguise" he took as a spy, and accepts his death heroically and without blaming America. The British finally release the elder Bland, who was to be killed if harm came to Andre.[12] Although in his concluding speech M'Donald urges that every child be taught the story of the struggle for independence and to despise the motives behind the British attack, he advises that they:

> ... Never let memory of the sire's offence
> Descend upon the son.[13]

Unlike the nationalistic attitude of Royall Tyler, that of Dunlap does not prevent one from realizing the value of foreign culture. The utterances, including those of the characters Washington and Seward, reveal, however, that the views of Dunlap were Federalistic as were those of Royall Tyler.

The ideal man, who has a balance, control, and self-discipline is revealed in Washington. The counter philosophy of passion and confidence in feeling is portrayed in young Bland. In conjunction with the idea of judgment or reason controlling our impulses, there arises the question as to how much one can control or change fate. The main importance of the drama lies in the varying degrees of nationalism exhibited in the various characters and not in the plot itself.[14]

---

[12] Halline, op. cit., p. 47.

[13] Dunlap, op. cit., V, 5, p. 74.

[14] Halline, op. cit., pp. 47-49.

CHAPTER XII

THE CLOSE OF THE WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH

General Clinton felt that a series of raids would cause the Americans to sue for peace. Lafayette, our French ally, was, however, on the alert and successfully avoided the raids by Cornwallis and Arnold. On returning to New York, Arnold was sent on a raid to New London, Connecticut; and Cornwallis fortified Yorktown.

Since his forces had been augmented by the French under Rochambeau, General Washington decided to strike a severe blow at the British by trapping Cornwallis. The French naval commander, De Grasse, brought his naval force to the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. Washington made it seem to Clinton that the next attack would be against New York but marched instead south to Virginia where he joined Lafayette. The British fleet under Admiral Graves was beaten off by De Grasse, leaving Cornwallis hemmed in and cut off from retreat by water by the French fleet. On October 19, 1781, Cornwallis surrendered his entire command. Admiral Graves reappeared too late with relief for the British. De Grasse sailed back to the West Indies where April 12, 1782, he was defeated by Admiral Rodney of the British navy. Thus the British still retained the mastership of the sea.[1]

---

[1] Edward Channing, A History of the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), III, 318-340.

However the victory over Cornwallis assured the independence of the United States. Lord North was forced to resign, and with his resignation ended the personal reign of George III. The reins of the government fell into more friendly hands. Not only the public of Britain but the ministry under Lord Rockingham desired peace. If the colonies did not wish to come back to the arms of Britain, independence would be granted.

Negotiations for peace began at Paris early in 1782, but the final treaty was not signed until September 3, 1783. The British were quite generous: the colonies received the boundaries of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi, and on the south, the thirty-first parallel. Moreover, citizens of the United States retained former fishing rights off the coast of Nova Scotia; the Mississippi remained open for both British and American shipping; suits were allowed in order to collect debts incurred during the war; and Congress recommended to various states restitution for confiscated Loyalist property. After much difficulty and resentment the treaty was ratified by Congress on January 14, 1784.[2]

In 1775 on the eve of the Declaration of Independence, Congress realized that it had little authority for the powers it exercised. As a result of the Declaration, a committee under John Dickinson drew up a draft for a plan of confederation, the

---

[2] Channing, op. cit., III, 364-374.

Articles of Confederation, which was adopted by March 1, 1781.[3]

The last of the purely patriotic plays, The Motley Assembly, is a satire published in Boston in 1779 and attributed to Mrs. Warren. It ridicules that portion of Boston society which believed that full support of the Revolution and the cause of liberty was incompatible with solid social standing. Members of the De Clois, Sheafe, Swan, and Hubbard families as well as T. Cartwright and Amiel are represented. The satire is severe and reveals the anger of one whose love for his country is great and who is not ashamed to admit it.[4]

At the time of the writing of Royall Tyler's The Contrast (John Street, April 16, 1787) it was realized that the Articles of Confederation, the first attempt at any kind of formal central government, were doomed to failure. Although Congress had complete control over foreign affairs and some control over interstate relations, all powers not assigned to Congress were retained by the states. Under the Articles of Confederation each state retained its sovereignty, freedom, and independence. Congress was a mere assembly to control certain problems common to all states. All its authority was derived from the states and changes in the Articles

---

[3] Channing, op. cit., III, 448-453.

[4] Arthur Hobson Quinn, A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1923), pp. 53-54.

could only be made after the approval of Congress and ratification by every state legislature.[5]

With a knowledge of this information one can easily understand why Tyler, who favored a strong central government gave Colonel Manly his great speech:

> Colonel Manly. It must be so, Montague! and is not all the tribe of Mandevilles that shall convince me that a nation, to become great, must first become dissipated. Luxury is surely the bane of a nation: Luxury! which enervates both soul and body, by opening a thousand new sources of enjoyment, opens also, a thousand new sources of contention and want: Luxury! which renders a people weak at home, and accessible to bribery, corruption, and force from abroad. When the Grecian states knew no other tools than the axe and the saw, the Grecians were a great, a free, and a happy people. The kings of Greece devoted their lives to the service of their country, and her senators knew no other superiority over their fellow-citizens than a glorious pre-eminence in danger and virtue. They exhibited to the world a noble spectacle, -- a number of independent states united by a similarity of language, sentiment, manners, common interest, and common consent, in one grand mutual league of protection. And, thus united, long might have continued the cherishers of art and sciences, the protectors of the oppressed, the scourge of tyrants, and the safe asylum of liberty. But when foreign luxury, had crept among them, they sapped the vitals of their virtue. The virtues of their ancestors were only found in their writings. Envy and suspicion, the vices of little minds, possessed them. The various states engendered jealousies of each other: and, more unfortunately, growing jealousy of their great federal council, the Amphictyons, they forgot that their common safety had existed, and would exist, in giving them an honorable extensive prerogative. The common good was lost in the pursuit of private interest; and that people who, by uniting, might have stood against the world in arms, by dividing, crumbled into ruin; -- their name is now only known in the page of the historian, and what

---

5 Channing, op. cit., III, 463-464.

> they once were is all we have left to admire. Oh! that America! Oh! that my country, would in her day, learn the things which belong to her peace![6]

The United States had to make its own way in trade; for Great Britain, still attempting to promote imperial self-sufficiency, deprived the United States of privileges that had been enjoyed by them prior to the Revolution and independence. The source of gold was cut off by the removal of English troops and trade. Because of the low ebb in commerce unemployment became common and radical propaganda found willing listeners.

Royall Tyler saw these problems and yet realized that they could not be solved by the states, each working separately, but that the only solution lay in a strong central government with the states more or less subservient to it. One can realize fully, with such historical information at hand, Tyler's bitterness against the importation of European culture, especially English, as brought out in the characters of Dimple, Jessamy, Charlotte, and Letitia.

The financial embarrassment to the Confederation government was great; it was faced with a debt of well over forty million dollars (six million to France, two million to other European countries, and the rest to the citizens of the United States in the form of back pay to soldiers and certificates of indebtedness

---

[6] Royall Tyler, The Contrast (Allan Gates Halline, editor, American Plays, New York: The American Book Company, 1935), III, 2, p. 28.

for supplies).[7]

Tyler brings out a point along this line when Charlotte asks Manly if he has come to the city to cash his commutation notes. If that were the reason for his coming, she wishes that he would get her some jewelry, and to this utterly selfish sister he says:

> Colonel Manly. I shall be every willing to contribute, as far as it is in my power, to adorn or in any way please my sister; yet I hope I shall never be obliged for this to sell my notes. I may be romantic, but I preserve them as a sacred deposit. Their full amount is due me, but as embarrassments, to the natural consequences of a long war, disable my country from supporting its credit, I shall wait with patience until it is rich enough to discharge them. If that is not in my day, they shall be transmitted as an honorable certificate of posterity, that I have humbly imitated our illustrious WASHINGTON, in having exposed my health and life in the service of my country, without reaping any other reward than the glory of conquering in so arduous a contest.[8]

Thus through the words of Colonel Manly, a soldier, Tyler is pressing the point that the soldiers, who were cashing their notes at that time, were not being fair to their country for which they had given so much. Having been given a fair chance, Tyler was convinced that the United States government could eradicate its debt. One must recall that the Congress in power under the Articles of Confederation could not tax but could only ask the states for the money. The states usually refused. They

---

[7] Channing, op. cit., III, 465-472.

[8] Tyler, op. cit., II, 1, p. 18.

had the powers of taxation and raising money and wished to use that money to their own advantage. This was only one of Tyler's reasons for favoring a strong central government.

At the Annapolis Convention held the first Monday in September, 1786, the suggestion was made by Alexander Hamilton in a report that the defects of the Articles of Confederation should be corrected,and it was decided that a convention should meet the second Monday in May, 1787, at Philadelphia,to discuss the necessary changes. Although he felt that the Articles should be discarded completely, he dared not say so. All the states were to be satisfied,for the changes had to pass all the state legislatures.[9]

It was from the supporters of the idea of a strong central government that Royall Tyler gained his convictions. This group of course was known as the Hamiltonian-Federalists and was made up of the intellectual as well as the propertied classes. John Adams was associated with this group and we know the relationship between Tyler and the Adams family, since Tyler was engaged at one time to the daughter of John Adams. The speech given by Manly concerning the Greek states is a definite reflection of the ideas of this group.

There also seems to be in The Contrast a reflection of

---

[9] Channing, op. cit., III, 473-491.

the trouble encountered at the convention between the large states and the small. For example, Jonathan and Manly were from Massachusetts while Dimple was a New Yorker, if he were anything at all. Massachusetts, Virginia and Pennsylvania were in favor of a strong national government. Because of their size they may have hoped to dominate. However, New York, one of the small states at that time, was an objector to it. It felt that the small states would lose all of their rights and be completely at the mercy of the larger states.

Although the Constitution was ratified by nine states by June 21, 1788, it was not until July 26, 1788 that the last state had accepted it as the ruling power in the United States. At this point the Revolutionary Period of American drama came to a close.[10]

As hostilities had ceased, there was an increased demand by the public for entertainment in the style of the English comedy of manners but with a nationalistic spirit. This style gradually disappeared.

In Samuel Low's The Politician Outwitted (1789) one can see a marked resemblance to Royall Tyler's The Contrast in that an event of political nature is placed in a social background and used as a means of developing a plot. Moreover, as in The Contrast,

---

[10] Channing, op. cit., III, 517-524.

Low compares two specific attitudes toward the Revolution, the Articles of Confederation and the adoption of the Constitution, which were characteristic of numerous people.

The prejudice with which a number considered the proposed changes in the old government is revealed in the character of old Loveyet.[11] At the opening of the play old Loveyet calls Thomas, a servant of the house, to bring the New York Journal and to see if there is anything worth reading concerning the old cause. He will not read it himself lest his eyes fall on something in favor of the opposing side. He is assured by Thomas that nothing in the New York Journal appears except material for the old government in which the states were actually independent agents. In order to anger old Loveyet, Thomas reads a passage from Mr. Child's Daily Advertiser, a paper in favor of the Constitution and a policy of consolidation. It forecasts that the more the Constitution is examined the more converts it will make for its adoption. The convention was sure to pass the federal government by a considerable majority. The reading of such sentiments is too much for Loveyet. Losing his temper at the impudence of Thomas, the old man chases him from the room.

Trueman, a schoolmaster, who favors the new government, enters and in the conversation that follows there is a play on the word constitution. Loveyet claims that the appearance of infirmity

---

[11] A tag-name referring to his prejudice against change.

in his constitution is caused by the tyrannical villainous Constitution. His unwillingness to admit weakness and age is characteristic of the group who refused to see the apparent weaknesses in the old government.[12]

A bitter quarrel between Trueman and Loveyet ensues in which Trueman complains of the ignorance of the age in which anyone could oppose a government like the Constitution. Although Trueman is confident that it will be adopted, old Loveyet is determined it shall not be adopted in that state. Trueman, in an attempt to reason with the obstinate Loveyet, quotes passages from the new Constitution. His words fall on unattentive ears. His unwillingness to listen has branded Loveyet as prejudiced; he remains firm in his conviction that his liberty and property have fallen victim to a devilish design of the Constitution. The old constitution suits him perfectly. To Trueman, on the contrary, the old one was a mere shadow of a government. He also argues that because the states consolidate, it does not mean that they will be annihilated. If Loveyet had studied Thomas Paine's Common Sense, he might have understood the situation. It seems impossible to convince Loveyet that the government as it stands is leading him and thousands of others to ruin. Trueman is the father of Harriet, who loves young Loveyet, son of old Loveyet. For Trueman's unkind remarks Harriet

---

[12] Samuel Low, The Politician Outwitted (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), I, pp. 359-360.

shall not marry Loveyet's son.[13]

Humphry, the ignorant servant of Loveyet, would like to know about the Constitution but even when Trueman puts his explanation of the document in the most vulgar vernacular, Humphry does not understand. Loveyet will have Trueman know that the old constitution would hurt no person. That, to Trueman, is where the trouble lies, but he is still confident that the new Constitution will pass since Massachusetts has ratified it, and thus becomes the sixth state of the required nine. Once the new form of government is adopted, Trueman is sure the nine muses will make their home in the United States.[14] The love plot eventually works out to a satisfactory conclusion.

---

[13] Low, op. cit., II, 2, pp. 375-378.

[14] Ibid., IV, 1, pp. 398-402.

CHAPTER XIII

THE NEUTRAL AND ROYALIST PLAYS OF THE PERIOD

On the whole the Revolutionary satires were either by patriots or by royalists, but Colonel Robert Munford of Mecklenburg, Virginia, expressed in his two plays, The Candidates, and The Patriots, a more neutral attitude which was, no doubt, characteristic of a great number of the colonial people. The Candidates is a satire on the methods of electing the Assembly members. The tone of The Patriots is one of pacifism. This play brands the American soldiers as Ambidexterian braggarts and cowards, and the Whig Committee as ignorant, intolerant, and suspicious men. It favors a view of moderation as illustrated by the characters of Trueman and Meanwell, who are representative of a group of people in the colonies that could not at first make up its mind on which side to lay its loyalty, but which finally decided in favor of the American cause and then fought vigorously.[1]

Since during the early stages of the controversy with Britain the Tory view seemed as popular as the patriotic or neutral attitude, it was natural that the Tory stand should also be set forth in the plays of the period. The earliest piece showing

---

[1] Arthur Hobson Quinn, A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1923), pp. 55-56.

the Tory sympathies was an anonymous one, A Dialogue Between a Southern Delegate and His Spouse on His Return from the Grand Continental Congress, A Fragment Inscribed to the Married Ladies of America, By their most affectionate Friend and Servant Mary V. V. In this short work, a wife speaks against the Continental Congress, to which her husband is a delegate, and suggests that it might have been more sensible to have sent women. In her speech -

> ... Your Non-Imports, and Exports, are full fraught with Ruin.
> Of thousands, and thousands, the utter undoing -

she voices the hatred of the non-importation acts. The question is brought up as to whether the Congress might not be of a tyrannical nature even though the colonies did avoid utter ruin. She closes with the advice to:

> ... Make your peace: — Fear the King: — The Parliament fear.[2]

Jonathan Sewall of Massachusetts was a great friend of John Adams and at one time favored the patriotic cause. He was Attorney-General of the colony from 1767 until 1775. In that year he sailed to England, and wrote the next Tory satire, The American Roused in a Cure for the Spleen, or Amusement for a Winter's Evening. Being the Substance of a Conversation on the Times over a Friendly Tankard and Pipe between Sharp, a country Parson; Bumper, a country Justice; Fillpot, an Innkeeper; Graveairs, a Deacon; Trim,

---

[2] Quinn, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

a Barber; Brim, a Quaker, Puff, a late Representative. Taken in short hand by Sir Roger de Coverly. Sharp, Bumper, and Trim voice the Tory view while Puff and Fillpot represent the supposed ignorance of the Americans.[3]

The anonymous Battle of Brooklyn, A Farce in Two Acts, As it was performed on Long Island, on Tuesday, the 27th of August, 1776. By the Representatives of the Tyrants of America Assembled at Philadelphia, ridicules the conduct of the battle by the patriot army and slanders Washington, Putnam, and other persons of importance.[4]

A Tory work which appeared late in the war is The Blockheads; or, Fortunate Contractor, A Opera in Two Acts as Performed in New York. The Music entirely new, Composed by Several of the most eminent Masters in Europe, reveals the uncertainty facing the Americans at the close of the war as to whether to form a close union with France or one with England. Americana (a personification of America) decides to join with England since she fears that France has her eyes on Maryland and Virginia. The first edition, which was supposed to have been published in New York, has never been found and it may have been merely Tory propaganda originating in

---

[3] Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, 1765-1819 (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918), p. 213.

[4] Quinn, op. cit., pp. 57-58.

England.[5]

Arthur Hornblow in his History of the Theatre in America states that it is his belief that after Congress in 1778 had issued a more stringent decree prohibiting play-acting in any form, as far as the Americans were concerned, the drama might have vanished altogether, but for the young British military officers who took theatrical work as a pleasant means of diversion from the ravages of war with which they were constantly faced. From 1775 to 1783 the American stage was in the hands of the British military group. Strangely enough this group gave American authors a chance and an incentive to create things for the theatre from American materials. Previously the American theatre had been almost entirely derivative and as a matter of fact the Americans remained tied to England intellectually for many years.[6]

Almost immediately after Congress had issued its mandate to close the theatres and seen it carried out, the British reopened them, General Burgoyne taking the first step at Boston in 1775 by turning Faneuil Hall into a theatre.[7] It was here that Burgoyne, who took as much pride in his playwriting as he did in his leader-

---

[5] Quinn, op. cit., pp. 58-59.

[6] Arthur Hornblow, A History of the Theatre in America from Its Beginning to the Present Time (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1919), pp. 148-149.

[7] Ibid., p. 151.

ship, had his farce, The Blockade of Boston, presented for the first time. This play drew a stinging reply from the pen of Mrs. Mercy Otis Warren in The Blockheads; or, the Affrighted Officers.[8]

Because of deplorable conditions during the winter of 1776-1777, the British garrison in New York followed the example of General Burgoyne and took up theatrical work.[9] During the winter of 1777-1778 General Howe and his players, British officers and soldiers' wives, opened the Theatre in Southwark. It is interesting to note that the leading individuals in this group of amateur players were Major Andre and Captain Delancey.[10] Little is known of General Clinton's troop of players, but that there was such a group seems certain.[11]

Although the productions of the various British playing

---

[8] The most striking incident that occurred during one of the British productions was during a production of Burgoyne's Blockade of Boston on January 8, 1776, in Boston. The farce had already begun when a sergeant appeared and announced, "The Yankees are attacking our work on Bunker's Hill." At first it was thought that the lines belonged to the play, but the orders of General Howe, who was present, soon showed that the report was the result of the attack by the Americans under Major Knowlton upon the British lines in Charlestown, and the performance was broken up. Quinn, op. cit., p. 59. Moses, op. cit., p. 211.

[9] Hornblow, op. cit., p. 152.

[10] Thomas Clarke Pollack, The Philadelphia Theatre in the Eighteenth Century Together with the Day Book of the Same period. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933), p. 34. A list of the plays which were presented by Howe's players may be found on pp. 130-132 of Pollack's book.

[11] Moses, op. cit., p. 211.

groups were amateur, they did all in their power to make them appear professional in type, and must be given credit for trying to keep a high standard of production and to keep alive on the part of the audience an interest in the drama.[12]

---

[12] Hornblow, op. cit., pp. 157-158.

CHAPTER XIV

CONCLUSION

By means of the foregoing chapters, a running history of the Revolutionary Era, as revealed in the political and social dramas of the period, has been traced. Not all the incidents of the war have been set down in dramatic form. Enough have, however, been set down to point out their importance in the recording of early American history. One must remember that the Continental Congress looked with disfavor upon theatrical writings and productions during the main part of the Revolution.[1] Because of that fact alone, it is remarkable that the story of America's fight for independence may be traced in the drama even in part.

The dramatic writings referred to in this work are two types: namely, those written at the time of the events, and those written after reflective thought. The former type consists of propaganda challenges to the spirit of patriotism, and the latter consists mainly of recordings of specific events.

---

[1] "We will, in our several stations, encourage frugality, economy, and industry, and promote agriculture, arts, and the manufactures of this country, especially that of wool; and will discountenance and discourage every species of extravagance and dissipation, especially all horse-racing, and all kinds of gaming, cock-fighting, exhibitions of shews, plays, and other expensive diversions and entertainments." Worthington Chauncey Ford, editor, Journals of the Continental Congress (Washington: 1904), I, 78.

Since most of the anti-American plays of the period are not extant, this work is confined in the most part to those plays by pro-American writers: Mrs. Mercy Otis Warren, John Leacock, Hugh Henry Brackenridge, Thomas Paine, Royall Tyler, Samuel Low, and William Dunlap.

As the story of the struggle for American independence opens, we find in John Leacock's The Fall of British Tyranny (1776), a recounting of the intellectual conflict between Britain and the American colonies, brought about by Lord Bute, his corrupt government, and his personal desire for gain, and the ultimate move by the British in sending General Gage and troops to subject Boston and Massachusetts to British tyranny, a move which the British sympathizers for America could not prevent. Although the play contains references to the Boston Massacre, the best account of the incident, as well as the prevailing conditions in Massachusetts, is found in Mrs. Mercy Warren's The Adulateur (1773). In this play we see patriotism as exemplified in John Adams and Samuel Adams, James Otis, John Hancock, and others, rise above the fear of British tyranny under George III, Lord Bute, and a corrupt and cruel parliament. Mrs. Warren's The Group (1775) succeeds in pointing out and commenting upon all the corrupt and sycophant Tories of Massa chusetts at that time. In both plays, however, her heaviest blows fall upon the administration of Thomas Hutchinson. The arrival of General Gage and his reception on the part of American

colonists are revealed in The Fall of British Tyranny.

The inevitable had arrived and Massachusetts was the scene for the opening battle. Not only The Fall of British Tyranny but also Hugh Henry Brackenridge's The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (1776) record the events and its stimulating effect upon American morale.

Because of the faith of the Americans in the Second Continental Congress, as revealed in The Fall of British Tyranny and The Battle of Bunker's-Hill, it succeeded in its work. Soon after its convening it was faced with two problems which are brought out in plays. The early attacks on Canada, as recounted in The Fall of British Tyranny, constituted the first problem. The selection of George Washington as Commander-in-Chief of the American forces, as recounted in the same play, was the second.

Other battles were ably handled in other plays. The actual conflict of the Battle of Bunker's Hill is revealed in a play by the same name. The three British attacks, the two repulsions, and the final retreat of the Americans are there pictured. Also by Brackenridge, The Death of General Montgomery in Storming the City of Quebec (1777) reveals the repulse of Americans in Canada. In conjunction with Brackenridge's account, I have used Leacock's The Fall of British Tyranny to reveal the effects these Canadian set-backs had upon the American leaders and forces under General Washington. Lord Dunmore's personal war in the South, is recounted in The Fall of British Tyranny.

An anonymous play, perhaps by Mrs. Warren, The Blockheads; or, the Affrighted Officers (1776) gives one the best account of the freeing of Boston. In addition, however, the speech of General Washington at the end of Brackenridge's The Battle of Bunker's-Hill is a valuable plea for joy, yet serious thought.

The all-important work dealing with the Declaration of Independence is Thomas Paine's A Dialogue between the Ghost of General Montgomery just Arrived from the Elysian Fields; and an American Delegate in a wood near Philadelphia (1776), although The Fall of British Tyranny reveals the general growth of sentiment toward the views of Thomas Paine's Common Sense.

The rising of American nationalism and the turning from foreign thought and culture are revealed in The Motley Assembly (1779), Royall Tyler's The Contrast (1789), Samuel Low's The Politician Outwitted (1789), and in William Dunlap's Andre (1798), the latter being an account of a British spy and the tyranny of Benedict Arnold.

A discussion of neutral and royalist plays by such playwrights as Colonel Robert Munford, Jonathan Sewall, General Burgoyne, and others, I felt was necessary to round out the discussion.

Thus, having consulted a number of available critics, and authorities on American theatrical, political and social history, as well as the plays themselves, one is led to conclude that the

dramatic writings of the Revolutionary Period exerted a powerful influence upon the political and social history of the time, not only by recording specific physical and intellectual incidents in the war, but also by setting forth just the right amount of impetus in the form of political and social propaganda to bring about necessary changes in the political and social attitudes of the American people. A recognition of the place of the American drama in the history of the Revolutionary Period has, heretofore, been somewhat neglected. I feel, however, that the early American plays should be allowed to take their rightful place among the important pamphlets, documents,and records of that period.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. DRAMATIC WORKS

Brackenridge, Hugh Henry, The Battle of Bunker's-Hill (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists) New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918. Pp. 235-276.

_____ The Death of General Montgomery in Storming the City of Quebec. Norwich: J. Trumbull, 1777. Pp. 1-50. (Reproduced by photography by the University of Chicago).

Dunlap, William, Andre (Allan Gates Halline, editor, American Plays). New York: American Book Company, 1935. Pp. 50-74.

Halline, Allan Gates, editor, American Plays. New York: American Book Company, 1935. Pp. 46-49.

Leacock, John, The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, 1765-1819). New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918. Pp. 279-350.

Low, Samuel, The Politician Outwitted, (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, 1765-1819). New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918. Pp. 353-429.

Moses, Montrose J., editor, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, 1765-1819. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918. Pp. 211-213-214, 279-281, 353-355, 433-439, 501-506.

Paine, Thomas, A Dialogue Between the Ghost of General Mongtgomery just arrived from the Elysian Fields; and an American Delegate in a wood near Philadelphia, (Philip S. Foner, editor, The Complete Writings of Thomas Paine). New York: The Citadel Press, 1945, II, 88-93.

Tyler, Royall, The Contrast, (Allen Gates Halline, editor, American Plays). New York: American Book Company, 1935. Pp. 10-39.

Warren, Mrs. Mercy Otis, The Adulateur. Boston: New Printing Office near Concert Hall, 1773. Pp. 1-34.

_____ The Group, (Montrose J. Moses, editor, Representative

Plays by American Dramatists, 1765-1819). New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1918. Pp. 219-232.

Anonymous, The Blockheads; or, the Affrighted Officers. Boston: Queen Street, 1776. Pp. 1-19. (Reproduced by photography from the Fred W. Atkinson Collection by the University of Chicago).

B. HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL WORKS

Adams, Charles Francis, editor, The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States: with a Life of the Author. Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1856, IX, 339-340, 354, 356; X, 98-100.

Becker, Carl, The Eve of the Revolution, A Chronicle of the Breach with England (Allen Johnson, editor, The Chronicles of America Series) New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920, XI, 228-230.

Bradley, A. G., Colonial Americans in Exile, Founders of British Canada. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1932. Pp. 98-102.

Burnett, Edmund Cody, The Continental Congress. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941. Pp. 67-78.

Channing, Edward, A History of the United States. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918, III, 30-79, 81-87, 97-102, 105-106, 198-206, 210-236, 241-273, 279-303, 305-307, 318-340, 346-374, 448-453, 463-491, 517-524.

Curti, Merle, The Roots of American Loyalty. New York: Columbia University Press, 1946. Pp. 14, 18-19.

Davidson, Philip, Propaganda and the American Revolution, 1763-1783. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941. Pp. 193, 211-212, 241, 352.

Fiske, John, The American Revolution, (John Fiske's Historical Writings). New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1902, X, 152-172, 196-202, 204-231.

Ford, Worthington Chauncey, editor, Journals of the Continental Congress 1774-1789. Washington: 1904, I, 78.

Hart, Albert Bushnell, Commonwealth History of Massachusetts. New York: The States History Company, 1929, II, 316.

Hornblow, Arthur, A History of the Theatre in America from Its Beginning to the Present Time. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1919, I, 152, 157-158.

Macmillan, Margaret Burnham, The War Governors in the American Revolution. New York: Columbia University Press, 1943. Pp. 22-25, 27, 79.

Newlin, Claude Milton, The Life and Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1932.

Pollock, Thomas Clark, The Philadelphia Theatre in the Eighteenth Century Together with the Day Book of the same period. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933. Pp. 34, 130-132.

Quinn, Arthur Hobson, A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1923. Pp. 1, 33-35, 40-47, 52-59, 216.

Trevelyan, Sir George Otto, The American Revolution. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1926, I, 286-290.

Tyler, Moses Coit, The Literary History of the American Revolution 1763-1783. New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1941, II, 193-208, 211-224.

Van Tyne, Claude Halstead, The American Revolution 1776-1783, (Albert Bushnell Hart, editor, The American Nation, A History). New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1905, IX, 32-33, 39-44, 46-49, 59-61.

Willis, Eola, The Charleston Stage in the XVIII Century with Social Settings of the Time. Columbia, S. C.: The State Company, 1924. P. 73.

Van Doren, Carl, Secret History of the United States. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918. Pp. 151-370.