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REVIEW

OF

LORD MAHON'S HISTORY

OF THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

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AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

John G. Palfrey

FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW FOR JULY, 1852.

BOSTON:
LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY.
1852.

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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1852, by
LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY,
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RIVERSIDE, CAMBRIDGE:
PRINTED BY H. O. HOUGHTON AND COMPANY.

REVIEW.

[*History of England from the Peace of Utrecht.* By LORD MAHON. Vols. V. and VI. 1763–1780. London. John Murray, 1851. pp. 500, xliii. 501, xliii.]

WE are not going to comment on these agreeable volumes at large. We have read them with great interest and enjoyment; — not with satisfaction; that is more than we can say. Lord Mahon is a better historical writer than either of the eminent persons who have treated any portion of English history between the Revolution of 1688 and the accession of George the Third. He is a more reasonable, at all events a more moderate, Tory than Mr. Adolphus, who began at the latter era. Indeed, one chief merit of his book is the fair and generous spirit which for the most part pervades it. It is quite plain that he means to maintain good faith with subjects and readers, to tell the story frankly and truly, and impartially to award praise and blame. It is further clear that he has right and manly feelings, a quiet sympathy with whatever is honorable and amiable in character, and an honest antipathy for what is base. "I feel," he says, in one of his earlier volumes, "that to state any fact without sufficient authority, or to draw any character without thorough conviction, implies not merely literary failure, but moral guilt. Of any such unfair intention I hope the reader may acquit me — I am sure I can acquit myself."* Of all such unfair intention we cordially acquit his Lordship. And because we do so, we assure ourselves of his favorable reception of a few corrections which we are presently to make of some of his unintentional misstatements.

Lord Mahon is not only an upright historian, but a writer, in the main, competent and accomplished for his work. If he makes no parade of philosophical disquisition, his exhibition of events and actors is such that the reader easily gets at the lessons, with the added pleasure

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* Vol. i. p. 3.

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of seeming to make them his own discovery. His style is perspicuous and flowing. Though not distinguished by vigor or grace, it gets over the ground evenly, and with speed enough, without Gibbon's stilts, or the ground-and-lofty tumbling of Carlyle. It has the great merit of a flexibility which makes it equal to dignified narrative, and which, at the same time, permits the introduction, without abruptness or jar, of personal anecdotes and illustrations of a lighter character.

As to materials, besides those already before the public in print, Lord Mahon had the advantage of consulting the valuable family papers transmitted from his ancestor, General Stanhope, the soldier and statesman of Anne and George the First; those (still in manuscript) of the Yorke family, the family of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke; the manuscript Memoirs of the Duke of Grafton; collections relating to the schemes and enterprises of the expelled dynasty, particularly the Stuart papers presented by the Pope to the Prince Regent after the death of Cardinal York; and the Grenville papers, now in the possession of George Grenville's descendant, the Duke of Buckingham. Lord Mahon says that he had also opportunity "to examine the despatches to and from America in our State Paper Office." * That opportunity, we fear, he did not suitably estimate or profit by. In those portions of his work which relate to American affairs, we see no evidence of his having pushed his researches in that branch of his subject at all beyond the commonest histories, nor far in them.

To carry out his purpose of impartiality, when treating of the disputes between Great Britain and her colonies, was no easy thing for Lord Mahon, with his strong Tory inclinings. We have said that we have no doubt of his having aimed at it. We doubt as little that he has failed of entire success. But though we cannot help tracing repeatedly in his work the operation of this disturbing element, we are bound to avow our opinion that it is not this chiefly which has made his treatment of the American part of his subject an unsatisfactory one. The simple truth is, that, as to this important portion of his

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* Vol. vi. Ap. p. iv.

work, — and what is there in modern history more important than the relations between Great Britain and America for the twenty years from 1763? — he does not appear to have sufficiently informed himself before he proceeded to write upon it. We suppose that his reading in the American historians does not extend beyond the works of Grahame, Bancroft, Gordon, and Ramsay, and that it is only a portion of the majority of these which has engaged his notice.

We also strongly suspect that, not having had his attention previously drawn to its importance, and learning it only by degrees as it forced itself upon him in the prosecution of his work, Lord Mahon had written up to the year 1765 before looking with any curiosity at the history of the colonies; and that he was content, as measures and events in England succeeded each other in his narrative, to acquaint himself successively and singly with the corresponding ones in America. Of course, this is not the way to write history; and this is not the way in which Lord Mahon has written the rest of his work. But, unless we greatly mistake, such is the account to be given of the comparatively barren, fragmentary, superficial, lifeless character of that portion of it which most interests us. One may make a chapter in a book of annals correctly without knowing any thing out of its limits. But history deals with sequences of cause and effect. Its large discourse looks before and after. How could Lord Mahon have written the English history of the Georges, as well as he has done, without being well read in the times of the Stuarts, the Commonwealth, and the Revolution? How could he be expected to understand much better than he appears to do the men and the measures of Massachusetts, without knowing something of its disputes with the mother country as far back as under the old charter?

We think that his Lordship mentions the English North American colonies but once in his first three volumes; that is, before the peace of Aix la Chapelle in 1748. And then he mentions them to relate the capture of Louisburg in just the following words, and no more.

"The people of New England had formed a design for reducing Louisburg, the capital of Cape Breton, a French port of great importance, and sometimes termed the Dunkirk of America.

The King's Government afforded its assistance to the enterprise. Early in the spring, about 4000 volunteers assembled at Boston: they were reinforced by a body of marines, and supported by Admiral Warren with a squadron of ten ships of war. For their commander they chose Mr. Pepperel, a private gentleman, in whom courage and sagacity supplied the place of military skill. Landing with very slight loss at Gabarus, four miles from Louisburg, they invested the place by land while the fleet blockaded the harbor. The walls were newly repaired and the garrison mustered 1200 men, and a resolute resistance was encountered; but, nevertheless, on the 15th of June, after forty-nine days' siege, the town and the whole island were compelled to surrender to the British arms." Vol. iii. p. 299.

What can it be imagined that the writer of this knew of the campaign against Cape Breton in 1745? What idea had he of the nature of that enterprise? The capture of Louisburg was a very extraordinary exploit, in its conception, in its conduct, in its consequences. It was one of the wildest undertakings ever projected by sane people. Crusaders of the twelfth century, rather than Yankees of the eighteenth, might be supposed to have devised it. Indeed, a sort of crusading fervor was part of its impulse. A chaplain took with him a hatchet which he had consecrated to a service of iconoclasm in the French churches; and Whitefield furnished the legend for the flag of the New Hampshire troops, *Nil desperandum, Christo duce.* The Massachusetts people were vexed by the vicinity of the French at Louisburg, then a sort of naval guard-house for the North American continent, like Halifax now. Louisburg, about five hundred miles distant from the capital of Massachusetts, was one of the strongest fortresses of the world, both by nature and art. Of a sudden, the idea was conceived of surprising it in the winter with a party of militia, and scaling its walls, over thirty feet high, with the help of the snow banks. The attempt was finally resolved upon in the Massachusetts General Court by a majority of one vote. As all the artillery at command was ten eighteen-pounders, borrowed from New York, the plan was, should a siege become necessary, to depend mainly on a park of forty-two-pounders, to be first taken from an outwork of the French. Col. Pepperell was not at all "chosen to the command" by volunteers, but regularly appointed, as

usual, by the Governor in Council. He had "courage and sagacity" in abundance; but he had had some experience, too, with the French and Indians in Maine; and as to his being deficient in "military skill," to suppose that is to make it all the more difficult to explain how Louisburg fell, which is hard enough already. It did fall, at all events, to the amazement of America and Europe, after six or seven weeks of siege by Pepperell's militia, and blockade by Commodore Warren.* The garrison, when it capitulated, consisted of 600 regulars and 1200 militia men, a force half as large again as Lord Mahon supposes. Of the besieging force there were 3250 Massachusetts men, exclusive of commissioned officers, 516 of Connecticut, and 304 of New Hampshire. The assailants were short of powder and provisions, and ill provided with camp equipage. Their siege artillery they had taken in "the grand battery" at Louisburg, according to the scheme laid out at Boston.

On the arrival in London of the Mermaid frigate with the news, her commander received a gratuity of five hundred guineas; "the park and tower guns were fired, and a general joy and gladness," says a London newspaper, "was diffused through the whole kingdom. Advices were forthwith sent to his Majesty in Hanover, who was graciously pleased to express the highest satisfaction. . . . . . And in further testimony how acceptable this important acquisition is to his Majesty, a patent has been sent from Hanover, creating Mr. Pepperell a baronet of Great Britain. . . . . . His Grace the Duke of Newcastle has in the most affectionate manner expressed the just sense the nation has of the service of the New England troops; that it will reflect everlasting honor on their country; and, happening when affairs in Europe were in so bad a situation, it will still the more endear them to his Majesty." The Gentlemen's Magazine took occasion to say, "Our countrymen and kinsmen of New England are like shrubs and trees which increase in beauty and vigor by being transplanted. They almost shame the soil of their ancestors

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* Lord Mahon says that Pepperell landed his troops "at Gabarus." In the rude old map of Colonel Gridley, the provincial engineer, the well known *Chapeau Rouge Bay* is called *Gabarus Bay*, — we suppose, a corruption of the former name, the *G* in Gabarus being pronounced soft.

by their stately growth." Moore's doctrine was not yet broached;

> "In glorious beauty woods and fields appear;
> Man is the only growth that dwindles here."

The event was one of those singular ones which baffle all reasonable calculation. The enterprise seemed to have no one element of success, but its daring. Douglas calls it "the very, very, very rash, but very, very, very fortunate expedition against Cape Breton;" and says that "if any one circumstance had taken a wrong turn on our side, and if any one circumstance had not taken a wrong turn on the French side, the expedition must have miscarried, and our forces would have returned with shame, and an inextricable loss to the province." *

All this may be nothing to the purpose of Lord Mahon's "History of England." But it is to the purpose of that history that the capture of Louisburg was, as far as England was concerned, the great event of the war of the Imperial succession of 1741 – 1748. England had no other success in that war, to compare with it. It was not without occasion that "His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, in the most affectionate manner, expressed the just sense the nation had of the service of the New England troops;" for that service of theirs extricated His Grace from infinite perplexity, and the nation from danger not a little. We think it would not be attaching too much importance to it to say, that by saving the honor of England, it gave peace to Europe. England, adopting the basis of the *status ante bellum*, for the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, bought back from France, by the retrocession of Louisburg in 1748, the conquests which the more fortunate arms of her rival had been wresting from her on the other side of the water; — a disposition of it, no doubt, very much to the discontent and chagrin of the New England actors and sufferers, but very greatly to her own aid and comfort. Lord Mahon had not sufficiently informed himself respecting the place of that event in the history of England, when he wrote the little paragraph which we have quoted.†

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* *Summary of the British Settlements, &c.*, vol. i. p. 336.

† The facts above stated are partly taken from the original "Letters relating to the Expedition against Cape Breton," (Massachusetts Historical Collections, vol. i.) and partly from newspapers of the time.

Throughout his work, the noble author appears disposed to do hearty justice to Washington, whom he introduces in the following terms:

"On the Ohio, the French surprised and sacked Blocks Town, a settlement of the Virginians, who, in return, sent forward Major George Washington at the head of 400 men, and with orders to attack Fort Duquesne. But this officer having advanced to a place called Little Meadows, found himself surrounded in a small fort by superior numbers, and, notwithstanding his resolute resistance, overpowered: he was compelled to capitulate, marching out, however, with military honors. This skirmish, of small importance, perhaps, in itself, was yet amongst the principal causes of the war. It is no less memorable as the first appearance in the pages of history of one of their brightest ornaments, — of that great and good man, GENERAL WASHINGTON." * Vol. iv. pp. 65, 66.

But notwithstanding this good disposition, Lord Mahon's want of sufficient study of the transactions of those times causes him to rob Washington of part of his due. For instance, in describing that miserable business, the defeat of General Braddock,† he fails to relate that Braddock's stupid proceedings were in haughty opposition to the remonstrances of his Virginian aid-de-camp, and that the intrepidity and conduct of the latter in the action attracted the universal admiration of the country, were extolled to and by the British ministry, and in short gave

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* Here are some little mistakes. For "Blocks Town," one should read *Logstown*, (which, however, had not been taken by the French,) and for "Little Meadows," *Great Meadows*. And when Washington was "sent forward," it was not "with orders to attack Fort Duquesne," which was not yet in existence, but to help in building upon its site a fort to be begun by another Virginia officer, who preceded him. The unfinished work was taken by the French, under Contrecœur, before Washington reached it. — Speaking of Washington's family further on, (vi. 64) Lord Mahon says, "His great grandfather, John Washington, had settled in Virginia about eighty years before, (that is about 1652,) and was descended from an old gentleman's family in England. There was a common descent between them and the Earls of Ferrers, whose ancient device — three mullets above two bars argent, as blazoned in the Herald's College, and as borne by that line of Earls, appears no less on the seal of the American General." But the connection of the name Washington with the Earldom of Ferrers, dates from as late a time as that of the marriage (about 1675) of Elizabeth Washington to Robert Shirley, afterwards Earl of Ferrers, while the Washington arms are known to have been borne by the family of that name as early as 1564, and probably much earlier. Can any one tell us whether the stars and stripes of the American flag (of the origin of which we must own our ignorance) have any relation to the mullets and bars in the arms of the commander-in-chief?

† Vol. iv. pp. 68 – 70.

him at once a great fame. Lord Mahon does not mention Washington's name as having a place in the expedition or the battle. Nor in relating that Braddock's "troops sought safety in headlong flight," is he careful to confine this remark to the regulars, or to state that while they, according to the official report, "broke and ran, as sheep before hounds," the provincials exerted themselves with steady valor to cover their retreat.

Again, in relating the capture of Fort Duquesne, in 1758, by General Forbes, which, next to the capture of Quebec, (though at a long distance,) was the great event in breaking the French power on this continent, Lord Mahon speaks of the march from Philadelphia as having been "fraught with no common difficulties," which, "however, were courageously overcome." * But he ignores the leading part taken by Washington and the militia in that expedition. Washington was the life of it, though he is not so much as named by our author in connection with the affair. In the only action which occurred in the course of it (that of the 14th of September) the regulars were again beaten, and it was owing to the Virginians that the detachment was not cut to pieces. If no better management than that of General Forbes had been at work for the overcoming of its difficulties, Fort Duquesne instead of Pittsburg might have stood at the forks of the Ohio at this day. At twenty-six years of age, Washington had established the military reputation which, seventeen years later, made him commander-in-chief of the forces of the united Colonies. It was at the close of this campaign that he received the thanks of the Virginia House of Burgesses, and that, being overcome with embarrassment when he attempted to reply, the Speaker said, "Sit down, Mr. Washington, your modesty is equal to your valor, and that surpasses the power of any language I can use."

The war with the Cherokees in South Carolina, in 1759–1761, Lord Mahon, with his right feelings, would not have related as he has done,† except from imperfect knowledge. It was altogether a brutal affair. The Indians, no doubt, when foolishly and cruelly injured, carried on the conflict after the ferocious fashion of their race. But Lyttleton, the English governor of South Carolina,

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* Vol. iv. p. 203. †Ibid. pp. 291, 292.

was the person chiefly culpable. The Cherokees had been friendly. With small thanks and less reward they had done useful service in the expedition to the Ohio. There had been some disorders on the frontier, and the chiefs had quieted their people; but Lyttleton wanted revenge. With needless and heedless obstinacy, regardless of the opinions of his best counsellors, — for Lyttleton was a martinet and, *quoad hoc*, a blockhead, — he insisted on having the last Cherokee offenders put to death or surrendered to him, when the savages thought, not without reason, that the account had already been pretty fairly squared, especially as they were not the original aggressors. Sincerely desirous of peace, and submitting to unusual humiliations to preserve it, they were driven into war by the outrageous violence and perfidies of the governor, who went so far as to keep their envoys as prisoners, and at length to put them to death under the miserable pretence of a conspiracy. His "treaty of peace," of which Lord Mahon speaks, was all a sham, well known by him to be so, and only intended to give a color to his violent proceedings; it was made with unauthorized persons, and in disregard of Indian customs. If, the war begun, the Indians carried it on with ferocity, the English did no less. A party, sent from the north by General Amherst, under Colonel Montgomery, and joined by a South Carolina force, committed horrible devastation among the poor savages. At length, the Indians waylaid him at Crow's Creek, and handled his party so roughly that he immediately made a rapid retreat from their country; a movement which Lord Mahon (in the use of a euphemism of which he presents other specimens) describes as his "rejoining Amherst's main army, according to his instructions." The savages now had their turn, and they used it accordingly, till the following summer, when they were finally brought to terms. "A fresh detachment from Amherst's army," says Lord Mahon, "after the campaign in Canada, soon compelled the Cherokees to sue for peace." But the better opinion in America is, that the detachment from Amherst's army, which was under the command of the same Colonel Grant whom the Virginians had saved before Fort Duquesne, did no such thing; but that, on the contrary, the incompetency of Grant was

redeemed by Middleton and his South Carolina troops. However that may be, the poor natives were more sinned against than sinning. It is a shocking passage in the mal-administration of the colonial governors; Lord Mahon, had he understood it, could not have found in his good heart to speak of it so coolly.

But we hasten to his Lordship's just published volumes. And of these we must say, in frankness, that, as to that portion of them which relates to American affairs, — or rather to American events,— they have to us altogether too much the appearance of being the result of *cramming* for the occasion, so unlike the rest of the work, which for the most part seems to have been written from a full mind. Lord Mahon appears to have begun his study of the colonial history when about to write his forty-third chapter, which relates to the passage of the Stamp Act. We judge, from the account of the foundation of the New England colonies, with which this chapter opens, that he is not so much as aware that Plymouth and Massachusetts were originally separate governments.* To be sure, they ceased to be so in the third year of William and Mary; but in describing the colony seal of Massachusetts Bay, Lord Mahon appears to give it to the Plymouth settlers, who,

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* "At one time," says Lord Mahon, (Vol. v. p. 98) "Cromwell himself, then a man of little note, had been on board ship to join them, when there came an order from Whitehall that he and the other emigrants should be disembarked, — an order, it has been aptly said, which, in its final consequences, destroyed both king and commonwealth." A note refers to Lord Byron's preface to *Marino Faliero.* But the reference to Lord Byron relates, we suppose, not to the statement of fact, but to the subjoined remark of Lord Byron upon it. The fact we take to be apocryphal, though Lord Mahon might quote no bad authority for it. Our own historian, Mather, asserts it (*Magnalia*, Book i. chap. v. § 7); but in these latter days his credit is not the highest. Hutchinson (*History of Massachusetts*, Vol. i. p. 42; a book, by the by, which, eminently important as it was to Lord Mahon's objects, we have the strongest persuasion that he never saw,) followed Mather, though with less precision of statement. Hume (chap. lii.) speaks of Hutchinson as having put the matter beyond question; and Lord Nugent (*Life of Hampden*, Vol. i. p. 256) has alluded to it with the same easy faith. But the fair inference from the statement of our own excellent annalist, Winthrop, (Vol. i. pp. 135, 266,) appears to be that all the persons were ultimately permitted to come over to America, who had engaged to do so; and the language of the contemporary Rushworth, in his record of the proceedings of the Privy Council (Vol. ii. p. 409) perfectly coincides with that of Winthrop. Nor does there appear any good reason why, when the king hoped to tame the young Sir Harry Vane by assenting to his desire of living in New England, he should have expected to accomplish the same object as to Cromwell, by keeping him at home.

from the time of their having a seal, used one of a quite different description. To say nothing, however, of earlier matters, most strangely the movements which immediately led to the Revolution are traced back no further than to the passage of the Stamp Act; all that had come and gone before, since 1760, is despatched with such share as may belong to it of the two following periods.

"At various periods there had arisen between the North American Colonies and the mother country differences touching the restrictions of trade which the latter had imposed. These differences were, no doubt, of considerable extent and bitterness; but, in my opinion, had no other and stronger cause of quarrel broken forth, they might have been to this day, quietly debated before the Board of Trade at Whitehall." Vol. v. p. 122.

The story is told with scarcely so much as a mention of the names of James Otis and Samuel Adams, down to 1770, when Otis was disabled and withdrew from public life. The tragedy of Hamlet is performed with the part of Hamlet omitted. For heaven's sake, then, the American reader asks, who are put upon the scene? And the answer is, Henry and Franklin. For aught the reader of Lord Mahon knows to the contrary, they bore the whole burden and heat of the day. For aught that Lord Mahon appears to know, others might as well have been spared from the conflict. The chapter which relates to the passage of the Stamp Act, and its immediate consequences, has no place for the Massachusetts *Dioscuri*, but sketches at length the characters of "those two eminent men who at this time took the foremost part in opposing the pretensions of the mother country on either side of the Atlantic — Patrick Henry in America, and Benjamin Franklin in England."

Far be it from us to withhold any honor from those great names. But fair play is a jewel, and we desire to see it allowed on all sides. Franklin rendered excellent service to the cause of American freedom. His labors were chiefly, as Lord Mahon says, in England, where he was agent for the colonies of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Georgia. But he was not one of those to whom the vision of coming independence was earliest disclosed, nor will a person well informed on the subject pretend that any part of his great merit was that of a pioneer in the

assertion of Revolutionary doctrine. Lord Mahon's own volumes would afford some materials for refuting such an error. As to Patrick Henry, he was a miracle of natural eloquence. In 1765, he was twenty-nine years old. In that year he took his seat in the Virginia House of Burgesses, having acquired a sudden and brilliant reputation a year or two before by a marvellous exhibition of forensic oratory, but being yet wholly unknown as a legislator or statesman. He proposed, and, in the face of a formidable opposition of the hitherto leading men of the Ancient Dominion, carried through, a series of five Resolutions relating to the passage of the Stamp Act. In the last of them lay the sting of the whole. It was carried by a majority of only one vote, and, on a reconsideration the next day, was expunged from the journal, but found its way before the public through the newspapers. It was as follows.

"Resolved, therefore, that the General Assembly of this colony have the sole right and power to lay taxes and impositions upon the inhabitants of this colony; and that every attempt to vest such power in any person or persons whatsoever, other than the General Assembly aforesaid, has a manifest tendency to destroy British, as well as American, freedom."

These resolutions were passed on the 30th day of May, 1765. They produced a great and salutary excitement throughout the country. Nearly a year before, on the 13th day of June, 1764, — and in revolutions years are ages, — the Massachusetts House of Representatives, in a document of equal formality and publicity, a letter to their agent in London, written to be communicated to the ministry, and immediately printed in the newspapers, had announced the same doctrine in all its breadth in the following words: "The silence of the province should have been imputed to any cause, even to despair, rather than be construed into a tacit cession of their rights, or an acknowledgment of a right in the Parliament of Great Britain to impose duties and taxes upon a people who are not represented in the House of Commons." And in October, 1764, the New York Assembly, taking up the same testimony, proceed to "inform the Commons of Great Britain, that the people of this colony, inspired by the

genius of their mother country, nobly disdain the thought of claiming that exemption as a privilege ; they found it on a basis more honorable, solid, and stable ; they challenge, and glory in it, as their right."

We might refer to other facts of the same nature, of earlier date than the Virginia movement. In what, then, consisted the great importance of the Resolutions, which, as Lord Mahon rightly says, " the House of Burgesses of his [Henry's] province was induced to pass," " mainly through his eloquence and energy ? " In this, — that they were the much-desired *adhesion of Virginia to the northern doctrine.* Massachusetts, then the great northern colony, was safe for it long ago. The great southern colony, Virginia, now adopted it. Had either Massachusetts or Virginia held back, it could scarcely be that the other colonies should go forward. Massachusetts had gone forward. Virginia now stood by her side. And, from that day, there was strong encouragement and confidence. And so far as that made the Revolution, Patrick Henry and his Resolutions made it, but hardly to the exclusion of the agency of others, who had earlier done the same sort of work. If any one thinks that the Revolution is to be dated from the time when Virginia first maintained strong doctrine as to the right of taxation, it will be reasonable for him to refer the Revolution to Patrick Henry's Resolutions. But such, we venture to say, is not and will not be the sentence of history.*

Four years after Henry's Resolutions, James Otis was still known to the British statesmen as the chief champion of the American claims, and was referred to as such by Lord Clare and Mr. Burke, in debate in Parliament. Four years before Patrick Henry's Resolutions, in February, 1761, in the State House in Boston, James Otis argued the question of the " Writs of Assistance " before

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* Lord Mahon says, that "it was universally thought the Address (of the Congress in 1774) to the English people was composed by Mr. John Jay, of New York, and the Petition to the King by Mr. Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia." When his Lordship looks into the second volume of the *Political Writings* of John Dickinson, of Pennsylvania, he will find that the latter document came from the pen of the famous author of the *Farmer's Letters.* Lee wrote the Address to the Colonies. See the *Life of Richard Henry Lee,* by his grandson, R. H. Lee. Vol. i. p. 119.

the Judges of the Superior Court. John Adams knew something of the history of American Independence, and this is what he has left on record as to his sense of the importance of that transaction.

"Otis was a flame of fire; with a promptitude of classical allusions, a depth of research, a rapid summary of historical events and dates, a profusion of legal authorities, a prophetic glance of his eyes into futurity, and a rapid torrent of impetuous eloquence, he hurried away all before him. American Independence was then and there born. The seeds of patriots and heroes, to defend the *Non sine Diis animosus infans,* to defend the vigorous youth, were then and there sown. Every man of an immense crowded audience appeared to me to go away as I did, ready to take arms against Writs of Assistance. Then and there, was the first scene of the first act of opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain. Then and there, the child Independence was born. In fifteen years, that is, in 1776, he grew up to manhood and declared himself free." Tudor's *Life of James Otis,* pp. 60, 61.

And, again:

"I do say in the most solemn manner, that Mr. Otis's oration against Writs of Assistance, breathed into this nation the breath of life." *Ibid.* pp. 87, 88.

Such was the opinion of a friend to the cause, than whom no other was more discerning or better informed. What did its enemies think? Towards the close of 1766, Governor Bernard wrote to Lord Shelburne: "The troubles in this country take their rise from, and owe their continuance to, one man, so much that his history alone would contain a full account of them. This man, James Otis, Esq., was a lawyer in Boston, when I came to the government," &c.*

It is the same John Adams, whose opinion of Otis's services we have given above, of whom Lord Mahon says:

"I observe that Mr. John Adams, in his private Diary, from time to time mentions Otis with no high respect. Thus, Dec. 23, 1765: 'Otis is fiery and feverous; he is liable to great inequalities of temper, sometimes in despondency and sometimes in a rage.' Thus again, Sept. 3, 1769: 'Otis talks all; he grows the

* Bowen's *Life of Otis,* in Sparks's *Am. Biog.* p. 147.

most talkative man alive; no other gentleman in company can find space to put in a word.'" Vol. v. p. 408.

The character ascribed by Adams to Otis in 1765 always belonged to him. It was the infelicity of his temperament, consistent however with generous and splendid qualities, and by no means excluding "high respect" in one who observed and recorded it. With growing years it became aggravated into insanity, to which condition it was rapidly tending when, in 1769, Adams described Otis as growing "the most talkative man alive." This was the last year that he passed for a sane man. But if Lord Mahon entertains a "high respect" for Lord Chatham, notwithstanding the imbecile prostration of the time of his second administration, why is Adams to be quoted as denying respect to Otis under like circumstances?

Of "the two Adamses, Samuel and John," Lord Mahon says that

> "These were distant kinsmen and close friends, and both men of much ability, but far different in character; the first a demagogue, the second a statesman." Vol. v. p. 408.

According to the etymology of the word, a demagogue means simply a popular leader. And this Samuel Adams eminently was. But a demagogue, in the invidious sense of that word, he certainly was not. He sought no private ends. He had a Spartan contempt for money and parade. He was a man of theories, — narrow theories, sometimes — but standing in his consideration far above all personal objects. The most special notice which Lord Mahon takes of him is to repeat a piece of scandal from the simple, but credulous, and therefore not too trustworthy Gordon.* But as he subsequently took pains to get further information, and on the strength of it has made the *amende* in his Appendix,† we pass that question by. It is certain that the people of Massachusetts, and especially his fellow-citizens of Boston, who best knew and were most interested in any cause of complaint against him of the sort alleged, extended to him a remarkable degree of confidence throughout his long life. In it there are no so salient passages as in the life of Otis. But, as much as

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* Vol. vi. p. 183. † Vol. vi. p. xvi.

any other person in the early period of the ante-revolutionary disputes, Samuel Adams was the man of reflection and daring, and, more than any other person, the man of business. He tempered and partly directed the impetuosity of Otis, and his more careful and fastidious pen was constantly in use to prune the exuberances and correct the method of his friend. Much of the important public correspondence of the time, as the Massachusetts petition to the king, the letters to members of the ministry and other persons in power in England, and the circular letter to the Assemblies of the other colonies, are known to have been thus their joint production, Otis furnishing the first draft, and Adams making amendments and additions. To Adams is probably due the invention of that potent enginery, the committees for correspondence between the different colonies. And on all hands, we believe, he is allowed to have suggested the committees of correspondence between the towns of Massachusetts, in which the other more extensive plan had its pattern. He has been said, but we do not know on what authority, to have first suggested the idea of the non-importation agreement, and that of the Congress at New York, in 1764, which led, ten years after, to the Continental Congress.* In the caucuses and the popular assemblies he was the oracle, and one never known to utter an ambiguous response. Lord Mahon may depend upon it that the history of American politics from 1760 to 1770 will not hold together in the absence of those two names.

His Lordship, following Mr. Adolphus, supposes that the famous speech of Colonel Barré on the passage of the Stamp Act was an afterthought. He says:

"Within doors the scheme was opposed with little vigor. Pitt was ill in bed at Hayes, and only a few of his friends, as Colonel Barré and Alderman Baker, spoke or voted against it. Nine years afterwards, and in the presence no doubt of many men who had witnessed these discussions, Mr. Burke described them in the following terms: 'Far from any thing inflammatory, I never heard a more languid debate in this House. No more than two or three gentlemen as I remember spoke against the Act, and that with great reserve and remarkable temper. There was but one division in the whole progress of the Bill and the minority did not

* *Biography of the Signers*, &c. p. 293.

reach to more than thirty-nine or forty. In the House of Lords I do not recollect that there was any debate or division at all.'

"There is extant, nevertheless, an eloquent and well-known burst of oratory, which is ascribed to Colonel Barré, on one of these occasions. Mr. Grenville having spoken of the Americans as children of our own, planted by our care and nourished by our indulgence, Colonel Barré exclaimed: 'Children planted by your care! No, your oppression planted them in America, they fled from your tyranny into a then uncultivated land;'—and there follows a fine philippic against the misgovernment of the mother country. But on further examination there appears the strongest reason to doubt whether these words were really uttered at that time. In the first place, they are not recorded in the contemporary Debates of Debrett. Secondly, they are hard to reconcile with the authentic description of Burke. It is probable therefore that some time afterwards, and when our dissensions with America had already darkened, this speech, under the name of revision, and on a slight foundation of reality, was added by the pen of Barré." Vol. v. pp. 130, 131.

This is an anachronism, and an *anachorism* besides. A Congressional orator nowadays publishes a speech in a pamphlet which it takes two or three hours to read, when the honorable gentleman has only been twice as many minutes on his legs. But we never heard of this being the practice in England. At all events, it was not in Col. Barré's time. Mr. Adolphus and Lord Mahon are mistaken. Mr. Francis Dana, afterwards Chief Justice of Massachusetts, heard Barré's speech, and wrote home an account of it at the time. But Lord Mahon might have found his contradiction in print. In June, 1766, Jared Ingersoll, then recently returned from London, where he had been agent for the colony of Connecticut, published at New Haven a pamphlet containing, among other letters, one addressed by him to Governor Fitch on the 11th of February, 1765. In this letter he gives the following account of the proceedings on the passage of the Stamp Act, at which he was present:

"The debate upon the American Stamp Bill came on before the House for the first time, last Wednesday, when the same was opened by Mr. Grenville, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a pretty lengthy speech; and in a very able, and I think, in a very candid manner, he opened the nature of the tax; urged the necessity of it; endeavored to obviate all objections;—and took

occasion to desire the House to give the Bill a most serious and cool consideration, and not suffer themselves to be influenced by any resentments, which might have been kindled from any thing they might have heard out of doors: — (alluding, I suppose, to the New York and Boston Assemblies' speeches and votes) — that this was a matter of revenue, which of all things was the most interesting to the subject, &c., &c. — The argument was taken up by several who opposed the Bill, namely by Alderman Beckford, Col. Barré, Mr. Jackson, Sir William Meredith, and some others. Mr. Barré, who by the way, I think, and I find I am not alone in my opinion, is one of the finest speakers that the House can boast of, having been some time in America as an officer in the army, and having, while there, as I had known before, contracted many friendships with American gentlemen, and I believe entertained much more favorable opinions of them, than some of his profession have done, delivered a very handsome and moving speech upon the Bill, and against the same, concluding by saying, that he was very sure that most who should hold up their hands to the Bill, must be under a necessity of acting very much in the dark, but added, 'perhaps as well in the dark as any way.'

"After him Mr. Charles Townsend spoke in favor of the Bill; — took notice of several things Mr. Barré had said, and concluded with the following, or like words: — 'And now will these Americans, children planted by our care, nourished up by our indulgence, until they are grown to a degree of strength and opulence, and protected by our arms, will they grudge to contribute their mite, to relieve us from the heavy weight of that burden which we lie under?' When he had done, Mr. Barré rose, and having explained something which he had before said, and which Mr. Townsend had been remarking upon, he then took up the beforementioned concluding words of Mr. Townsend, and in a most spirited, and, I thought, an almost inimitable manner, said,

"'They planted by your care! No, your oppressions planted 'em in America. They fled from your tyranny, to a then uncultivated and unhospitable country; where they exposed themselves to almost all the hardships to which human nature is liable; and among others, to the cruelties of a savage foe, the most subtle, and I take upon me to say, the most formidable of any people upon the face of God's earth; and yet, actuated by principles of true English liberty, they met all these hardships with pleasure, compared with those they suffered in their own country, from the hands of those who should have been their friends.

"'They nourished up by *your* indulgence! They grew by your neglect of 'em: — As soon as you began to care about 'em,

that care was exercised in sending persons to rule over 'em, in one department and another, who were, perhaps, the deputies of deputies to some member of this house, sent to spy out their liberties, to misrepresent their actions, and to prey upon 'em; — men, whose behavior, on many occasions, has caused the blood of those sons of liberty to recoil within them; — men promoted to the highest seats of justice, some, who to my knowledge, were glad by going to a foreign country, to escape being brought to the bar of a court of justice in their own.

"'They protected by *your* arms! They have nobly taken up arms in your defence; have exerted a valor amidst their constant and laborious industry, for the defence of a country, whose frontier was drenched in blood, while its interior parts have yielded all its little savings to your emolument. And believe me, remember that I this day told you so, that same spirit of freedom which actuated that people at first, will accompany them still; — but prudence forbids me to explain myself further. God knows I do not at this time speak from motives of party heat; what I deliver are the genuine sentiments of my heart: However superior to me in general knowledge and experience, the respectable body of this house may be, yet I claim to know more of America than most of you, having seen and been conversant in that country. The people, I believe, are as truly loyal, as any subjects the king has; but a people jealous of their liberties, and who will vindicate them, if ever they should be violated; — but the subject is too delicate, and I will say no more.'

"These sentiments were thrown out so entirely without premeditation, so forcibly and so firmly, and the breaking off so beautifully abrupt, that the whole house sat awhile as amazed, intently looking, and without answering a word.

"I own I felt emotions that I never felt before; and went the next morning and thanked Col. Barré, in behalf of my country, for his noble and spirited speech. However, sir, after all that was said, upon a division of the house upon the question, there was about two hundred and fifty, to about fifty, in favor of the bill." Mr. Ingersoll's *Letters*, pp. 14-17.

There can be no question about this evidence. "Last Wednesday," (which by the calendars we find to be February 6th,) Ingersoll says that Barré made a speech, which Ingersoll reports, just as American children have had it almost ever since in their school-books. Lord Mahon says that it is "not recorded in the contemporary Debates of Debrett." But, as his Lordship has looked into Debrett to verify that statement, he knows that the whole proceedings in relation to the Stamp Act, are despatched

in eleven lines of that concise reporter.* The supposition of Barré's speech having been made at the time alleged, again says Lord Mahon, is "hard to reconcile with the authentic description of Burke." But what proceedings was it in particular that Burke authentically described? It is hard to say. If they were those of the 6th of February, either Burke's memory was in fault, or he estimated Barré's eloquence in a way we should not expect from him. In a later letter (of March 6th,) Ingersoll, referring to his former "particular account of the reception the American Stamp Bill met with in the House of Commons upon *the first* bringing of it in," says, (p. 22,) "since that time, in the further progress of the bill through the House, there have been some further debates, the most considerable of which was at the second reading of the bill." On that day too, Ingersoll, — a colony agent, interested to observe the facts, and under no motive, as far as we can see, to deceive, — says that the presentation of a Virginia petition by Sir William Meredith "drew on a pretty warm debate;" that "Mr. Yorke, the late Attorney-General, delivered himself in a very long speech;" that "in the most peremptory manner" General Conway "denied the right of parliament to tax us;" that he "urged with great vehemence the many hardships and what he was pleased to call absurdities that would follow from the contrary doctrine and practice," and that "the hardships and inconveniences were also again urged and placed in various lights by our other friends in the House." And he says further on, under the date of March 6th, (p. 23,) "It is about four days since the Bill passed through all the necessary forms in the House of Commons, and is now ready and lies before the Lords for their concurrence."

It was then pending in the House from February 6th to about March 2d. On the 6th of February, Barré made his famous speech, and it was in answer to Charles Townsend, and not to George Grenville, whom Lord Mahon, by yet another error, supposes to have been the alleged opponent of Barré on that occasion. "In the further progress of the bill" there were "some further debates," of one of which in particular, Ingersoll, within three or four weeks at the longest, gives a detailed account.

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* *Parliamentary Register*, Vol. iv. pp. 250, 251.

Nine years after, Burke used language which Lord Mahon interprets as proving that the Stamp Act passed almost *sub silentio*, and, in particular, that Barré's speech upon it, as it has since gone into the books, is a fiction. Lord Mahon must look for some other explanation of Burke's words. After the facts which we have stated, he will own that his former inference from them must be abandoned.

Barré's speech, as copied from Ingersoll's letter to the Governor, appeared in the New London Gazette on the 10th of May, 1765, a few days only after the news of the final passage of the Stamp Act reached America, and immediately went flying all abroad through the continent on the wings of all the newspapers. This we might not have been surprised that Lord Mahon should have overlooked. But there is one somewhat public refutation of his mistake which might have been less expected to escape his notice. He is acquainted with the phrase "Sons of Liberty," for he says (p. 361,) "thus did the opposition parties in America continue (in 1769) to call themselves." But it seems he did not know that it had its origin in 1765, in the enthusiasm for Barré's speech, who had used it. For this fact, which in America is so notorious as to need no proof, we appeal, for Lord Mahon's satisfaction, to Ingersoll's pamphlet; who says, (p. 16, note,) "I believe I may claim the honor of having been the author of this title, (Sons of Liberty,) however little personal good I have got by it, having been the only person, by what I can discover, who transmitted Mr. Barré's speech to America."

It is perhaps scarcely worth while to mention that the device of a snake cut in pieces, with the initial letters of the names of the several colonies affixed to the parts, with the motto "Join or Die," which appeared at the head of the "Constitutional Courant" after the passage of the Stamp Act, was not contrived for that occasion, as Lord Mahon (p. 133) appears to suppose. It was invented by Franklin, at the beginning of the previous war, with the design of uniting the colonies against the French, and was published at that time in his newspaper, the "Pennsylvania Gazette." *

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* See Sparks's *Writings of Franklin*, vol. iii. p. 25.

Of not much more consequence is a mistake a little further on, if it were not for the unpleasant use which it is made to serve. After the signature of the treaty of peace in 1783, a story was current in England that Franklin appeared on that occasion in the same dress of "Manchester velvet," in which he had been clad, when, eight years before, he was the object of Wedderburn's vituperation before the Privy Council; thus showing the deep resentment with which he had treasured up the remembrance of that scene. Lord Mahon says, (vol. v. p. 495,) "Mr. Sparks has given some strong reasons against the truth of this story," and adds, referring to that gentleman's edition of Franklin's Writings, (vol. i. p. 488,) "But Mr. Sparks is quite mistaken when he proceeds to say that this story was fabricated in England, 'to gratify the malevolence of a disappointed party.'" But this is not precisely what Mr. Sparks did proceed to say. Mr. Sparks's words were these: "The report was fabricated in England at a time when the treaty was a topic of vehement discussion; and it was eagerly seized upon to gratify the malevolence of a disappointed party." Now there can be no question that a story may be fabricated as a pleasantry, and afterwards seized upon for a purpose. And this is a distinction which apparently Mr. Sparks meant to make; at all events, it is one which his language intimates. And Lord Mahon should recognize the difference between fabricating a thing, which his Lordship never does himself, and seizing upon it when fabricated, an error from which (as in the case of the Baroness Riedesel's reports,) he is not equally exempt. He goes on to say, that the story "was told by one whom Mr. Sparks will hardly consider an adherent of what he terms the malevolent and disappointed party, namely, Dr. Priestley, and it was vouched for most distinctly by Dr. Bancroft, an American, and an intimate friend of Franklin." And for this he refers to Sparks's Franklin.* But here his Lordship is still more astray. He well knows the difference between the treaty of peace with Great Britain in 1783, and the treaty of alliance with France in 1778; and if he had overlooked it, the very note of Mr.

* Vol. iv. p. 453.

Sparks, to which he refers, read carefully, would have brought it to his mind. That note cites the authority of Dr. Priestley and Dr. Bancroft for an incident of the signing of the treaty of 1778, and not at all of the treaty of 1783, as Lord Mahon imagines. These things are not material. But a writer of his Lordship's reputation has a character for exactness to maintain; and especially he cannot be too careful as to accuracy in quotations and references, when he intends to make them the basis of censorious comment.

In December, 1776, a large building in the dock-yard at Portsmouth was consumed by fire. Soon after, a quantity of combustibles was found concealed in another building of the same establishment; and, still later, attempts were made to fire the shipping at Plymouth and Bristol. Suspicion fell upon a young Englishman, named Aitken, who had been in America, and who was otherwise called John the Painter. While in gaol, a fellow-craftsman gained his confidence, and

"John the Painter was by degrees drawn in to own to his false friend that he was engaged in a design of setting fire to the several dock-yards, and thus destroying the navy of Great Britain, and that he had been more than once to Paris to concert his measures for that object with Mr. Silas Deane. 'Do you not know Silas Deane?' he asked. 'What, no, — not Silas Deane?' He is a fine clever fellow; and I believe Benjamin Franklin is employed on the same errand.' The prisoner added that Silas Deane had encouraged him in his noble enterprise, inquiring all the particulars, and supplying him with the money he wanted." Vol. vi. pp. 217, 218.

As Franklin had just arrived in France when the Portsmouth dock-yard was set on fire, and had not yet reached Paris, Lord Mahon, in a note, acquits him of any privity to the transaction. But he does it with little grace, thinking proper to add, —

"Yet some persons may consider as significant the hint which he drops in a letter to Dr. Priestley many months before: 'England has begun to burn our seaport towns; secure, I suppose, that we shall never be able to return the outrage in kind.' Works, vol. viii. p. 156." Vol. vi. pp. 217, 218.

This was said by Franklin in allusion to the burning of Charlestown by the British, during the battle of Bun-

ker Hill. If Lord Mahon regards those words of Franklin as affording any presumption that Franklin or his countrymen would be disposed to send incendiaries into the cities of England to retaliate that act of military wantonness, then perhaps less importance is to be attached to his Lordship's opinion of Silas Deane, on whom, for want of such a proof of *alibi* as Franklin's, he appears willing to allow the Painter's charge to rest.

But to go back again some years. We cannot quite acquiesce in Lord Mahon's estimate of Sir Francis Bernard, though we are aware that he is not without apparently good authority for his opinion. We think we could point to not a few occasions on which a man, such as he describes Bernard, would not have acted as Bernard did. We have materials for arguing the point, but, on the whole, we must pass it by, as requiring an induction of facts too large for our present limits. Lord Mahon says that Bernard was "a man of ability and firmness, but harsh and quarrelsome." We could not select the epithet "harsh" as well characterizing him; and we are by no means clear that he should be called "quarrelsome." Sir Francis was an accomplished man, of unexceptionable private life, and of distinguished talents for society. He had governed New Jersey very satisfactorily to the people. Notwithstanding the dissatisfaction occasioned by the appointment of Hutchinson as Chief Justice, he was, on the whole, popular through the first three years — Hutchinson says, through the first five years — of his administration of Massachusetts, and the provincial government gave him substantial tokens of its good will. But he was not rich; he had a large family to provide for; and this was to be done through official preferment, which accordingly he was always seeking. The way to preferment was through ministerial favor, and the way to the favor of court and ministry when George the Third was king, and George Grenville was minister, was through a lofty assertion of the prerogative. He stood for prerogative confidently, ably, and at the same time imprudently. Had he been more cunning, he would have dealt more in generals. He spread his argument too much, volunteered too many applications of his principles, and exposed too many points to attack. He was engaged

with abler men than himself. Otis, Adams, and Bowdoin made wild work with his state papers. Such refutations as he got from them are of the things that drive wise men mad. It was hardly in human nature — it was not in that of Sir Francis — to bear them with equanimity. Had there been less in him, he would have ventured less, and sought quiet in inefficiency. As it was, his conscious ability, stimulated by his needy ambition, tempted him to repeated conflicts, and so involved him, again and again, in vexatious defeats. That under such circumstances, he should have sometimes betrayed irritation, and suffered himself to be driven to undignified expedients, we do not think justifies calling him "harsh and quarrelsome." But perhaps this is not much more than a dispute about words, and at all events we have not space to pursue it. Champion of parliamentary supremacy as he was, Bernard was opposed to the Stamp Act.* His independent good sense, had he been left to follow it, would have saved him from many indiscretions. It was not so much ill temper that led him into them, as the erroneous estimates of popular opinion into which he was seduced by the crown officers and their adherents. He was never, by any means, so much an object of dislike as Hutchinson became, though it is true, this was partly owing to the feeling that Hutchinson, as a Massachusetts man, had added treachery to oppression.

"In Rhode Island," says Lord Mahon, "there had taken place a most daring outrage during the past year, (1772,) when a king's ship, the Gaspee schooner, which was employed against the illicit traders, was boarded, set on fire, and destroyed."† Daring, undoubtedly, that affair may well be called. The Gaspee was boarded

* "I would not presume to give advice to his Majesty's ministers of State; but yet I hope I shall be excused when I reveal my earnest wishes, that some means may be found to make it consistent with the dignity of parliament to put the Stamp Act out of the question, at least for the present." *Bernard's Letter to Secretary Conway*, of October 28th, 1765, in "*Select Letters*" of Bernard (London, 1774,) p. 28. "I heartily disapproved of the Stamp Act, before it passed. I voted against it, and doubt not I shall vote for the repeal. I knew your sentiments were the same as mine on this subject." R. Jackson to Bernard, November 8th, 1765, in *Massachusetts State Papers*, (Boston, 1818,) p. 70.

† Vol. v. p. 483.

at midnight, in Narragansett Bay, from eight boats from Providence, set on fire, and destroyed. On the arrival of the intelligence in England, a royal proclamation was issued offering a large reward for the discovery of the perpetrators, and a royal commission proceeded to Rhode Island, and made laborious scrutiny for their detection; but they kept each other's counsel, and were not discovered. There had been plenty of "outrage" on the part of the petty officer in command of the vessel, to provoke her fate. Contrary to English law, he had sent property, seized by him, out of the colony, for trial at Boston; and in a letter of complaint to Lord Hillsborough, the Governor of Rhode Island had had occasion to represent that "since the Gaspee and Beaver have been stationed in this colony, the inhabitants have been insulted without any just cause, with the most abusive and contumelious language, and I am sorry that I have reason to say that the principal officers belonging to said vessels have exercised that power with which they are vested, in a wanton and arbitrary manner." A previous correspondence on the subject between the Governor and Admiral Montague, commanding on the station, had been conducted by that officer with the insolence customary with the officers of the royal navy in their communications with the colonial governments in those times.*

Lord Mahon habitually looks upon the people and the measures of Massachusetts with less favor than upon those of the other colonies. In April, 1775, the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts addressed a letter to a missionary among the Indians of the Six Nations, requesting him to use his "influence with them to join with us in the defence of our rights; but if you cannot prevail with them," it continues, "to take an active part in this glorious cause, that you will at least engage them to stand neuter, and not by any means to aid and assist our enemies." The former of the two clauses which we have quoted, Lord Mahon cites, with an unpleasant paraphrase of his own.† For the letter, he refers in a note to Mr. Sparks's edition of *Washington's Writings*, (vol. iii. p. 495,)

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* The story is told, and the whole evidence collected in a pamphlet published by William R. Staples, at Providence, in 1845. See also Gordon's *History*, vol. i. pp. 311, 312.

† Vol. vi. p. 53.

and adds: "The pretext assigned for this application was a rumor, 'that those who are inimical to us in Canada have been tampering with those Nations,' — an assertion very easy to make." It was an assertion very easy to make. But as Lord Mahon might have learned from that very note of Mr. Sparks, to which he has referred for the letter, there were facts which made it appear to be also an assertion pretty easy to substantiate. Several months before, a committee, of which Samuel Adams, Joseph Warren, and John Hancock were members, had been directed by the Congress to correspond with persons in Canada for the purpose of obtaining intelligence of movements in that province.* Emissaries were likewise despatched to Canada, instructed to consult with the friends of the American cause, and report such information as they might procure. They had reported "that secret agents had been sent among the Indians of the Six Nations to gain them over and stir them up against the colonists," — intelligence, the correctness of which was substantiated by the shocking butchery of Americans at the Cedars, early in the following year, by Indians under the command of a British officer. In a letter to General Schuyler, towards the close of the same year, Washington speaks of proofs before possessed "of the ministry's intention to engage the savages against us" as "incontrovertible," and adds that they were then recently confirmed by some intercepted despatches.†

In respect to the first battle of the Revolution, that of the 19th of April, 1775, Lord Mahon very correctly uses the following language.

"Before the British, now exhausted with long marching, could again reach Lexington their retreat had grown into a rout. Their utter destruction would have ensued had not General Gage, to guard against any adverse turn of fortune, sent forward that very morning another detachment under Lord Percy to support them.‡ That new force they found just arrived at Lexington. Here Lord Percy's men formed a hollow square, into which the British of the first detachment flung themselves at full length, utterly

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* *Journals of the Provincial Congresses*, p. 59; Dec. 6th, 1774.

† Sparks's *Washington*, vol. iii. p. 210.

‡ In fact, Colonel Smith had sent back to General Gage for this reinforcement early in the morning, on finding that the country was alarmed.

spent with fatigue, says one of their own Commissaries, and 'their tongues hanging out of their mouths like those of dogs after a chase!' After some brief interval for rest and refreshment the whole united force, amounting to eighteen hundred men, continued the retreat, and towards sunset reached the shores of Boston harbor, harassed all the way by the American's fire from behind stone walls and every other place of ambush." Vol. vi. pp. 55, 56.

This, one would think, might pass for a defeat, on Lord Mahon's own showing. But he is not content to leave it so. He must needs complain that,

"The retreat of the British troops to Boston, which was always intended as soon as they had accomplished the object of their march, was held forth as an undesigned and ignominious flight before a conquering enemy." Vol. vi. p. 57.

Why it should not be, we should like to know. As to its being "ignominious," we will not quarrel about words, nor do we care to insist that it is ignominious to run when there is nothing to be got by standing. But as to its being an "undesigned flight before a conquering enemy," we cannot for our lives see how there can be two opinions. We suppose it was not "intended" by General Gage, that his troops, "as soon as they had accomplished the object of their march," should come back from Concord to Boston upon a trot, a trot which "became a gallop soon." We take it to have been no part of that officer's plan to have the retrograde movement of his men so rapid, that when met by Lord Percy's detachment, and received into a hollow square, where they were protected by artillery against king's arms and fowling-pieces, they "flung themselves at full length, utterly spent with fatigue, and their tongues hanging out of their mouths like those of dogs after a chase." Nor do we believe it to have been a feature of General Gage's sketch of operations for the day, that even the reinforcing party should owe it only to the approach of night, that a man of them got back to tell the day's story. To say that the British behaved on that occasion as well as circumstances permitted, may be fair enough. But to pretend that they were not disastrously beaten is puerile.*

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* In a note, Lord Mahon refers to Colonel Smith's report to General Gage, in

As Lord Mahon carried on the early dispute with England without the help of Otis or Adams, so he makes shift to fight the battle of Bunker Hill without Prescott or Putnam. Certainly, in a military point of view, Bunker Hill was not Waterloo. But the story of Waterloo would be as complete without Wellington, as that of Bunker Hill without Prescott.

"The Americans also received from their main army a large accession of force, led on by Dr. Joseph Warren, the physician of Boston, who had lately become the President of the Massachusetts Congress, and been raised (by his own authority in fact) to the rank of Major-General." Vol. vi. p. 83.

This is all wrong. General Warren was raised to the rank of Major-General on the 14th day of June, not at all by his own authority, but like other general officers, by a vote of the Provincial Congress. He led no "large accession of force" to Bunker Hill. He went alone, with his musket on his shoulder, and just before the action began, reported himself to Prescott as a volunteer, declining the command which Prescott offered him.

Of the numbers engaged at Bunker Hill, Lord Mahon says, —

"One account, published in Rhode Island, swells the British to five thousand, while reducing the Americans to two thousand men, thus nearly inverting the true numbers. . . . . The more judicious and candid American historians have since admitted their troops to have amounted to four thousand. But if we may rely on the official relation, addressed by General Gage to the Secretary of State, the British in this battle were opposed by 'above three times their own number,' — that is, by upwards of seven thousand men." Vol. vi. p. 89.

There is no certainty to be had on this subject. But by the side of Lord Mahon's argument, we will put down

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which that officer charged the Americans with having "scalped and otherwise ill-treated one or two of our men, who were either killed or severely wounded, this being seen by a party that marched by soon after." What is true of this story is bad enough. As the militia drove the British from Concord bridge, a young man killed with a hatchet a wounded soldier who lay in his way. It was a brutal act. We wish that innumerable such acts had not occurred, before and since, in the heat of fight. As to the scalping of either one or two men, we presume that there is not a particle of proof of such an occurrence, and Colonel Smith's own vague way of making the representation is not such as to entitle it to credit.

that of Mr. Frothingham, who, in his very learned and trustworthy "History of the Siege of Boston," gives the result of his investigations as follows.

"So conflicting are the authorities, that the number of troops engaged on either side cannot be precisely ascertained. 'The number of the Americans during the battle,' Colonel Swett says, 'was fluctuating, but may be fairly estimated at three thousand five hundred, who joined in the battle, and five hundred more who covered the retreat.' General Putnam's estimate was two thousand two hundred. General Washington says, the number engaged at any one time, was one thousand five hundred, and this was adopted by Dr. Gordon. This is as near accuracy as can be arrived at. General Gage, in his official account states the British force at 'something over two thousand,' and yet the same account acknowledges one thousand and fifty-four killed and wounded. This certainly indicates a force far larger than two thousand. Neither British accounts, nor the British plans of the battle, mention all the regiments that were in the field. Thus, the movements of the second battalion of marines are not given; yet the official table of loss states that it had seven killed and thirty wounded; and Clarke, also, states it was not until after the Americans had retreated, that General Gage sent over this second battalion, with four regiments of foot, and a company of artillery. Americans, who counted the troops as they left the wharves in Boston, state that five thousand went over to Charlestown; and, probably, not less than four thousand were actually engaged." pp. 190, 191.

With much better reason than when he was treating of the 19th of April, Lord Mahon stoutly maintains that his countrymen were not beaten at Bunker Hill.

"The Americans at that period — and some of them even to the present day — have claimed the battle of Bunker's Hill as a victory. Yet considering that the British were left in possession of the ground and maintained it for several months to come, and considering also that, of six pieces of artillery which the Americans brought into action, they carried away but one, there can surely be no question that according to the rules of war they must be considered as defeated." Vol. vi. p. 88.

Lord Mahon may have some authority in view with which we are not acquainted; but when he shall quote the American writer of the present day, or of 1775, or of any day between the two, who has called the battle of

Bunker Hill a victory of the Americans in the common sense of that word, he will give us information which we are not prepared for. In its moral effect, it was so great an exploit as to be worth fifty common victories. It taught the New England people a little of what they could do against cannon and discipline; and it taught the other colonies to rely on the New England people and on themselves. Had Prescott had a few more rounds of powder and ball, there is the best reason to believe that it would have been a magnificent American victory. It might, or it might not, have been followed by a victory, if General Ward had acceded to Prescott's urgent solicitation to return the next night, and retake the ground with all the advantage of his own intrenchments against him. But, as to the rest, after living, man and boy, almost within the shadow of Bunker Hill for more than half a century, we protest that we do not remember to have known it called an American victory, in speech or writing, by one of our countrymen. The English captain, Hamilton, in his entertaining work on "Men and Manners in America," appears to have thought that this battle was gained by General Washington. But we suppose that all American men, women, and children know as well that it was not gained by the Americans, as they know that General Washington neither won nor lost it.

Lord Mahon has a happy way of drawing characters. But sometimes his portraitures lack completeness. Of Colonel Ethan Allen, of Vermont, the captor of Ticonderoga, he says, —

> "He was not even a believer in the Christian Revelation, but composed a book against it, entitled 'Reason the only Oracle of Man.' The void left in his mind by religious truth was, as we have often seen it, filled by silly fancies. According to some of his biographers, he was wont to assure his friends that he expected to return to this life, not indeed once more as a biped, but in the form of a 'large white horse!'" Vol. vi. p. 60.

And for this anecdote he refers to Mr. Sparks's Life of Allen, in the American Biography. So far, so good. But Mr. Sparks introduces the story with the remark that "some of his (Allen's) biographers have not done him strict justice in regard to his religious opinions." And

then, having told the story, Mr. Sparks goes on to say, what if Lord Mahon had gone on to quote, he would have given his readers a better comprehension and a less unfavorable view of Allen's sentiments on the great subject of religion.

"If he was absurd and frivolous enough to say such a thing in conversation, he has certainly expressed very different sentiments in his writings. No person could declare more explicitly his belief in a future state of rewards and punishments, and a just retribution, than he has done in the following passage contained in this book.

"'We should so far divest ourselves,' he observes, 'of the incumbrances of this world, which are too apt to engross our attention, as to acquire a consistent system of the knowledge of our duty, and make it our constant endeavor in life to act conformably to it. The knowledge of the being, perfections, creations, and providence of God, and the immortality of our souls, is the foundation of our religion.' Again, 'as true as mankind now exist and are endowed with reason and understanding, and have the power of agency and proficiency in moral good and evil, so true it is, that they must be ultimately rewarded or punished according to their respective merits or demerits; and it is as true as this world exists, and rational and accountable beings inhabit it, that the distribution of justice therein is partial, unequal, and uncertain; and it is consequently as true as that there is a God, that there must be a future state of existence, in which the disorder, oppression, and viciousness which are acted and transacted by mankind in this life, shall be righteously adjusted, and the delinquents suitably punished.'" Am. Biog. i. 351, 352.

We have not space to discuss the vexed question of the paper currency, called *Continental Money*, issued by Congress during the war. Lord Mahon despatches it too easily.

"Considering the subsequent extension of their national wealth, and the great pride which they have ever felt in the origin and event of their Revolutionary War, it might be supposed that all the obligations contracted in and for that war had been promptly and punctually discharged. This, however, has by no means been the case." Vol. vi. p. 62.

Two hundred millions of dollars, in nominal value, were issued from time to time, within a period of six years. There was a great deficiency of other circulating

medium in the country, and for nearly two years this passed readily at par. It then began to *depreciate*, and continued to do so, while the necessities of Congress compelled them to make new emissions. These issues did not go into circulation at their nominal value, but at the rate of depreciation at which the currency stood in the market. It has been estimated that the actual value received by Congress for the nominal two hundred millions was not more than about thirty-six millions of silver dollars.* Lord Mahon tells a story (vi. 416) of a British officer of the Convention troops, who, in 1779, paid an innkeeper's bill of seven hundred and thirty-two pounds, with four guineas and a half in gold; and a writer of that day, well informed on the subject, says that the circulation of the paper " was never more brisk and quick than when its exchange was five hundred to one." † In one point of view, the whole operation was of the nature of a tax, each person, through whose hands the money passed, parting with it again at a loss proportioned to the quantity he held, and the time he held it.

Undoubtedly there were great hardships incident to this process; but, as the currency circulated among the whole people, passing through the hands of rich and poor in proportion to the respective amounts of their purchases and sales, the losses were divided among them somewhat in proportion to their ability and liability to pay a tax. To redeem it in a way to remunerate the individuals who, in the gradual progress of depreciation, had sustained the losses, was obviously impossible; and there certainly appeared great hardship, on the other hand, in paying the value borne on the face of the paper to a holder who had taken it at the rate of five hundred for one, when the payment would have to be made by a second tax on the same persons who had already been all but intolerably taxed through the very depreciation which was now to be made up. These are but hints. If Lord Mahon will look a little into the discussions of the subject which took place soon after, or if he will but read a letter written to the Count de Vergennes, in June, 1780, by John Adams, which he may find in the forthcoming seventh volume of

* Jefferson's *Works*, i. 412. † Webster's *Political Essays*, p. 175.

that great statesman's Works, he will own, if we mistake not, that the question is not so simple as to his quick mind it has appeared.

Ethan Allen took the fort at Ticonderoga, May 10th, 1775. On receiving intelligence of that event, Congress resolved, May 18th, that, "whereas there is indubitable evidence that a design is formed by the British ministry, of making a cruel invasion from the province of Quebec upon these colonies for the purpose of destroying our lives and liberties," and seeing that the cannon and stores at Ticonderoga would certainly be "used in the intended invasion of these colonies, this Congress earnestly recommend it to the cities and counties of New York and Albany immediately to cause the said cannon and stores to be removed from Ticonderoga to the south end of Lake George." And on the 1st of June it was further resolved that "no expedition or incursion ought to be undertaken or made by any colony or body of colonies against or into Canada." Yet, on the 27th of the same month, Congress instructed General Schuyler to repair without delay to Ticonderoga, and, "if he found it practicable, and it would not be disagreeable to the Canadians, immediately to take possession of St. John's and Montreal, and pursue any other measures in Canada which might have a tendency to promote the peace and security of these colonies." In view of these facts, Lord Mahon exclaims, —

> "Hard task to vindicate on this occasion either the good faith or the consistency of the American rulers! Mr. Sparks attempts it, by pleading that in the interval between their two Resolutions they had received reports that General Carleton was preparing an invasion against themselves. But the apologist forgets that, even some days previous to their Resolution of the 1st of June, they had in the most solemn manner declared themselves in possession of 'indubitable evidence' that such an invasion was designed." Vol. vi. p. 115.

"Hard task to vindicate," &c.! Why so? On the contrary, does not the whole proceeding hang together like network? And is it not merely Lord Mahon's own careless reading of the resolutions on which he comments, that has drawn from him such an ungracious stricture? By the terms of its preamble, which Lord Mahon overlooks when he comes to argue upon it, though he had

before quoted them correctly, (p. 92,) the resolution of May 18th was founded on alleged evidence of "a design formed *by the British ministry*, of making a cruel invasion," &c., a design which it might take months to mature, and which, in respect to the course of counteraction required, was an exceedingly different thing from the actual commencement of operations on the frontier by the Governor of Canada. Between the 1st and the 27th of June, a Committee at Albany sent information to Congress that "General Carleton was fortifying St. John's, building boats, and preparing to make a descent on Lake Champlain, and attack Crown Point and Ticonderoga." Here was a pretty clear call for immediate action; and accordingly, on the latter of these days, were despatched the orders to General Schuyler to make a counter invasion. "Hard task to vindicate on this occasion" the common sense "of the American rulers," if they had not altered their plans to conform to such altered circumstances!

Lord Mahon thinks that the Marquis de Montcalm foretold the independence of the American States.

"It had been a saying of the Marquis de Montcalm, that our conquests along the St. Lawrence would hereafter lead to the severance of our own American colonies from the parent State, and that France would thus obtain a compensation for her loss." Vol. vi. p. 143.

And in a note he adds, that "on the prediction of the Marquis de Montcalm, and on this whole branch of the subject," he "would refer the reader to that most able speech on colonial government, delivered by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, February 8, 1850."

"It had been a saying of the Marquis de Montcalm," &c. How does Lord Mahon know that? Not, we presume, at second-hand from Lord John Russell's most able speech of February 8, 1850, which contains a mere passing allusion to Montcalm's Letters,* but from those letters themselves. Has Lord Mahon seen that book? If so, what does he think of it? Has he attended to its history and its structure, which are, briefly, as follows: In the year 1777, — Montcalm having died in 1759, of his wound

* Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. cviii. p. 538.

before Quebec,— there appeared in London this pamphlet, consisting of what purport to be letters written by Montcalm to Messrs. De Berryer and De la Molé during his command in Canada, and containing speculations on various topics, commercial, military, and political; among which is expressed (p. 24) the opinion to which Lord Mahon refers. Soon after the publication of this pamphlet, in the course of a debate in Parliament on Lord Chatham's motion for an address to the king, Lord Shelburne declared that the letters "had been discovered to be a forgery;" * and, though Lord Mansfield insisted that they were "not spurious," † no attempt appears to have been made in any quarter to establish their genuineness. No explanation was given of the manner in which the letters were obtained from France. They are printed in French and English on opposite pages. Will Lord Mahon look at them and say whether he is prepared to pronounce that the French was the original, and the English the translation, instead of the opposite having been the fact? As his Lordship, like a more famous English historian, began his literary career with a book in French, he should be a better judge of this matter than ourselves; but, to our thinking, there are Anglicisms in the turns of phrase of the French copy, rather than Gallicisms in those of the English. The prophetical letter is dated "Camp before Quebec, Aug. 24, 1759," in the critical part of the campaign, three weeks before the fatal battle. Perhaps Lord Mahon believes,— but we do not, — that it was with such communications to his Parisian friends that the French commander amused his leisure in the intervals between sending fire-ships into Wolfe's fleet and cannonading his camp across the Montmorenci.

After describing the evacuation of Boston, in March, 1776, Lord Mahon proceeds to say: —

> "The Congress voted that in commemoration of this great event there should be struck a medal in gold and bronze; and it was struck accordingly, not indeed for lack of an artist in America, but by their direction, in France." Vol. vi. p. 128.

The history of the medal is of no great consequence.

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* *Parliamentary Register*, Vol. vii. p. 122. † Ibid. p. 127.

But, if told, it is as well to have it told correctly. The votes simply were, first, one of thanks to Washington and the troops under his command, and then "that a medal of gold be struck in commemoration of this great event, and presented to his Excellency." * Nothing is said of bronze, or of the place at which the medal should be made. Eleven medals were voted by Congress to officers who had distinguished themselves in different actions during the war, but in no instance was it directed that they should be struck in France. On the 6th of July, 1779, Congress voted "that the Board of the Treasury cause the medals in honor of the commander-in-chief and other officers of the United States, to be struck without delay." Much delay, however, still followed; the medals for Washington, Gates, Greene, and several other officers, were not procured till four years after the signature of the treaty of peace. They were all executed in Paris, for the good reason that they could be done there in much better style than was at that time possible in the United States. Lord Mahon does more than justice to the claims of American art in the last century.†

In connection with the account of operations on Long Island, in 1776, we find the following astonishing sentence.

> "The command of this important post was intrusted by Washington to General Greene, an officer of bravery and enterprise, but of intemperate habits." Vol. vi. p. 164.

When Lord Mahon knows the wrong he has done to the memory of an illustrious and blameless man, he will feel more pain than we feel in recording it. After Washington, there is no military worthy, of the revolutionary age, whom this country remembers with such veneration as Greene. No whisper of such a charge as this was ever before heard against him. Nothing of the sort can be better known than that it is utterly without foundation. Lord Mahon quotes La Fayette in support of his assertion.

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* *Journals of Congress*, Vol. ii. pp. 108, 109.

† The story of the procuring of all the medals in France is told in a letter of Colonel Humphreys, of November, 1787, published in the *American Museum*, Vol. ii. p. 493.

"*Greene, un général souvent ivre.* These are the words of La Fayette; Mem. et Corresp. vol. i. p. 21, ed. 1837." *Ibid.*

But he quotes La Fayette incorrectly, and misunderstands him. La Fayette's words were these, according to the copy of his "*Mémoire, Correspondance*," &c. which lies before us.

"Lord Stirling, plus brave que judicieux, un autre général souvent ivre, *Greene, dont les talents n'étoient encore connus que de ses amis,* commandoient en qualité de Major-généraux." Tome i. p. 21.

Who the second general was, who was "often drunk," is no secret. He was soon dismissed from the army for misconduct at the battle of Germantown, occasioned by his bad habit. But it is enough for us that it was not Greene, of whom La Fayette's whole description is that "his talents were as yet only known to his friends." La Fayette knew already and admired them, and the modest and noble character which they adorned; and continued to do so more and more. In this reference Lord Mahon has but committed a singular negligence. But what is to be thought of the knowledge of an historian, writing upon the American Revolution so much in the dark as to make it possible for him to pass by General Greene as "an officer of bravery and enterprise, but of intemperate habits?" When one page represents Greene as a sot, one would scarcely be surprised to find the next declaring that Jefferson was an idiot.

Lord Mahon refers, without positively adopting it, to the story told by Mr. Adolphus, (ii. 440,) on the authority of "private information," of Washington's having received from Benedict Arnold, on a visit of that officer to headquarters, the first suggestion of "the idea of attempting to recross the Delaware, and surprise some part of the King's troops." * Arnold arrived in camp a week before that exploit. But, several days before he came, Washington had written to Governor Trumbull that he meditated "a stroke upon the forces of the enemy, who," he adds, "lie a good deal scattered, and, to all appearance, in a state of security." † In fact, the importance of such an attempt seems

* Vol. vi. p. 195. † Sparks's *Washington*, Vol. iv. p. 541.

now so obvious, that it may reasonably be supposed to have occupied his thoughts from the time he crossed the Delaware in his retreat. We suppose that the author is equally in error in attributing to Arnold the original conception of " the daring and skilful scheme " of the expedition from Cambridge through the wilderness to Quebec.* Washington's correspondence indicates nothing of the kind. September 21st, he wrote, " I am now to inform the honorable Congress that, encouraged by the repeated declarations of the Canadians and Indians, and urged by their request, I have detached Colonel Arnold," &c.† The plan was matured about the middle of August, between the commander-in-chief and several members of Congress, who were then in camp, during a short adjournment of that body.

Of La Fayette Lord Mahon speaks in the offensive terms common with the writers of his school, when referring to that illustrious man.‡ We cannot go into a survey of the life of La Fayette or into a vindication of his course through a long, varied, and eminent career. We formerly treated these subjects at length, down to the time of his visit to this country in 1824.§ But we must not omit to say, that, in the part which he took in the American war, he acquitted himself with uniform discretion, fidelity, courage, and honor. Considering his youth and inexperience (he was not yet twenty years old when he was appointed a major-general in the American army), considering that he was acting with and upon a people of different country, language, and habits, there are few examples indeed on record of such success as his in discharging the duties of a high station, and winning universal confidence and esteem. He was always placed in as high command as his rank would permit; he committed no mistakes; he failed on no occasion to obtain the cordial approbation of his superiors and of the country. " As a general, it can scarcely be pretended," says Lord Mahon, " that his exploits were either many or considerable." What does his Lordship think, on reflection,

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* Vol. vi. p. 116.
† Sparks's *Washington*, Vol. iii. p. 102.
‡ Vol. vi p. 231.
§ N. A. Review, Vol. xx. p. 147, *et seq.*

of the wisdom of that remark? In the course of his historical studies, how many generals has he found, in any time, who have performed "exploits either many or considerable," in proportion to those who have done their duty, and served their country well? Meritorious conduct, his Lordship knows, is a thing that does not depend on fortune. Brilliant achievement is a thing that partly does depend upon it. La Fayette's "exploits" were equal to his opportunities. He proved himself a brave, discreet, sagacious, energetic officer. In command of the American forces in the Virginia campaign of 1781, he had the dexterity to foil the tactics of Lord Cornwallis, who had written home, "The boy cannot escape me,"* and to push that officer with his army of seven or eight thousand men into the trap of the fortified lines of Yorktown, where they laid down their arms, and virtually closed the war. His character and his military talents always commanded the respect and confidence of Washington, never lightly given; and at the peace, he retired from the army and the country universally beloved.

Referring to Sir Henry Clinton's expedition up the Hudson in the autumn of 1777, with a view to forming a junction with Burgoyne, Lord Mahon says, —

> "So important was this diversion of Clinton, that, could it have taken place only one week or ten days sooner, — could the tidings of it have reached Burgoyne at any time, he says, between the two actions on Behmus's Heights, — it was the deliberate opinion of that officer, formed after the event, that he would have been enabled to make his way to Albany, and that final success would therefore have attended his campaign." Vol. vi. p. 281.

General Burgoyne, in his "Narrative," (p.17,) expressed that opinion, which, under his circumstances, it was not unnatural for him to entertain. It was against all probability, however. He capitulated nine days after the second battle of Behmus's Heights, at which time, according to Lord Mahon,† his force was reduced to 3500 effective men, and his provisions were nearly exhausted, while the American army under Gates numbered 13,000 men, well supplied. If the comparatively small detachment, sent up

* Gordon, Vol. iv. p. 111.

† Vol. vi. p. 286.

the Hudson by General Clinton, which was engaged in burning Kingston at the time of Burgoyne's capitulation, had been ten days earlier in its movement, and had contrived to effect a landing near Albany, it is to the last degree improbable that it would have been able to penetrate through the force which would have been collected in that city and the adjacent country, so as to form a junction with Burgoyne.

It is a mistake that "General Schuyler, on being removed from his command by Congress, had continued to serve as a volunteer in Gates's army," (p. 285.) He felt the injustice of being superseded by an officer inferior in rank, and, immediately on surrendering the command to Gates, retired to Albany, where he remained till after the capitulation. In fact, this important campaign is, in various parts, imperfectly described. The defeat of St. Leger at Fort Stanwix is barely mentioned,* and the brilliant exploit of Colonel Brown before Ticonderoga, in September, when he captured three hundred men, and liberated a hundred American prisoners,† is not mentioned at all, though both were events which materially contributed to the failure of Burgoyne's expedition. The following imputation demands much more serious rebuke:

> "General Gates . . . . . was found willing to recede from his first pretensions. He rightly judged it unwise to drive to utter despair even a far inferior number of brave and disciplined troops. He felt that the capitulation of such troops on almost any terms, and under almost any circumstances, would be a most solid advantage, and would shed on the arms of the United States a lustre which as yet they had never known. Judging from the event, I am justified in saying, that another motive also may perhaps have weighed with some, at least, of the Americans. It matters little what terms are granted, if it be not intended to fulfil them!" Vol. vi. p. 278.

Such a reflection on the integrity of the American officers who assented to the capitulation, is gross. The delay in its execution on the part of Congress we shall not undertake to defend. Congress was exasperated by

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* Vol. vi. p. 259.

† See Marshall's *Washington*, Vol. iii. pp. 279, 280; Williams's *History of Vermont*, Vol. ii. pp. 135, 136.

the perfidy of the British commander in the then recent affair of St. Leger. And we could quote officers of the most unblemished honor, who lived and died in the opinion that the Convention from the first was void for material fraud on the part of the defeated party. But we have not met with evidence to that point which completely satisfies our minds.* We think there was misconduct, — we fear there was bad faith, — in relation to the treatment of the Convention troops. But, whatever it was, the responsibility rests on Congress alone. General Gates and his officers had nothing whatever to do with it.

Lord Mahon does generous justice to the hospitality shown by the New York people to the Convention troops, and then proceeds : —

"But on entering Massachusetts the scene was wholly changed. There rancor against the Royalists seemed to have absorbed every other feeling. It is stated by Madame de Riedesel, that whenever she passed in the streets of Boston the female part of the population cast upon her angry looks, and, in sign of their disdain, spat on the ground before her. A far worse token of their rancor is recorded by the same authority. There was a Captain Fenton, of their town, who had gone to England, but had left behind his wife and daughter, the last a beautiful girl of fifteen. At the news that Captain Fenton continued faithful to the King, some women of the lower orders seized on these unhappy ladies, tore off their clothes, and tarred and feathered them, in which condition they were dragged as a show around the town!" Vol. vi. pp. 294, 295.

The first part of this we profess ourselves unable to understand. Forms of insult are conventional. Pulling the nose, for instance, has, among men, a very serious associated significance of this description, though it would be impossible to show that, abstractly, it is suited to convey any meaning of the kind, more than squeezing the hand. Now expectorating on the ground before a per-

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* December 3d, Gates wrote to the President of Congress, "Respecting the standards, General Burgoyne declared upon his honor, that the colors of the regiments were left in Canada." (Gordon, Vol. iii. p. 46.) But the Baroness de Riedesel boasts (*Letters and Memoirs*, p. 200,) of the address with which she got off the colors of the German regiments, by having them quilted into a mattress. Madame de Riedesel's book, however, was not published till 1800.

son is not an American expression of anger or contempt. We never saw or heard of its being done with this design. Inns, streets, steamboats, even the carpeted Halls of Congress would be perpetual Aceldamas, if this were the recognized interpretation of that act. Quite as much are we confounded by the specification of the act itself; for, culpable as the male American must be owned to be in regard to it, our fair countrywomen are blameless of all share in so gross a habit. As authority, however, for this and the other story in the above extract, the reader is referred to the Baroness Riedesel's *Dienst-Reise*, (ss. 192–202. edit. 1801.) The reader will do well to turn to the volume accordingly, which was published in a translation, in New York, twenty-five years ago, and therein he will find it thus written.

"Boston is quite a fine city, but the inhabitants were outrageously patriotic. There were among them many wicked people; and the persons of my own sex were the worst: they gazed at me with indignation, and spit when I passed near them. Mrs. Carter resembled her parents in mildness and goodness of heart; but her husband was revengeful and false. They came often to see us, and dined with us and in company of our generals. We endeavored, by all means, to show them our gratitude; and they seemed to feel much friendship for us; though, at the same time, this wicked Mr. Carter, in consequence of General Howe's having burnt several villages and small towns, suggested to his countrymen to cut off our generals' heads, to pickle them, and to put them in small barrels; and as often as the English should again burn a village, to send them one of these barrels; — but that cruel plan was not adopted.

"I had, during my residence at Bristol, in England, made the acquaintance of a Captain Fenton." *Letters and Memoirs*, p. 196.

And then follows the anecdote of the tarring and feathering of the wife and daughter of Captain Fenton. If Lord Mahon thought the stories of the spitting before the Baroness de Riedesel, and the outrage on the two other ladies, worthy of credit and preservation, why not equally that of the proposal to pickle and barrel up the heads of British generals, which stands between them on the record? The Baroness de Riedesel was a lady deserving all credit when she tells what she has seen,

though she may have put a wrong construction upon it. But the case is not exactly the same as to every thing which she may have heard. Perhaps she did not understand English perfectly well. And perhaps her readiness to believe may have been abused by that "wicked Mr. Carter." If so, Mr. Carter was greatly to blame. But his fault was of a different degree from that of packing British generals' heads in casks, or maltreating loyalist females.

"There [in Massachusetts] rancor against the royalists seemed to have absorbed every other feeling." Party spirit undoubtedly ran very high. How could it be otherwise, when, on the one hand, liberty and life were at stake, — on the other, rank, fortune, and home? Madame de Riedesel was the wife of a person engaged in one of the most nefarious occupations that human mind and muscle can be put to. He and his had no quarrel with us and ours; but he had been let out for hire by the wretch called Elector of Hesse Cassel, to come hither and make our wives and children widows and fatherless. If he could come on such a business, it was very fit that his wife should come with him. Heaven knows he stood enough in need of every solace of domestic love. He failed in what he came for. He sold his own blood, and not ours. We caught him and his attendant reptiles, and drew their fangs. If women whose husbands, fathers, sons, he would have butchered, perhaps had butchered, spat on the ground in sign of anger, as his wife passed, it was a very unfeminine, discourteous, indecent act, though it was evidently an affront designed for him rather than for her; and something may perhaps be pardoned to the rage of those against whom injuries so enormous, so wicked, so unprovoked had been committed, or had only failed of being committed because God's providence and man's valor dashed the miscreants to the earth in the flush of their abominable enterprise.* Burgoyne's troops had also

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* We speak no worse of these ruffians than did the friends of America and humanity at the time, in England. "We had," said Lord Chatham, in debate, on the 5th of December, 1777, "swept every corner of Germany for men; we had searched the darkest wilds of America for the scalping-knife; but, those bloody measures being as weak as they were wicked, he recommended that instant orders might be sent to call home the first, and disband

something to blame themselves for, for any inhospitality in respect to their reception in Massachusetts. Gordon, himself an Englishman, and at that time in Massachusetts, says, " While upon their march to the neighborhood of Boston, the British behaved with such insolence as confirmed the country in their determination never to submit. . . . . . The Germans stole and robbed the houses as they came along, of clothing and every thing on which they could lay their hands, to a large amount." * Hired stabbers as long as they were in arms, house thieves as soon as they were beaten, they had nothing better to claim, at the hands of meekness itself, than mere forbearance and humanity.

But, after all, Madame de Riedesel had not much to complain of, in her stay in Massachusetts. Massachusetts did not put her in fear, or even in Coventry. She testifies that her household " passed their time in Cambridge [it was a year] quietly and happily." They occupied a spacious mansion, one of the most agreeable residences in the neighborhood of Boston. The Baroness gave frequent dinner parties, balls, and *fêtes*. At one of her balls, she says, —

" We had an excellent supper, to which more than eighty persons sat down. Our yard and garden were illuminated. The king's birth-day falling on the next day, it was resolved that the company should not separate before his Majesty's health was drank, which was done with feelings of the liveliest attachment to his person and to his interests. Never, I believe, was ' God save the king ' sung with more enthusiasm or with feelings more sincere. Our two eldest girls were brought into the room to see the illumination. We were all deeply moved, and proud to have the courage to display such sentiments in the midst of our enemies. . . . . . When our guests retired, the house was surrounded with people." *Letters and Memoirs*, p. 199.

The police of Cambridge could not have been very rigorous, nor the patriotic mob very intolerant.

Having spoken of the dissatisfaction occasioned to the Americans by Count D'Estaing's sailing with his squad-

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the other; for peace, he was certain, would never be effected, as long as the German bayonet and Indian scalping-knife were threatened to be buried in the bowels of our American brethren." See *Correspondence of William Pitt, &c.* Vol. iv. p. 474, 475.

* Vol. iii. p. 44.

ron for the West Indies in November, 1778, Lord Mahon proceeds: —

"They had formed the most sanguine hopes from the French alliance. They had found that alliance as yet little better than a name. Moreover, just before the departure of D'Estaing, he had given them another valid reason for displeasure. He had issued a proclamation to the people of Canada, inviting, though in guarded terms, their return to the sway of their former sovereign. It need scarcely be observed, that such views were most directly repugnant to the terms of the treaty signed only nine months before." Vol. vi. pp. 384, 385.

As we read D'Estaing's proclamation, it admits of no such construction. Having argued in full the reasons urging the Canadians to take part with the Americans against the English, it concludes as follows: "I will not attempt to convince a whole people, for a whole people, when they acquire the right to think and act, know their own interest, that to connect themselves [*se lier*] with the United States is to secure their happiness; but I will declare, as I now formally do, in the name of his Majesty, who has given me authority and instructions to that effect, that all his former subjects in North America, who will no longer recognize the supremacy of England, may rely on his protection and support."* What is this but to say, that, during the contest, they would have the protection and support of France acting in concert with the United States? There is nothing in the language to justify its being interpreted as an invitation to "return to the sway of their former sovereign." The Americans conceived no resentment or jealousy on account of this declaration. It would have been absurd for them to do so. "Valid reason for displeasure" in it there was none, nor a particle of repugnance "to the terms of the treaty, signed only nine months before." By the sixth article of that treaty,† the king of France "renounces the possession of any part of the continent of North America, which, before the treaty of Paris in 1763, or in virtue of that treaty, were acknowledged to belong to the crown

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* See *Annual Register*, for 1779, p. 355. † *Secret Journal*, Vol. ii. p. 85.

of Great Britain;" and by the fifth article, it was provided that any territory conquered by the United States in the northern parts of America should "be confederated with, or dependent upon, the said States." These stipulations were strictly and faithfully adhered to by the French government throughout the war. If they never lent direct aid to the American invasions of Canada, neither did they throw any obstacles in the way of the execution of those plans; still less did they take any steps whatever to secure Canada for themselves. In fact, they had had quite enough of it in the war of 1758, even if there had been no considerations of good faith with their allies.*

Lord Mahon has his doubts respecting the extent of the feeling in favor of independent and republican institutions, after the Declaration of Independence.

"In tracing the measures of Congress at this juncture, it is to be observed that while most of the members were warm and zealous in prosecution of the war, there was not wanting a minority inclined to absolute and unconditional submission. So much danger would have been incurred by a manifestation of such views, that we cannot expect to find them in any manner clearly or explicitly avowed. But that such a party did exist at Philadelphia, and that in numbers it was considerable, is recorded by most unimpeachable authority; by the Adjutant-General of the American army, himself a Philadelphian, and connected with all the chief houses of that city. Few things, indeed, are more remarkable than the lingering attachment to kingly government which may be traced in these insurgent colonies. So strong was this feeling that, even when every hope was relinquished of returning to the sway of King George, there were some persons who in their stead turned their thoughts to the Pretender — to the Prince Charles of 'The Forty-five.' Some letters to invite him over, and to assure him of allegiance, were addressed to him from Boston at the very commencement of the contest. Thus, also, Mr. Washington Irving was assured by Sir Walter Scott, that among the Stuart Papers which Sir Walter had examined at Carlton House, he had found a Memorial to Prince Charles from some adherents in America, dated 1778, and proposing to set up his standard in the back settlements. These men were not, and could not be, aware of the broken health and degraded habits

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* On this subject, see Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, Vol. i. pp. 189, 190.

into which their hero had fallen. They did not, they could not, know the details of his domestic life at Florence. But such was still their reverence for Royalty, that they desired to cling to it even where it might be only the shadow of a shade." Vol. vi. pp. 184, 185.

Mr. Washington Irving's testimony is incontestable, as far as it goes. He says that Walter Scott acquainted him with the contents of a paper in the Stuart collection, which paper is not now to be found, so that the accuracy of Sir Walter's recollection cannot be verified. Supposing it accurate, what did Sir Walter say? That "he had found a memorial to Prince Charles from some adherents in America, dated 1778, and proposing to set up his standard in the back settlements." Where were the "back settlements"? Boston was not one of them. More front settlement than Boston, there was none. In Boston, probably, there were not at that time fifty Catholics, nor probably was there any part of the British dominions where the aversion to that religion was more intense. It is just as credible that the Bostonians, or enough of them to make any figure in a joint letter, should have sent for the Grand Lama to rule over them, as that they should have called in Prince Charles Edward. Boston being, through the whole early history, the principal English place known to the French on this continent, their common name for Anglo-Americans was *Bostonnais*. When Duten quoted the Abbé Fabroni as having seen "letters from Americans of Boston to the Pretender, inviting him to place himself at their head," we presume that by "Americans of Boston" is to be understood men of British America. The letters which Fabroni had seen were probably the same as those afterwards in the hands of Sir Walter Scott. Sir Walter's invited the Pretender "to set up his standard in the back settlements." In 1778, there were "back settlements" under the English flag, but consisting mainly of French Catholics, as the posts of St. Louis, Kaskaskia, Cahokia, St. Vincents, and others, afterwards taken by George Rogers Clark. Till further informed, we shall strongly incline to the opinion that it was from settlements of this description that the invitation was sent to the grandson of James the Second. It is a curious passage in history, and Lord Mahon will do a service by elucidating it further.

And, in connection with the last extract, we remark that he is certainly in error, though it is an error which he shares with most British writers, in his estimate of the number and influence of the American Royalists. While they were more or less numerous in different provinces, — large, for instance, in New York, and small in Massachusetts, — the fact is, that taken in the aggregate, and compared with the whole population, the number was at all times very small. At first, it consisted mainly of crown officers, their dependents and adherents, a few native English "Church and King" men, and a few men of property, conservatives in grain, who preferred tranquil times under the old government to the hazards and discomforts of a revolution. Afterwards, wherever the British army marched or was stationed, it was not unnatural that many of the inhabitants, seeking only quiet and safety in their homes, should, for the time being, maintain friendly relations with the invaders. And this was the case, to a considerable extent, particularly in Pennsylvania and the Southern States. But, on the whole, throughout the country, the men of talent, of education, and of the greatest weight of character, with few exceptions, rallied in a body in opposition to the measures of the British Parliament. Hutchinson was a crown officer, and left the country in that capacity. Of men not holding office under the crown, there was but one American that had made any figure in public life, — Galloway, of Pennsylvania, — who withdrew from the patriot cause, and placed himself under the king's protection. Only about a thousand left Massachusetts when Sir William Howe was driven from Boston, in 1776. As a party, acting in concert, the Royalists effected nothing. They were not of consequence enough for any show of influence on the public counsels after the first year of the war. For some testimony on this subject, to which he will allow great weight, we refer Lord Mahon to John Adams's letters in October, 1780, to the Amsterdam lawyer, Mr. Calkoen, in the forthcoming seventh volume of that statesman's writings; particularly the second, fifth, and seventh letters of the series.

Connected with this mistake of fact is another of opinion. Lord Mahon thinks, that, if Lord Chatham had

lived to take the helm of public affairs, to which all circumstances were inviting him in the year 1778, and had attempted, as he would have done, "to regain the affections while refusing the independence of America," the undertaking would not have been hopeless, (p. 343.) Lord Mahon will undoubtedly abandon this opinion as soon as he shall have read the journals of Congress of that period, or run over the proceedings of the assemblies of the several States, or pursued any other course of inquiry suitable to acquaint him with what was at this time the sentiment and spirit of the whole people of the United Colonies. Just before, the British Ministry had sent out conciliatory bills, yielding almost every thing except independence. And how did Congress receive them? With a unanimous vote, "that these United States cannot with propriety hold any conference or treaty with any commissioners on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or else, in positive and express terms, acknowledge the independence of the said States." * This vote was passed before so much as an intimation of the conclusion of the French alliance had been received. Congress was equally decided two years before, when proposals for an accommodation were presented from the Ministry by Lord Howe. In short, whoever supposes that Congress could have been induced to make peace at any time after the Declaration of Independence, on the condition of going back to a colonial state, with any privileges and exemptions whatsoever, only shows himself quite too little acquainted with the invariable sentiments of that body.

But, says Lord Mahon, (p. 345,) "the Provinces might, perhaps, have been inclined to control the deliberations, or even to cast off the sway, of the central body, and make terms of peace for themselves." Than this there can be no wilder dream. From the organization of Congress till the end of the war, the Provinces, or the *States*, as they were called in America, uniformly and cordially acquiesced in its proceedings in relation to the parent country. There was no instance of a remonstrance, or of any formal expression of discontent with

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* *Journals of Congress*, Vol. iv. p. 233.

the doings of Congress, from the Assembly of a State, or any association of individuals. Never was a disposition shown to interfere through separate action, or to press local interests. With a federal government as feeble and incompact as well could be, the deficiency was well supplied by a strenuous unanimity of sentiment.

On this point, of the possibility of recalling the Colonies to their allegiance, there can be no sort of doubt that Lord Chatham was in error. So far he did not understand the spirit of their people. His great mind had been in eclipse during part of the time, while the feeling of opposition in America had been maturing. He had lost the bearings of the ship; winds and tides had carried it out of his reckoning. When we add to this the uncompromising character of the man, and the invincible repugnance which he may naturally have felt to see the American empire dismembered, which his brilliant administration had established on so magnificent a footing, we are in some condition to understand his pertinacity. Lord Rockingham and the Duke of Richmond comprehended better the conditions and exigencies of the time, in respect to American affairs. After the capture of Burgoyne's army, in September, 1777, Lord Rockingham and his friends had the discernment to see that the conquest of America was desperate; and they adopted the manly and patriotic part of avowing that conviction in Parliament, and urging the adoption of a policy conformable thereto.* It has lately become known, what had not been unsuspected, that Lord North entertained the same views, but was borne along in his fatal course by a principle of honor, which compelled him to lend himself to the obstinacy of the king.† Had the advice of the Marquis of Rockingham and his friends been taken after the capture of Burgoyne, it would have saved Great Britain five years of costly, discreditable, and unprofitable

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* See the debate in the House of Lords on the motion for adjournment, December 11th, 1777; and in Committee, April 7th, 1778; and those in the House of Commons, February, 23 — March 2d, 1778. (*Parliamentary Register*, Vols. viii. and x.); and speeches of Lord Chatham, and letters to and from him and Lord Rockingham, in December, 1777, and January and February, 1778, in the *Chatham Correspondence*, Vol. iv.

† See Sparks's *Writings of Washington*, Vol. vi. p. 531, &c., and the Appendix to Lord Mahon's Vol. vi. pp. xxix.–xliii. for the letters of George the Third to Lord North.

war with these States. And there can be extremely little doubt, that an accommodation with America at that juncture would also have averted the war with France and Spain, who would not have ventured upon a breach without the advantage of the hostilities then going on between Great Britain and her ancient Colonies. Lord Rockingham was a statesman of abilities much superior to what Lord Mahon represents them. Britain might have owed him much, had not she, or rather her monarch, been too perverse to hear his counsel. America owes him gratitude for his moderation and candor, as well as respect for his good sense.

We have borne our cordial testimony to Lord Mahon's general good nature. But there is a temptation which besets a person of that temper when he comes to put pen to paper, unless he be at the same time a quite self-relying man. It is that of being occasionally *piquant*, even at the expense of justice, in order to break and relieve a dead level of candor and complacency. Lord Mahon's Tory prejudices have partly dictated the direction in which that seducing impulse should take effect.

To Washington, as we have already said, he almost uniformly does hearty justice; scarcely does George the Third command his reverence more; though to us he greatly impairs the praise bestowed on Washington, by that supposition of his having been laggard in his country's cause, which, perhaps, had some share in buying him the historian's favor. (Vol. v. p. 483.) The supposition is entirely unfounded. Washington was never impetuous, and, until he was forced into the most responsible public position, others claimed the public ear before him. But, from the first, he shared in the counsels of the Virginia patriots, and took as early and resolute a part as any one of them against the usurpations of the British Ministry.* Lord Mahon, perhaps, does not know that the temporary prevalence, to some extent, of a different opinion, was owing to the publication, in 1776, in London and New York, of a collection of spurious letters, in which Washington was represented as expressing to his

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* See, on this subject, *Life and Writings of Washington*, Vol. i. p. 116, *et seq.*

friends sentiments inconsistent with his public course, and condemning the Declaration of Independence and the rest of the bold policy of Congress. In this country, where his character was known, the fraud accomplished nothing; the letters were set down for a forgery at once, as he, at a time of more leisure, declared them, under his own hand, to be.

To New England, and especially to Massachusetts, the leading province, Lord Mahon is generally unjust to a painful degree. Of the ability and the services of the patriots of Massachusetts he has no notion; at all events, he gives his readers none. James Otis he almost ignores. Samuel Adams he singles out for the repetition of a scandalous story, though on a sober second thought he takes it back in the Appendix.* John Hancock he commemorates mainly as a smuggling merchant. (Vol. v. p. 356.) James Bowdoin he despatches in a hasty period or two. Josiah Quincy, Jr., he does not know by name. Joseph Warren he knows, or rather misknows, as "the physician of Boston, who had lately become the President of the Massachusetts Congress, and been raised (by his own authority, in fact,) to the rank of major-general," and who led "a large accession of force" to Bunker Hill. Than John Adams, no statesman was more important, to say the least, in the first two Continental Congresses. If Thomas Jefferson, more than any other man, was the author of the document *The Declaration of Independence*, of the Declaration of Independence as a measure, taking place at the time that it did, John Adams was the author, more than any other man. Scarcely less material were his diplomatic services presently after in Europe. Yet Lord Mahon can treat of American politics down to 1780, and find John Adams's place of highest honor in the court-room, where he acted as counsel for Captain Preston; a highly honorable act, no doubt, but scarcely of the same consideration as

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* We will help the author for his next edition, so far as to refer him for this story to Hutchinson's *History of Massachusetts*, Vol. iii. pp. 294, 295. Strange as it may seem, that his Lordship should never have seen a book on the period of which he treats, of such extreme importance, and one so peculiarly suited to his use, as maintaining the loyalist side, still we believe such to be the fact.

that of his great agency in redeeming the continent to freedom.

"It is not to be supposed that the ferment in any other colonies of North America, — and in some there was, it may be said, no ferment at all, — bore any proportion to that in Massachusetts. . . . . . In no other was there the same Cromwellian leaven at work." Vol. v. p. 361.

Amen. Massachusetts was very prompt, resolute, and active, in asserting her chartered privileges and her unchartered rights, in talkative town-meeting, solemn council-chamber, and, in good time, bloody field. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.* Massachusetts was very "Cromwellian," if Lord Mahon pleases. We have no sort of objection to the phrase. After a not un-Cromwellian fashion, she looked at things in various points of view; she fasted and prayed, and meanwhile filled her magazines, and drilled her demure young yeomanry. Minding a lesson which was her own before it was Cromwell's, she trusted in God and kept her powder dry.

Yet Massachusetts — ugly customer as she was, and more or less had always been, to the king — was at the same time without public spirit, and sordid. This charge Lord Mahon tries to sustain, (vol. vi. p. 122,) by extracts from private letters of Washington to Joseph Reed, in November and February, 1775, 1776, and from a letter to the President of Congress, in December, 1775.

Heaven forbid that we should find fault with any strong expression of Washington's discontent and anxiety at that dismal period! Little money, scarcely any powder, difficult enlistments, inexperienced officers, troops impatient to be discharged, subordination to be introduced into an army of which the officers and privates were at home each other's equals, — his embarrassments were all but intolerable; they would have been intolerable to any mind but such as his. His own responsibilities and difficulties were enough to occupy his thoughts. It was not for him to be thinking of excuses for others, but rather of stimulating them by censure, remonstrance, complaint. But impartial history may and ought to look a little at the other side. These troops, so reluctantly detained in camp, had left their homes unexpectedly in

early spring, and their absence had been prolonged into the depth of winter. Literally, in many instances, leaving the plough in the furrow and the steers yoked, they had come to the war on the signal of Concord battle; and ploughing-time, sowing-time, harvest-time, had passed, while, scantily provided themselves, — so that Washington found them "very deficient in necessary clothing," (vol. iii. p. 21,) — they were still distant from their unprovided families. We shall not maintain that many of them might not have shown more self-sacrifice than they did show, nor shall we deny that such a course would have been more to their honor. We could wish that every Massachusetts man had been a very Curtius in his self-devotion, though perhaps history has not often had to record more of the prevalence of a Curtius spirit than shone forth here in 1775. But, at all events, while the occasions for complaint on one side were most prominent when the conflict was flagrant, it is now time to allow their fair weight to the difficulties on the other. In his answer to the address of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, July 4th, 1775, Washington thought it not unfit to use the following language.

"In exchanging the enjoyments of domestic life for the duties of my present honorable but arduous station, I only emulate the virtue and public spirit of the whole province of Massachusetts Bay, which, with a firmness and patriotism without example in modern history, has sacrificed all the comforts of social and political life, in support of the rights of mankind, and the welfare of our common country." *Writings*, Vol. iii. p. 14.

In the same paper he very justly says, —

"The course of human affairs forbids an expectation, that troops formed under such circumstances should at once possess the order, regularity, and discipline of veterans." *Ibid.*

The difficulties which he thus reasonably anticipated, and which he afterwards experienced, he was not indisposed to make allowances for.

"This unhappy and devoted province has been so long in a state of anarchy, and the yoke of ministerial oppression has been laid so heavily on it, that great allowances are to be made for troops raised under such circumstances. The deficiency of num-

bers, discipline, and stores can only lead to this conclusion, that their spirit has exceeded their strength." Vol. iii. p. 24.

In November, there was so much impatience of longer detention that Washington found himself compelled to grant furloughs (vol. iii. p. 176) "to fifty at a time from each regiment;" and it is at this period, under the vexation arising from this cause, that Washington uses his severest language. No doubt, the state of things was perplexing, irritating, deplorable. It was enough to create all the displeasure that Washington felt. But, after all, what did the men want their furloughs for? Not to take themselves out of the enemy's way, nor out of the way of an unprovided winter in camp. Washington himself answers that question.

"One thousand five hundred at a time are to be absent on furlough, until all have gone home to visit and provide for their families." Vol. iii. p. 189.

A not unreasonable object to present itself, as winter came on, to husbands and fathers, who, in the last spring, had left their homes *impromptu*, — though very unpropitious to the discipline of the army, annoying to its general, and hazardous to the public safety. And presently after, Washington felt better. The last quotation is from a letter of December 5. The militia were called in to supply the places of the men absent on furlough, and December 11th, Washington wrote as follows: —

"The militia are coming in fast. I am much pleased with the alacrity which the good people of this province, as well as those of New Hampshire, have shown upon this occasion." Vol. iii. p. 195.

And again, just a week later: —

"The returns of men enlisted since my last amount to about eighteen hundred, making in the whole seven thousand one hundred and forty. The militia that are come in, both from this province and New Hampshire, are very fine-looking men, and go through their duty with great alacrity. The despatch made, both by the people in marching and by the legislative powers in complying with my requisition, has given me infinite satisfaction." Vol. iii. pp. 205, 206.

On the 7th of March, 1776, Washington informed the

President of Congress of that movement to take possession of Dorchester Heights, which drove the British army from Boston. He says, —

"It having been the general opinion, that the enemy would attempt to dislodge our people from the Heights, and force their works as soon as they were discovered, which probably might have brought on a general engagement, it was thought advisable that the honorable council* should be applied to, to order in the militia from the neighboring and adjacent towns. I wrote to them on the subject, which they most readily complied with; and, in justice to the militia, I cannot but inform you that they came in at the appointed time, and manifested the greatest alertness, and determined resolution to act like men engaged in the cause of freedom." Vol. iii. p. 304.

To Colonel Reed he wrote on the same day, —

"Every thing had the appearance of a successful issue, if we had come to an engagement on that day. It was the 5th of March, [the anniversary of the Boston Massacre, so called,] which I recalled to their remembrance as a day never to be forgotten. An engagement was fully expected, and I never saw spirits higher, or more ardor prevailing." Reed's *Life and Correspondence*, Vol. i. p. 169.

Once more, acknowledging, on the 18th of April, the vote of thanks by Congress to his troops, Washington said, —

"They were, indeed, at first 'a band of undisciplined husbandmen,' but it is, under God, to their bravery and attention to their duty, that I am indebted for that success," &c. *Writings*, Vol. iii. p. 361.

The hardships in camp required great exertions out of camp, and such exertions were made as do not indicate a penurious people. The usual sources of revenue were cut off, and Massachusetts was extremely poor; and as yet there was scarcely a new social organization, such as deserved to be called government. In December, the army was suffering for want of firewood and hay; and the way in which provision was made illustrates the imperfection of the fiscal machinery, as well as the public spirit which supplied its defects.

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* The Executive Council of Massachusetts.

"The Assembly of Massachusetts undertook to supply these articles, by calling on the towns, within twenty miles of Boston, to furnish at stated times specific quantities, according to the population of each town and its distance from camp. This requisition was generally complied with by the selectmen and committees of the towns, although it was issued only in the form of a recommendation, and the wants of the army were effectually relieved." Vol. iii. p. 190, note.

It is a bitter and a cruel thing for any man to look back from these calm and abundant days, and say that the people of Massachusetts have ever been a parsimonious people when public exigencies required great expense. We can give but one example of the action of its village democracies before we pass from the topic, and we take that of the town of Concord, because the record of its doings lies at hand, and because we can present it in the language of R. Waldo Emerson, in his Centennial Discourse fifteen years ago. Concord is fourteen or fifteen miles from Cambridge, where were then head-quarters. It was and is a very patriotic town, and we will not say that it did not do better than the average of other towns in the autumn of 1775. But here is what it did then, and through the war.

"Its little population of 1300 souls behaved like a party to the contest. The number of its troops constantly in service is very great. Its pecuniary burdens are out of all proportion to its capital. The economy so rigid, which marked its earlier history, has all vanished. It spends profusely, affectionately in the service. 'Since,' say the plaintive records, 'General Washington, at Cambridge, is not able to give but 24*s.* per cord for wood, for the army; it is voted, that this town encourage the inhabitants to supply the army, by paying two dollars per cord, over and above the General's price, to such as shall carry wood thither;' and 210 cords of wood were carried. A similar order is taken respecting hay. Whilst Boston was occupied by the British troops, Concord contributed to the relief of the inhabitants £70 in money; 225 bushels of grain; and a quantity of meat and wood. When, presently, the poor of Boston were quartered by the Provincial Congress on the neighboring country, Concord received 82 persons to its hospitality. In the year 1775, it raised 100 minute-men and 74 soldiers to serve at Cambridge. In March, 1776, 145 men were raised by this town to serve at Dorchester Heights. In June, the General Assembly of Massachusetts resolved to raise 5000 militia, for six months, to reinforce the Continental army.

'The numbers,' say they, 'are large, but this court has the fullest assurance, that their brethren on this occasion, will not confer with flesh and blood, but will, without hesitation, and with the utmost alacrity and despatch, fill up the numbers proportioned to the several towns.' On that occasion, Concord furnished 67 men, paying them itself, at an expense of £622. And so on, with every levy, to the end of the war. For these men, it was continually providing shoes, stockings, shirts, coats, blankets, and beef. The taxes, which, before the war, had not much exceeded £200 per annum, amounted, in the year 1782, to $9,544 in silver. The great expense of the war was borne with cheerfulness, whilst the war lasted; but years passed, after the peace, before the debt was paid. As soon as danger and injury ceased, the people were left at leisure to consider their poverty and their debts. The town records show how slowly the inhabitants recovered from the strain of excessive exertion.'—pp. 37, 38."

In Philip's war, the debt incurred by Plymouth exceeded the aggregate personal estate of all the inhabitants of the colony; and she paid it, dollar for dollar. In one year of the French war of 1758 – 1763, Massachusetts taxed herself thirty-six *per cent.* on the income from real, and sixty-six *per cent.* on the income from personal estate, besides several excises; and more than one third of the effective men of the colony were in the field. At the time of the Boston Port Bill, Salem, Marblehead, and other seaboard towns, which the ministry hoped to bribe, with the spoils of Boston, to opposition to her policy, offered to receive the Boston ships, and load and unload them without charge. In the war of the Revolution, 298,134 men (231,971 continental, 56,163 militia,) were at different times employed. Of these, the four New England States, including the little State of Rhode Island, furnished 147,373, only 1,694 less than half of the whole number; while the single State of Massachusetts furnished 83,262, or only 24,174 less than half the aggregate number furnished by all the other twelve States, nearly 8000 more than half the number furnished by the nine States out of New England, and between twice and three times as many as Virginia, the largest of those States, which sent 32,288 men to the war. At the same time, the excess of her payments into the common Treasury from 1775 to 1783, over and above what she drew from it, was greater than that of

the aggregate of her twelve sister States. No. Lord Mahon may depend upon it that he has fallen into an error, in taking Massachusetts for his example of halting or penurious public action. "Cromwellian," he is free to call her, without any denial from us; but the two descriptions do not agree together.

In speaking of what is called Conway's cabal, Lord Mahon says, (vi. 367,) that Conway "leagued himself with several other ambitious officers and scheming members of Congress; several, above all, from the New England States." No part of the country was more *Washingtonian* than New England was from first to last. She took the lead in Congress in selecting him to be commander-in-chief; and throughout his life, military and civil, none of the States was more devoted to his virtues, his policy, and his glory. Massachusetts stood stiffly by him through his Presidency, when his own Virginia was averse or cold. Still if New England had any particular connection with Conway's plot, by all means let it be known; and let justice be done, though the sky fall. Mr. Sparks, after a thorough examination of the subject, in a note, which Lord Mahon describes as "well deserving of perusal," concludes that there was nothing of the kind. Without producing a particle of evidence or of argument to refute him, Lord Mahon, who perhaps has looked into Botta, says that Mr. Sparks seeks "to glide gently over the participation of the New England members." We appeal to any candid reader of Mr. Sparks's note to say, whether he does any thing of the kind; whether, on the contrary, it is not a most upright and dispassionate investigation of a curious historical problem, as well as thorough, so far as the extant materials permit. Mr. Sparks concludes his note of thirty-six closely printed octavo pages as follows: —

"Some writers have laid the charge heavily upon the New England members; but this charge has been ably and conclusively refuted in Mr. Austin's *Life of Gerry*, where several interesting facts on the subject may be found. Others implicate the Southern members, but with no better evidence than conjecture. In truth it cannot be proved, nor is it probable, that any combinations unfavorable to the Commander-in-chief existed, either in the army or in Congress, which partook of local interests, or were sustained by the prejudices of any particular State or district of the Union." *Washington's Writings*, Vol. v. p. 518.

"The biography of Mr. Elbridge Gerry," replies Lord Mahon, "seems to me wholly inconclusive, *and to make (for an American book) one most singular blunder.*" What sleepiness is it, in which his Lordship dreams that the oversight of the author of Gerry's Life, in incidentally naming Philadelphia as the place of the session of Congress in November, 1777, when in fact Congress was sitting at York, is of any avail against the cogent argument there presented respecting Conway's cabal? * If Lord Mahon has any facts upon the subject, not known in this country, or not recorded by our writers, let him oblige and instruct us with them. But until he has done so, or has been at some pains to place the facts known to us in some new light, we will not say that his *ex cathedrâ* judgment on this point is impertinent, but we must say that it is not weighty.

Our readers have seen some proof that Lord Mahon is not eminently good at weighing authorities, or even sufficiently careful in his citations of them. It is painful to see how he sometimes disposes of such an authority as that of our learned countryman, Mr. Sparks, a writer to whom American history is much more indebted than to any other, for fruits of original research. He is not perhaps so sprightly a writer as Lord Mahon, but among qualifications for historical composition there are several which rank higher than liveliness of style. The habit of accuracy in investigation and in statement is one of them; and in this great merit, as well as in others, Mr. Sparks excels, to a degree which makes Lord Mahon's flippant allusions to him a subject of mortification to such as wish well to his Lordship's fame.

Of the Declaration of Independence, Lord Mahon says, (vi. 161,) that "it excited much less notice than might have been supposed." That measure had, however, been sufficiently long in progress not to take the public mind by surprise; it produced no change, like a French Revolution, in the form of government or the condition of the people; — the revolution had taken place before, in the several States; it scarcely raised anticipations, or intro-

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* Austin's *Life of Gerry*, Vol. i. pp. 232–245.

duced a policy, not already existing in full maturity. Under these circumstances, it appears to us that no greater excitement was reasonably to have been looked for than what the newspapers of the day show to have been actually produced, which was certainly by no means small. But what irks us most in connection with this matter is, that as a qualifying circumstance, Lord Mahon takes occasion (vi. 161) to add, "Washington, however, in his public letter to Congress (unless Mr. Jared Sparks has *improved* this passage) says that the troops had testified 'their warmest approbation.'" * "Unless Mr. Jared Sparks has *improved* this passage"! Is it thus that self-respecting men, engaged in liberal pursuits, should speak of one another? Neither this passage, nor any other, has Mr. Sparks improved in the manner that Lord Mahon ventures to imply. There is an old collection of Washington's "official letters" during the war, published while he was President. The edition before us is the second, issued at Boston in 1796. Lord Mahon knows the book, for he has quoted from it, (vi. 378,) and therein, (vol. i. p. 176,) the passage stands, word for word, as printed by Mr. Sparks. Thirty seconds' time would have sufficed to inform his Lordship whether he had a right to suppose it to be an *improvement* by that gentleman, and would have saved him from the discontent he will feel in reflecting upon so rash a sneer.

After making an extract from one of Washington's letters, and referring to others relating to the detention of Burgoyne's troops by Congress, Lord Mahon says, —

> "How far Mr. Sparks may have either garbled these passages or suppressed others, I know not. Mr. Adolphus says that Washington remonstrated with force and firmness against this national act of dishonor. (*Hist.* vol. iii. p. 99, edit. 1802.)"— Vol. vi. p. 299.

We suppose that Mr. Adolphus was mistaken. He may have had evidence not known to us; but, as at present advised, we presume that Washington, whatever may have been his private opinion, never "remonstrated" to Congress against their measures in relation to this subject. It would

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* *Writings*, Vol. iii. p. 457.

have been contrary to his rule and practice. Will Lord Mahon get Mr. Adolphus's vouchers, and set us right as to that question? But his Lordship "knows not how far Mr. Sparks may have either garbled these passages, or suppressed others." He might easily have known, however, as to one of them. He had only to turn to his copy of that manual, to which we have just referred as an acquaintance of his, and he would have found that passage (vol. ii. p. 207,) in precisely the form in which it is printed by Mr. Sparks. The others, we presume, are from letters hitherto unpublished, except in Mr. Sparks's edition. Lord Mahon's not knowing whether they have been "garbled" would have been a more material fact, had he not declared himself to be equally unknowing in respect to the former, when knowledge concerning it was so cheaply to be had from a little book just laid by him upon his own shelves.

Having quoted from the "Official Letters" some sentences in which Washington condemns the policy of proscriptive measures by which loyalist merchants and mechanics would be driven from Philadelphia, Lord Mahon adds, (vi. 378,) "Mr. Sparks has deemed it expedient to omit the letter containing these passages." No doubt of it. Mr. Sparks not only "deemed it expedient," but found it unavoidable, to omit several thousands of letters. The same feeble sort of implied complaint often occurs in these pleasant volumes, as if it were something discreditable to Mr. Sparks that he did not print Washington's remains bodily, in forty or fifty volumes, instead of making such a selection from them as might be comprehended within eleven. If his Lordship will refresh his memory with the contents of his own preface to his edition of Lord Chesterfield's letters, he will own that reasons for such omissions do sometimes exist.

Besides occasional petulances of this kind scattered through his sixth volume, Lord Mahon devotes to the work of our learned countryman a whole article in his Appendix. After some commendations of Mr. Sparks's work as "of great historical interest and importance," and of his "notes and illustrations" as "written not only with much ability, but in a spirit, on most points, of candor and fairness," Lord Mahon proceeds: —

"I am bound, however, not to conceal the opinion I have formed, that Mr. Sparks has printed no part of the correspondence precisely as Washington wrote it, but has greatly altered, and, as he thinks, corrected and embellished it." Vol. vi. p. iv.

We have much allowance and charity for *obiter dicta*. But this is not one. Lord Mahon has formed an opinion. It is so clear, matured, and consequential, that he is "bound not to conceal" it. And it is this; "that Mr. Sparks has printed *no part* of the correspondence precisely as Washington wrote it." To arrive intelligently at that opinion, (relating as it does, by its terms, to every part,) one needs to have become acquainted, we will not say with the whole, but at least with a very large portion of that correspondence in the original, and to have observed constant deviations from it in the printed copy. This being so, what is Lord Mahon's opinion that Mr. Sparks has correctly printed "*no part* of the correspondence" good for? His Lordship will answer that this is not what he meant. So we suppose. But then we must be allowed to ask, What is the authority of so sweeping an opinion, when he who utters it with such judicial stateliness is not at pains to understand himself enough to be able to announce his meaning with more precision?

But justice to an admirable national monument of the nation's greatest man, and to an eminent and most meritorious American scholar, demands that we should look more closely at the question thus presented. Fourteen years ago, four years or more after the completion of Mr. Sparks's work, we spoke of it as follows, expressing, as we believed and believe, the well-determined sense of good judges in this country.

"To judge of the service which Mr. Sparks has rendered the country, we must compare the previous accounts of Washington's career with that which we now possess. All that is contained in Marshall is meagre and incomplete in comparison with the copious details and ample illustrations with which we are at present furnished. We have Washington to the life, from boyhood to the last hour; narrating his own career; explaining himself, the formation of his own character; and promulgating his views on every question of his day. And these letters are not left unexplained. The editor has gathered collateral aid from every

quarter; and sparingly, yet clearly and admirably, illustrated the whole work by researches of the deepest interest. As a critic, the mind of Mr. Sparks seems to know no bias. He pursues the truth, and is enamored of inquiry; and, where explanation is needed he does not rest satisfied, till he has exhausted every source of information.

"The great merit of Mr. Sparks, giving him the first rank among the critical students of our history, consists in his candor and his completeness. In the selection of documents he appears ever to have been guided by the highest reverence for historic truth. But more than all, he perceived clearly, that the history of our revolution, the life and character and influence of Washington, could not be derived from American sources alone; and with a wide grasp, which proves his mind to be enlarged not less than accurate, he has sought materials in England and on the continent of Europe. He saw clearly the momentous importance of the diplomatic connections of our country; and would not rest satisfied, till, at a vast expense of time and fortune, he had culled the most interesting memoirs from the archives of London and Paris, and, through friends, from the papers of the Spanish Court. And he has, in consequence, been able to accomplish a great work. He has published such an edition of Washington's works, as is never likely to be excelled; thus winning a claim to regard by his zealous care for the remains of our greatest benefactor, and permanently connecting himself with a name that will never perish.

"The admirable fund of historic information which Mr. Sparks has acquired, and holds in his own mind, ought not to rest unemployed. It would take an apprenticeship of many years for a new critic, — and a critic of equal natural endowments is a rare phenomenon, — to attain the position which Mr. Sparks occupies. His judgment is disciplined; his acquisitions, such as to save him from imperfect conceptions or undue estimates of the importance of new documents; familiar with the relative merits and activity of the men of the revolution, we cannot too strongly desire, that his mind may continue to be bent upon illustrating the history of his country." *N. A. Review*, Vol. xlvi. pp. 483, 484.

And again, —

"We dismiss his work with unqualified satisfaction. Its extent required a patience of labor, which few men could have brought to the task. To these have been added rigid literary as well as moral integrity, and that love of his theme which engaged him in supplementary and illustrative researches, in this country and Europe, of the most important and interesting character.

Mr. Sparks must not look for his reward to pecuniary compensation. Notwithstanding Mr. Moore's recent complimentary remarks on the splendid dowry which literature now brings to those who espouse her, we doubt not he has been as well paid for the lightest of his own graceful effusions by the Mæcenas of Albemarle Street as Mr. Sparks will be for his ten years of unrelaxing and conscientious labor. His reward has been already in part enjoyed; it must be found in the consciousness of laboriously and worthily performing a noble work;—in the conviction that he has contributed to give a wider diffusion, and a more abiding permanence, to the fame of Washington; and that, whenever the authority of the greatest and best of chieftains and patriots is appealed to in all coming time, it will be in some association with his own name and labors." *N. A. Review*, Vol. xlvii. p. 381.

And such, while widely circulated, and subjected to criticism far and near, has continued to be the reputation of this great work, unquestioned till within about a year. In 1847 was published "The Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed," by his grandson. It contained several private letters from Washington to Reed, (for some time his private secretary,) some of them the same which had before been printed by Mr. Sparks. A comparison between those letters, as published in the two works respectively, exhibits some discrepancies. They were commented upon, last year, in a tone unfriendly to Mr. Sparks, in one or more of the New York newspapers; and catching at this from across the water, and echoing it with some exaggeration, Lord Mahon has given it form and permanency.

Mr. Sparks understood the difficulties of his undertaking beforehand, as well as those who criticize him understand them, after having been enlightened by his expositions and experience. In the Preface to the first volume published, (the second in the series,) he expressed himself as follows.

"It has been a task of some difficulty to determine what general principles should be adopted, in selecting the parts for publication from the whole body of papers left by Washington. In the first place, the mass of manuscript, which extends to eighty volumes, consisting chiefly of letters, is so large as to preclude the idea of publishing more than a comparatively small portion. Again, from the nature of the correspondence, being mostly offi-

cial, and many of the letters having been written to different persons on the same subject, there are necessarily frequent repetitions, and numerous particulars constantly intervening, which, though essential at the time in the transaction to which they relate, have no longer any interest or moment. Of this description are the innumerable details incident to the subordinate arrangements of an army, such as supplies, provisions, clothing, camp equipage, arms, ammunition, and other points of minor consideration, which engaged the incessant care of the Commander-in-chief, and entered largely into his correspondence even with Congress, and the highest officers, both civil and military. To print all the materials of this kind would not only be useless in itself, but would add so much to the size and expense of the work, as at the same time to make it cumbersome and unattractive to readers, and raise its cost above the means of many individuals, who may wish to possess these personal records and authentic memorials of the acts, opinions, and character of the Father of his Country.

"Under these circumstances, I have endeavored to pursue such a course as would the most effectually attain the object to be desired, in bringing these papers before the public; namely, to exhibit the writings of Washington in a manner that will render strict justice to the imperishable name of their author, and contribute the greatest advantage to his countrymen, both at the present time, and in future ages. For this purpose I have laid down two rules, which I have labored to follow with as much discrimination as possible; first, to select such parts as have a permanent value, on account of the historical facts which they contain, whether in relation to actual events, or to the political designs and operations in which Washington was a leading or conspicuous agent; secondly, to comprise such other parts as contain the views, opinions, counsels, and reflections of the writer on all kinds of topics, showing thereby the structure of his mind, its powers and resources, and the strong and varied points of his character. Upon this plan, it has been my study to go carefully through the manuscripts, without regard to what has heretofore been made public, and gather from the whole, and combine into one body, the portions most important for their intrinsic value and historical characteristics; so that the work in its complete form, may be a depository of all the writings of Washington which it is essential to preserve, either as illustrating his political and private life, or the history of his country during the long and brilliant period of his public career.

"According to this plan, when a letter throughout bears the features above described, it will be printed entire, as will, in

every case, the addresses, speeches, messages, circulars, and other state papers, issued by him from time to time. But many of the letters, both in the public and private correspondence, for the reasons already assigned, will necessarily be printed with omissions of unimportant passages, relating chiefly to topics or facts evanescent in their nature, and temporary in their design. Special care will be taken, nevertheless, in all such omissions, that the sense shall not be marred, nor the meaning of the writer in any manner perverted or obscured. Nor is this difficult, because the omitted passages usually treat upon separate and distinct subjects, and may be removed without injury to the remaining portions of the letter.

"It ought to be premised here, that, in preparing the manuscripts for the press, I have been obliged sometimes to use a latitude of discretion, rendered unavoidable by the mode in which the papers have been preserved. They are uniformly copied into volumes, and this task appears to have been performed, except in the Revolutionary correspondence, by incompetent or very careless transcribers. Gross blunders constantly occur, which not unfrequently destroy the sense, and which never could have existed in the original drafts. In these cases I have, of course, considered it a duty, appertaining to the functions of a faithful editor, to hazard such corrections as the construction of the sentence manifestly warranted, or a cool judgment dictated. On some occasions the writer himself, through haste or inadvertence, may have fallen into an awkward use of words, faults of grammar, or inaccuracies of style, and when such occur from this source, I have equally felt bound to correct them. It would be an act of unpardonable injustice to any author, after his death, to bring forth compositions, and particularly letters, written with no design to their publication, and commit them to the press without previously subjecting them to a careful revision. This exercise of an editor's duty, however, I have thought it allowable to extend only to verbal and grammatical mistakes or inaccuracies, maintaining a scrupulous caution that the author's meaning and purpose should thereby in no degree be changed or affected." *Washington's Writings*, Vol. ii. Introd. pp. xii.–xv.

If the correctness of these views taken by Mr. Sparks of his editorial duty, and submitted by him to the judgment of experts at his first publication of two volumes, was liable to any doubt, then, when objections were almost solicited, was the time for objections to be made. Had any error in his plan then been pointed out, the exposure of it would have influenced the remainder. But

no error was pointed out. Approbation was expressed,* and silence gave consent, and the plan was thought to be most judiciously conceived, and met universal concurrence.

Has there been a departure in the execution from the plan and principles announced? Lord Mahon, and the American journalists whom he has followed, say that there has been; that into Washington's letters Mr. Sparks has interpolated matter of his own. We shall see presently how that is.

Lord Mahon has "formed the opinion," and is "bound not to conceal" it, "that Mr. Sparks has printed no part of the correspondence precisely as Washington left it." The deviations must have been of one or more of three classes, namely, additions, omissions, or alterations.

Of *additions*, Lord Mahon and his American authorities have imagined that they detected one. A passage in a letter from Washington to Reed, of March 7, 1776, stands in Reed's "Life and Correspondence" as follows.

"The drift and design are obvious, but is it possible that any sensible — but enough." Vol. i. p. 170.

While Mr. Sparks presents it thus.

"The drift and design are obvious, but is it possible that any sensible nation upon earth can be imposed upon by such a cobweb scheme or gauze covering? But enough." *Washington's Writings*, Vol. iii. p. 310.

Upon this Lord Mahon makes himself boisterously merry. In his exhilaration, he ventures on what is rare in his writings, a jest of his own.

"I know not whether my readers will concur with me in liking Washington's own, and, though homespun, excellent cloth, much better than the 'cobweb schemes or gauze coverings,' which have, it seems, been manufactured in its place." Vol. vi. p. viii.

Droll, certainly! And the distinction does honor to his Lordship's critical acumen. How clear, (when pointed out,) and how ludicrous the contrast between the genuine grave rhetoric of Washington and the flimsy supposititious texture of Sparks.

"Demens! qui nimbos et non imitabile fulmen
"Ære, et cornipedum pulsu simulârat equorum!"

* For our own judgment at the time, see *N. A. Review*, Vol. xxxix. pp. 468–471.

The flout and the fun have only one flaw. The fault is in the finder. The language, so ridiculously unlike Washington's, and so presumptuously invented by Mr. Sparks for him, is Washington's own. It was not added in Mr. Sparks's edition, but, by some accident, it was omitted in Mr. Reed's. In both editions it was printed from the same original letter. By Mr. Sparks it was printed correctly; by the editor of Reed's "Life and Correspondence," not so. Lord Mahon, we have no doubt, will easily get from that gentleman a confirmation of this statement of ours, if he chooses to take the trouble; and he will then suspect himself to be not an infallible judge of the warp and woof of Washington's homespun, or a sufficiently cautious censor of a fellow-freeman of the republic of letters.

As to the charge of *additions*, it is clear that Lord Mahon will have to try again. So far, Mr. Sparks's assertion in his recent pamphlet stands unimpeached, that "*not a single line, or fragment of a line, was intentionally added* to the original text, throughout the whole twelve volumes of the work." *

Of *omissions* there may be different kinds: as of whole letters; of portions of a letter, treating topics distinct from the rest; of single words or phrases.

To complain of the omission of letters, and those in great numbers, is to complain that Mr. Sparks did not propose a work consisting of forty or fifty volumes instead of twelve; or that he could not command the treasury of the nation to defray the cost, instead of having to look to the patronage of the trade and of readers. What the reading public wanted, and was ready to pay for, was a selection. If the number of volumes was not judiciously determined, if the selection would have been materially better suited to its purpose by being more voluminous, let that be shown; it will be fair matter for censure. French readers wanted only six volumes; and for their use Guizot reduced Mr. Sparks's work to that number. The Germans craved but two; and with two, accordingly, they were accommodated by Von Raumer. The question whether, all things considered, the American

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* *Reply to the Strictures*, &c. p. 8.

public would have been better suited with more than eleven, we think Mr. Sparks, *primâ facie*, better qualified to decide than Lord Mahon. Still we are open to conviction, and are ready to give our best attention to his argument whenever he is ready to make it.

The collection, however, may be comprehensive enough, but not judiciously made. In other words, some letters which are omitted may have had a better right to be embraced in it than some which have a place. That is a very intelligible case, and not improbable in point of fact. We do not remember that, in any instance, Lord Mahon or the critics whom he has followed have adopted this line of argument, and undertaken to show that the collection would have been, on the whole, improved by the rejection of this letter and the substitution of that. Yet it would in no degree surprise us if, in some instance, this should be shown. We should be much more surprised if the editor's judgment, applied to so many different comparisons, should in every case prove to be unquestionable.

To argue that the collection ought to have been enlarged, or that some letter should have been omitted from it in order to find place for some other, is to argue to the purpose. But it is not to the purpose to say, simply, "Mr. Sparks has seen fit to omit this letter," as if to exclude any letter was a thing unfit; when three letters out of four, or seven out of eight, or two out of three, or some proportion or other, were necessarily to be omitted.

In respect to the omission of portions of a letter, treating some topic distinct from the rest, we have not a word to add to the perfectly clear, and, to our minds, perfectly satisfactory exposition of Mr. Sparks himself.

"The propriety of omitting parts of letters, and retaining other parts, may, perhaps, at first view, be thought questionable. But when it is considered that parts of letters, treating upon totally distinct and unconnected topics, are in reality the same as so many distinct letters, it is obvious that to omit such parts differs in no respect from omitting separate letters. Moreover, if entire letters had in every instance been printed, it would have been necessary to leave out of the work much that was valuable and important, which is now included, and fre-

quently to repeat the same matter, and sometimes in the same language.

"In the correspondence during the Revolution, it often happened that several letters were written nearly at the same time to different persons; the President of Congress, the governors of States, officers of the army, or other official characters, in which not only the same facts were communicated, and the same topics discussed, but whole paragraphs were almost literally transcribed from one letter into others. These repetitions grew out of the nature of the business in hand, and could not have been avoided without unnecessary circumlocutions and strained attempts to seek a variety of language for expressing the same ideas. As to letters of this description, it was the practice to print some one of them entire, and to select from the others such parts as were free from repetitions. But in all omissions, whether for these reasons or others, whether short or long, special care was taken not to break off in the midst of a topic or train of thought, and not, by any abrupt transition, to weaken or obscure the sense of the author." *Reply*, pp. 20, 21.

The remaining case, of *omissions of words and phrases*, stands on substantially the same principles as that of *alterations;* so that, in what we have to say of them, it will be most convenient to treat the two classes together.

What are the privileges, and what the obligations of an editor of posthumous letters, in respect to such omissions and alterations? The question is not without its difficulties; there is something to be said on both sides. In discussing it, we desire distinctly to apprise the reader beforehand, that we shall take some positions which do not at all belong to the defence of Mr. Sparks; *which he has not assumed*, or had occasion to assume; and which we cannot say that, in any editorial exigency, he would approve.*

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* Gray, by his will, left his papers to his friend Mason, who published a selection from them, prepared according to his notions of editorial duty. But when "he that is first in his own cause seemeth just," sometimes "his neighbor cometh and searcheth him." By and by Mitford, the editor of Milton, published a larger selection, with a preface, animadverting severely on the method of his predecessor, in omitting, transposing, and altering. But what does the censor say of his own course? This: (Vol. i. Advertisement,) "The editor has only further to observe, that he has formed the following selection according to the best of his judgment; he has made a few omissions when the subject turned on mere matters of business, or private and domestic circumstances; and he has taken the liberty of altering a very few words, which occurred in the freedom of the most familiar correspondence; but it must be

The great public has a prurient curiosity to see a great man in dishabille. If, being a good thinker, he has sometimes used bad reasonings, — if, being or not being a good scholar, he has made some lapses in spelling, grammar, rhetoric, or recollection of facts, there is a sort of satisfaction to readers in having them exposed, and in having opportunity afforded to exercise their own critical gifts, and to feel, so far, their own superiority. If hasty opinions, alien from the usual habits of thought, have somehow been put on record; if some petulant expression has been used, out of harmony with the characteristic style of comment and intercourse; if something which the man kept to himself, during his life, can be got at, now that he is no longer here to protect it, there is many a reader who especially rejoices in such spoil.

How far is that taste to be accommodated, by one who has an editor's responsibility for a great renown? If a man may reasonably dislike the thought of having his dead body exposed to a mob of students on a dissecting table, has he no privileges whatever of exemption from a vulgar exposure of his mind? If he may be allowed to have his corporeal carbon and nitrogen quietly inurned, according to his own notions of decency and taste, is his unclad mind to be at the mercy of any rude survivor, who may be inclined to gibbet it by the highway for the inspection of the passers-by?

We cannot but think that some consideration is due to the known judgment and feelings of him whom we compel to make a posthumous appearance upon the stage. It is no small liberty that we take with a man, when, after he has gone beyond the reach of being consulted,

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added that this has not taken place above three or four times in the whole collection of letters, and only in those cases where the original expression could not with propriety have been retained." In other words, the fierce purist found it impossible to reck his own rede. The rules which he was so shocked at another's departure from, turned out to be too rigorous for his own application; and, after all, he was fain himself to "tamper with the truth of history." We shall not undertake to defend Mason's freedoms, which were utterly unlike the judicious fidelity of Mr. Sparks. But in high quarters there has been a favorable opinion of his labors. It was after Mitford's publication that the *Quarterly Review*, (Vol. xv. p. 377,) pronounced Mason's to have "put to shame every subsequent attempt of the same nature."

or the power of crushing us for our impudence, we take all of him that was most his own (including all that he would most have cared to keep so,) and share it with the world.

The freedom ought not to be extended a great way further than is necessary for the public good. And if ever there was a man, as to whom more than to all others, such terms ought to be kept, that man perhaps was Washington. Perfect, punctilious, rigid propriety and dignity of public appearance was perhaps more considered by him than by any other great man in history. Cicero would not have wished to appear to posterity in his letters, otherwise than as he does appear. Pliny and Walpole, in their correspondence, dressed themselves up for posthumous enthronement, like Peruvian Incas. In the letters of Dryden and Swift there is a vast deal, and in those of Pope not a little, which dying they ought to have wished to blot; but they did not wish to blot it, and therefore it is doing them the less wrong to let it stand. Cromwell's letters defy the rhetorician's art to bring them into any shape; but they are true and precious illustrations of the man, nor is there the slightest ground for supposing that he would have been disinclined to have them used, just as they are, for that purpose. The careless expressions, which very rarely occur in Washington's letters, are not illustrations of the man. They are illustrations of nothing but of what the man carefully and strenuously intended not to be or do, and of what he uniformly in fact avoided when he voluntarily stepped into the public view. An editor of the writings of Adams, Jefferson, or Madison, would occupy, we think, a different position in this respect, from an editor of those of the first President. Secure in the consciousness of scholarly culture, John Adams would not have cared a groat had he known that rhetorical or even grammatical errors of his were going to be reprinted to the end of time. With Washington it was different. Not only had gravity and precision a singular prominence in his estimation of character, not only did dignity make in a peculiar manner his point of honor, but, like most eminent men who are not, strictly speaking, scholars, he had a sensitive tenderness on the point of apparent deficiency in that respect. So correct were his habits of thought, so complete his

method, and so clear his perceptions of the meaning of words, that few men of his time on the whole wrote better, when he had time to compose with care. He always did compose with care, when he was composing for the public. So solicitous was he on this head, that, on important occasions, he availed himself largely of the criticisms of others. When writing not for the public, nor with time for correction, still the qualities of his mind stamped themselves on his language, and it was generally all that could be desired. Sometimes, no doubt, it could not fail to be otherwise; and then, if ever, there was a sleeping worthy, whom a posthumous exposure of infelicities of the kind would have made revisit in complete steel the glimpses of the moon, that terrible avenging shade would have been Washington's. And its aspect would have been more awful than was that of its substance, — though that was awful enough, — when Gouverneur Morris, feigning to have mistaken him, slapped him on the shoulder.

But we repeat, that in throwing out some general views upon this subject, which strike us as not unworthy of consideration, we have gone much further than was at all necessary for the defence of Mr. Sparks's work, and much beyond any principles of editorship which he has announced or applied. Washington's understanding was so accurate, and most of what he wrote was so carefully considered, that there was very little left by him requiring different treatment from what any judicious editor of posthumous letters left for publication by a thoroughly trained writer, would think proper to apply. Those who think Mr. Sparks has used too much freedom, of course know how the thing could have been better done. How then would they have gone to work themselves? Washington, like some great men of letters, as Pope, and like many great commanders, as Napoleon and Frederick, — did not always spell correctly, either according to the fashion of our day, or even according to that of his own. Would it have thrown any useful light on Washington's character or career, or would it have been in any way entertaining or profitable to the reader, to have the press follow such inadvertencies, not always uniform, either, with each other? In a letter printed by Mr. Sparks, (vol. iii. p. 35,) Washington speaks of "Captain Derby," com-

mander of the Essex frigate. We knew the fine old gentleman well, and he always spelt his name with those letters. But at the time when Washington wrote of him, it was pronounced D*a*rby, and we observe that it is so printed in the copy of the same letter in the "American Archives," (vol. ii. p. 1707,) which we dare say is a correct representation of Washington's original, since his orthography would be likely in this case to be guided by his ear. But would any thing have been gained to historical truth, if Mr. Sparks, by letting "Captain D*a*rby" stand, had veiled that gallant officer's identity from the view of posterity? If an editor is bound to preserve an author's orthography, every new edition of Paradise Lost is a new violation of the truth of history on a large scale. We will take it for granted that the objector, since he does not mean to be consummately absurd, will yield us this point; though in doing so he abandons his own chosen ground; for that Washington wrote a word with a certain combination of letters, is for these minute philosophers an historical fact, and when Mr. Sparks, professing to represent him, uses another combination of letters, he "tampers with the truth of history," if their doctrine is good.

A step further brings us to cases of grammar. Suppose Washington, or one of his copyists, has written in his letter-book, "Greene and Putnam *has* gone up the river." Is it of any use to anybody, to have that peccant singular form of the verb perpetuated? Does the page look better? Is the reader better instructed? Is Washington better understood? Is the fidelity of history usefully subserved? We wish one who thinks so, would try the making of a book on that principle. We fancy that booksellers and purchasers, or rather no purchasers, would before long impress him with another view of the subject. Grammatical errors occur very rarely in any thing written by Washington's own hand. Would it have been of any sort of benefit to vary his general correctness in this respect with a *hortus siccus* of specimens of his occasional oversight?

"The truth of history," according to Lord Mahon's sharp conception of it, is pretty effectually disposed of already. But if violations of it may go thus far, may they

proceed another step? May they be pushed an inch into the department of rhetoric? If Washington at Monmouth swore some Virginia oaths when he met Lee retreating, (which we do not know that he did,) does historical integrity require their preservation? Lord Castlereagh was a great man, besides being an English University man; but he is reported to have spoken, in his place in parliament, of "the fundamental features on which the question hinges," and of "the honorable gentleman on the other side, who, crocodile-like, put his hands into his breeches pockets and wept." Does Lord Mahon think that an editor of Lord Castlereagh's speeches is bound to embalm those less select expressions, on pain of being charged with tampering with the truth of history? Washington never sinned so far against Quinctilian's rules about mixed metaphors, or any metaphors. But does historical integrity require the preservation of an expression in a familiar and confidential letter, so alien from Washington's usual style as "a hundred thousand dollars will be but a flea-bite"? Letters are sometimes as extemporaneous as speeches.

The legitimate discretion of an editor is to be used, we conceive, in respect to these three classes of peccadilloes with a freedom, as to each, in the reverse order of that in which we have named them. In respect to the last class, it appears to us that Mr. Sparks has been, as he ought to have been, exceedingly cautious. In fact, in the great mass of letters, as we have already said, there was not, in any view, occasion or opportunity for changes. There was no temptation to make them. In what Washington wrote for the public, or in what he wrote with care, as he wrote almost every thing, all was in as good order as any pedant or pedagogue could wish it. The instances which Lord Mahon parades in his Appendix are all from eight letters (out of more than twenty-five hundred contained in the work) addressed by Washington to Joseph Reed, in the last two months of 1775 and the first three of 1776. Written with a carelessness altogether unusual with him, they were evidently of the most confidential description. It is pretty clear that he regarded the correspondence in that light. He kept no copies of his own letters, and, as the editor of Reed's

"Life and Correspondence" informs us (vol. i. p. 163, note,) none of Reed's letters previous to March 1776 are preserved; the inference from which must be, either that they were destroyed by Washington, or else returned to their writer, and by him destroyed.* Our only doubt is whether, under these circumstances, Mr. Sparks should have given them any place in his collection, though they contain so much interesting matter that the inducement was strong, and the mere reader cannot but be thankful for the decision to which he came. Respecting them, the editor of Reed's "Life and Correspondence" says:—

"In a letter from Professor Sparks to the author, dated 21st February, 1838, he says, 'The letters from Washington to your grandfather, in '75 and '76, which you were so kind as to send me, and a selection from which I printed, seemed to me the most imperfect I had ever seen from his pen. They were evidently written in great haste, in perfect confidence, and without any thought that they would ever be published. I used more caution in selecting from these letters than from any others.' These letters are now for the first time printed entire." *Life and Correspondence*, Vol. i. p. 125.

If they were to be printed at all, they appear to have required some such caution as Mr. Sparks has used. The reader does not seem to lose much that is worth deploring in the omission of the epithets "rascally" and "dirty," nor in the metaphors of the "flea-bite," and the "lame hand." One diversity of expression however, does convey a diversity of sense. The passage which Mr. Sparks has printed, "If this has given rise to the jealousy, I can only say that I am sorry for it," reads in the Philadelphia copy of the letter of December 15th, 1775, "If this has given rise to the jealousy, I cannot say that I am sorry for it." On this we wait for further light. There has been carelessness somewhere. But we shall not confidently lay the blame on the editor of Washington's Writings, as Lord Mahon has done, till we know what is

* Washington's scrupulosity in this matter is especially illustrated by the fact of the destruction of his letters to his wife. Only one survives; that printed by Mr. Sparks in *Washington's Writings*, Vol. iii. p. 2.

the true reading of the original, to which we have not access. One alleged addition of Mr. Sparks to one of these letters, which was in fact the *gravamen* of the charge against him, has turned out to be, on the contrary, a true copy by him, and an omission by the Philadelphia editor. What happened once, may have happened twice, though we by no means intend to assume it. We only suspend our judgment on the present case, and await more proof. The omission in the printed Philadelphia copy which occasioned an arraignment of Mr. Sparks on the charge of adding, was an accident, — no more. The different reading of Mr. Sparks in the letter of December 15th, was an accident, too, if it turns out to be his error, and an accident of less importance.

Washington's table at Cambridge in 1775 and 1776 was not surrounded by gray-beards. He, the oldest of the group, was forty-three years old. Harrison and Mifflin had not reached half the age of man. Palfrey was thirty-four, and no Heraclitus at that; Moylan and Baylor were at an age for nonsense. With all the gravity which the general communicated to the intercourse of his board, it is not likely that it uniformly witnessed all and more than all the solemnity of fourscore. And if the commander of the right wing was some times there irreverently called "Old Put," the designation might undeliberately, and withal blamelessly, slip into Washington's private correspondence with Reed, who had just left him, though it is about as impossible as any thing else that can be imagined, that the writer, being what he was, should have been willing to serve it up to the public eye. Further; Reed calls General Putnam *Old Put* in his letter to Washington of March 15th,* and in Washington's letter to Reed of April 1st "Old Put" is guarded within quotation marks. Do they indicate a reference in the latter letter to the nick-name given in the former? If so, the force of the expression would lose its point and fitness when Washington's letter is printed apart from Reed's.†

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* Reed's *Life and Correspondence*, Vol. i. p. 172.

† Lord Mahon thinks it worthy of mention (vol. vi. p. 57, note,) that in Mr. Peabody's *Life of Putnam* it is not recorded — as it is by Gordon — that that officer had kept a tavern. If his Lordship thinks himself defrauded of any thing by that omission, we will indemnify him by the information that

But we do not intend to vouch for the infallibility of each and every of Mr. Sparks's decisions of this nature. Perhaps he would not be disposed to stand by every one of them himself. Single little matters must be summarily disposed of. *De minimis non curatur*, is a general rule, and though Mr. Sparks's diligence forms an eminent exception to it, it was impossible for an editor of thousands of octavo pages, an investigator of tens of thousands of pages of manuscript, to pause till he had obtained absolute conviction on the respective claims of "General Putnam," and "Old Put." Still we should fail in candor did we not own that, had we been in Mr. Sparks's place, we should have been strongly tempted, at least, to win Lord Mahon's approval by holding on, as with hooks of steel, to "Old Put" and the "flea-bite." We should have been sensible to a natural — it could scarcely be called a malicious pleasure, — in showing that Washington, statuesque as he almost always was, and as he always meant to be, had after all in his grand heart a secret chord of sympathy with human levities. Mr. Sparks's austerer judgment, more penetrated with the spirit of his master, determined otherwise, and though we can scarcely approve, we shall not undertake magisterially to blame.

Lord Mahon rebukes Mr. Sparks (vol. vi. p. 122,) for the omission of the following sentence from a letter of Washington to Reed, of February 10th, 1776.

"Notwithstanding all the public virtue which is ascribed to these people, there is no nation under the sun, that I ever came across, *which pays* greater adoration to money than they do."

Where does his Lordship get that sentence, which Mr. Sparks ought to have inserted as Washington's? The censor does not stand *rectus in curiâ*. It is not for him to be loud-tongued against changes and omissions, when he corrects them after this fashion. He professes to copy

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Greene, his supposed sot, began life as an anchor-smith; that Knox, the chief artillery officer, served his apprenticeship with a book-binder; and that Stark, Prescott, Heath, and others, were farmers who held the plough. If men so trained could dispose of British and German regiments as they did, possibly their more elaborate initiation into the science of arms might have more speedily cleared their country of its invaders.

the omitted sentence from Reed's "Life and Correspondence." We turn to the letter in that work (vol. i. p. 157,) and we find the word "pay" where Lord Mahon has written "which pays."

Again, on the same page, Lord Mahon quotes the following as from Washington's letter to Reed of November 28th, 1775.

"Such stock-jobbing and fertility in all the low arts to obtain advantages of one kind or another in this great change of military *management*, I never saw before, and pray God I may never be witness to again."

In the last clause, for "and pray God," Mr. Sparks (vol. iii. p. 178) has "and pray God's mercy." Till further informed, we shall think it probable that this is an accidental omission in the Philadelphia edition, such as we pointed out in a former case,* rather than an addition by Mr. Sparks, to which there was no apparent temptation. As far as to the last clause, Mr. Sparks and the editor of Reed's "Life and Correspondence" (vol. i. p. 130,) print the sentence precisely alike; and they both have the word "arrangement," where Lord Mahon has "management." We are bound to suppose that their united testimony is to be received, as Lord Mahon has no knowledge on the subject from inspection of the original.

In these cases, to use his own language, applied to Mr. Sparks, his Lordship has "altered, and, as he thinks, corrected and embellished." He should not have ventured on such liberties, in the same paragraph in which he reproves them. Will he say they are errors of a copyist or of the press? Very well. The accident may reveal to him an element of fair criticism of the works of others. And certainly Mr. Sparks never, through any oversight, or error of copyist or compositor, has printed an alteration, of a kind to do injustice to character, like that of Lord Mahon in his erroneous quotation from La Fayette in relation to General Greene.

Though our remarks have been drawn out far beyond what we expected, we have by no means exhausted the subject, nor shall we pretend to do so. There remain,

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* See above, p. 194.

however, two or three points which we ought not to pass wholly without notice, and we shall best present them in Mr. Sparks's own words.

"In regard to the text, also, it is proper here to repeat what has been said in another place, that frequent embarrassments have occurred. It was Washington's custom, in all his letters of importance, first to write drafts, which he transcribed. In making the transcripts he sometimes deviated from the drafts, omitting, inserting, and altering parts of sentences; nor did he always correct the drafts, so as to make them accord with the letters as sent to his correspondents. These imperfect drafts were laid aside, and from time to time copied by an amanuensis into the letter-books. [The amanuenses were sometimes the rude and ignorant overseers of his plantations.] Hence the drafts, as now recorded, do not in all cases agree precisely with the originals that were sent away. My researches have brought under my inspection many of these original letters. Regarding them as containing the genuine text, I have preferred it to that in the letter-books, and it has accordingly been adopted wherever it could be done.

"But the discrepancies are of little moment, relating to the style, and not to the substance. For the most part, I have been obliged to rely on the letter-books; and, for the reasons here mentioned, it is probable that the printed text may not in every particular be the same as in the originals, that is, the corrected copies, which were sent to his correspondents." *Reply*, pp. 23, 24.

In Reed's "Life and Correspondence," (vol. ii. p. 41,) is published a letter of Washington, dated December 12th, 1778, also contained in the "Writings of Washington," (vol. vi. p. 130.) In the latter copy as compared with the former, there appear some variations; as "I am at a loss to discover," for "is beyond the reach of my conception;" "*our* posts," for "*the* posts;" "be so much out," for "miss it so much;" and seven or eight others of the same importance, or rather unimportance. But their importance or unimportance is not now our point. On a reëxamination it appears, that Mr. Sparks's copy is an exact transcript from Washington's letter from which he printed, except in two particulars; and these are "logged houses," in the letter-book, for "log houses;" and "lest disaster might happen," for "lest *a* disaster might happen;" — which amounts to this, that the letter sent to Reed had some verbal variations from the copy kept by Washington, which was Mr. Sparks's only guide. Again, in Marshall's

"Life of Washington," (vol. v. p. 15,) is a letter of October 10th, 1784, to Benjamin Harrison, of Virginia, also printed in "Washington's Writings," (vol. ix. p. 58,) in which a comparison of the two copies discloses a few various readings of no more consequence; as "stumbling-blocks," for "impediments;" and "connections in a commercial way," for "commercial connections." On recurrence to the letter-book at Washington, it proves to be truly represented, word for word, by Mr. Sparks's copy. Having stated these facts, and another set of them, of the same description, occurring in a letter to Richard Henry Lee, of December 14th, 1784, Mr. Sparks proceeds as follows:

"These specimens will serve to show the state of the text in a large portion of Washington's letters, as they now exist in manuscript, particularly those written at Mount Vernon, and others of a private nature written elsewhere. The originals sent to his correspondents seldom agree throughout in phraseology with the copies retained on record. Moreover, these copies are constantly marred by the blunders or mistakes of illiterate or careless transcribers. For the most part there was no resource for the editor but to follow the letter-books." *Reply*, p. 30.

"Another example, still more striking, may be mentioned. Washington kept a copy of his official correspondence during his military services in the last French war before the Revolution, written on sheets loosely stitched together. Some twenty or thirty years afterwards, he revised this manuscript, making numerous erasures, interlineations, and corrections in almost every letter. This corrected copy was then transcribed into bound volumes under his own direction. Which is now the genuine text? Which would Washington himself have printed?

"The one in the letter-books was adopted, because it seemed obvious, that, after the pains he had taken to prepare it, he intended that copy for permanent preservation and use. It would be easy to cavil here, and say that we have not the precise language employed by Washington to convey his thoughts at the time the letters were written, but a garbled substitute introduced at a much later day. Yet this was an act of his own, and certainly no editor would be justified in disregarding it. In these letters, therefore, the same kind of discrepancies will necessarily appear, as in the cases alluded to above, between the printed text and that of the originals sent out to his correspondents." *Ibid.* pp. 30, 31.

The amended form in which Washington had his letters copied into books, was not that which they bore when

transmitted to the persons addressed. Mr Sparks printed them from the manuscript books. Has some one "tampered with the truth of history" to bring them into the shape which they bear on the printed page? If so, who was it?

But we have detained our readers long enough with comments of detail, which were not, however, to be avoided, if we undertook to treat this important work. With great respect for Lord Mahon's character and labors, but with greater respect for the truth of history and for the principles of a generous criticism, we have felt bound to present some of his errors to his notice. Some of them are material. Others are of small account; but they throw light on that credulity and haste which have betrayed him into those of the graver sort. So far as we have exposed any, to his own conviction, we rely upon his upright nature to correct them for those future editions in which we believe his history is destined to live and "gather all its fame."

Page 44, line 2. *For* "St. Leger," *read* "the Cedars."

Page 66, line 30. *For* "Mr. Sparks's work," *read* "five volumes of Mr. Sparks's work."

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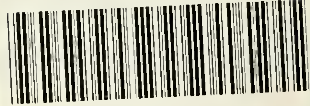
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