

so they quickly and wisely concluded that it was high time to give up (1777). The British soldiers, therefore, laid down their arms, and the Americans marched into their camp playing "Yankee Doodle," the tune they had adopted as a national air.

We are told that Burgoyne, on handing Gates his sword in token of surrender, proudly remarked: "The fortune of war, General Gates, has made me your prisoner;" to which Gates answered, as he gave it back: "I shall always be ready to bear testimony that it has not been through any fault of your Excellency." Later on, touched by the courtesy of Schuyler, whose house he had burned down, Burgoyne said: "You show me much kindness, though I have done you much injury." "That was the fate of war," said Schuyler, kindly; "let us say no more about it."



LXXI. THE WINTER AT VALLEY FORGE.

ALTHOUGH Gates received all the credit at first, the battles of Saratoga were really won by Schuyler, Morgan, and Arnold. Burgoyne's surrender proved the turning point of the Revolutionary War, so the fight at Saratoga is known as one of the decisive battles of the world. Not only did it end the British plan of separating New England from the Southern states, but it made the French promise to help the Americans openly. It also gave King George such a fright that he even offered to let the Americans send members to Parliament, if they would lay down their arms and promise to obey him.

But this offer, which would have more than satisfied the colonists a short time before, came too late. They had suffered so much that they were not willing to give up what they had won and again become subject to a king who, like those who had come before him, might at any time change his mind or break his promises. Besides, they remembered only too clearly that, after granting charters, kings had often taken them away again, and so they decided to keep on fighting until the matter was settled once for all.

The news of the victory at Saratoga created a great sensation in Paris, where the French had been waiting to see how things turned out before they openly sided with the Americans. The king now not only acknowledged the independence of the United Colo-

nies of America (1778), but made a treaty of friendship and commerce with them, and soon sent a fleet to help them fight the British.

This happy turn of affairs was mainly brought about by Franklin, who for the past two years had been making as many friends for America as he could. Every one admired him for his learning and good nature, and the French minister Turgot (tur-go') once proposed his health, saying: "He snatched a thunderbolt from heaven, and the scepter from the hand of the tyrant!"

But Franklin—who had a keen sense of humor, and, like all really great men, was very modest—smiled, and quaintly answered that while he appreciated the kindness of the speech, he was obliged to confess that not only had he left thunder in the clouds, just where he had found it, but that more than one million of his countrymen had helped him snatch the scepter from the hands of the tyrant!

News traveled so slowly in those days that it took months before Franklin heard of Burgoyne's surrender, and before Washington and Howe received word that the French were going to help the colonies openly. These months were full of hardships for all the Americans, for while the men were away fighting, the heroic women were obliged to do the men's work at home, as well as their own.

Washington's army, as we have seen, had encamped at Valley Forge, where the soldiers lived in rude log huts. They were without proper food or clothes, and cowered miserably over campfires, for which they had to carry wood on their backs from neighboring forests. Even General Washington had but one room, and lived on cabbage and potatoes, with a few hickory nuts for dessert from time to time.



At Valley Forge.

His heart was wrung at the sight of his men's sufferings, and as soon as his wife joined him at Valley Forge, he begged her to work as hard as she could to supply the men with stockings. Mrs. Washington's own knitting needles now flew faster than ever; besides, she interested all her friends in the work, and every day visited the soldiers' quarters, carrying to them the stout garments thus secured. But provisions grew so scarce that

Washington had to send all the women home, and Mrs. Washington again withdrew to Mount Vernon, where she lived as economically as possible, working day and night for her husband and the army.

As if matters were not bad enough already, some of the officers now formed a plot to take the command away from Washington, and put Gates at the head of the army in his stead. This plot, known as the Conway Cabal, was headed by a man named Conway, to whom Washington had been particularly kind, but who was angry because he had not been promoted as fast as he wished.

The question was brought before Congress at Baltimore, where, hearing that there was danger of Washington's being dismissed for lack of a vote, Du'er, one of his friends, although ill in bed, determined to go to the meeting. His doctor, however, said that if he did so it would be at the risk of his life. "Do you mean I should expire before reaching the place?" asked Duer. "No; but I should not answer for your leaving it alive," replied the doctor. Hearing this, the good man firmly said: "Very well, sir, you have done your duty; now I will do mine." Then he called for a litter to carry him to Congress.

Luckily for him, some of Washington's friends came back in time to prevent his leaving his sick room. But better still for the welfare of our country that the Conway plot failed, and Washington remained at the head of the army. Conway had been so ungrateful that he was forced to leave the country, where people despised him for the mean part he had played.

All these trials wrung Washington's noble heart, and as he had no privacy in his headquarters, he sometimes rode out alone to think. A Quaker, hearing a noise in the bushes, once stole up cautiously, and found the general's horse tied to a tree. A few feet farther away, he beheld Washington kneeling in the snow, praying aloud for his country, with great tears streaming down his cheeks. The good Quaker crept away again unseen, but in telling the story some years later, he remarked that he felt at the time that the Lord could not but answer the fervent prayer of so good a man.

