

AMORY, Daniel Sullivan's visits.

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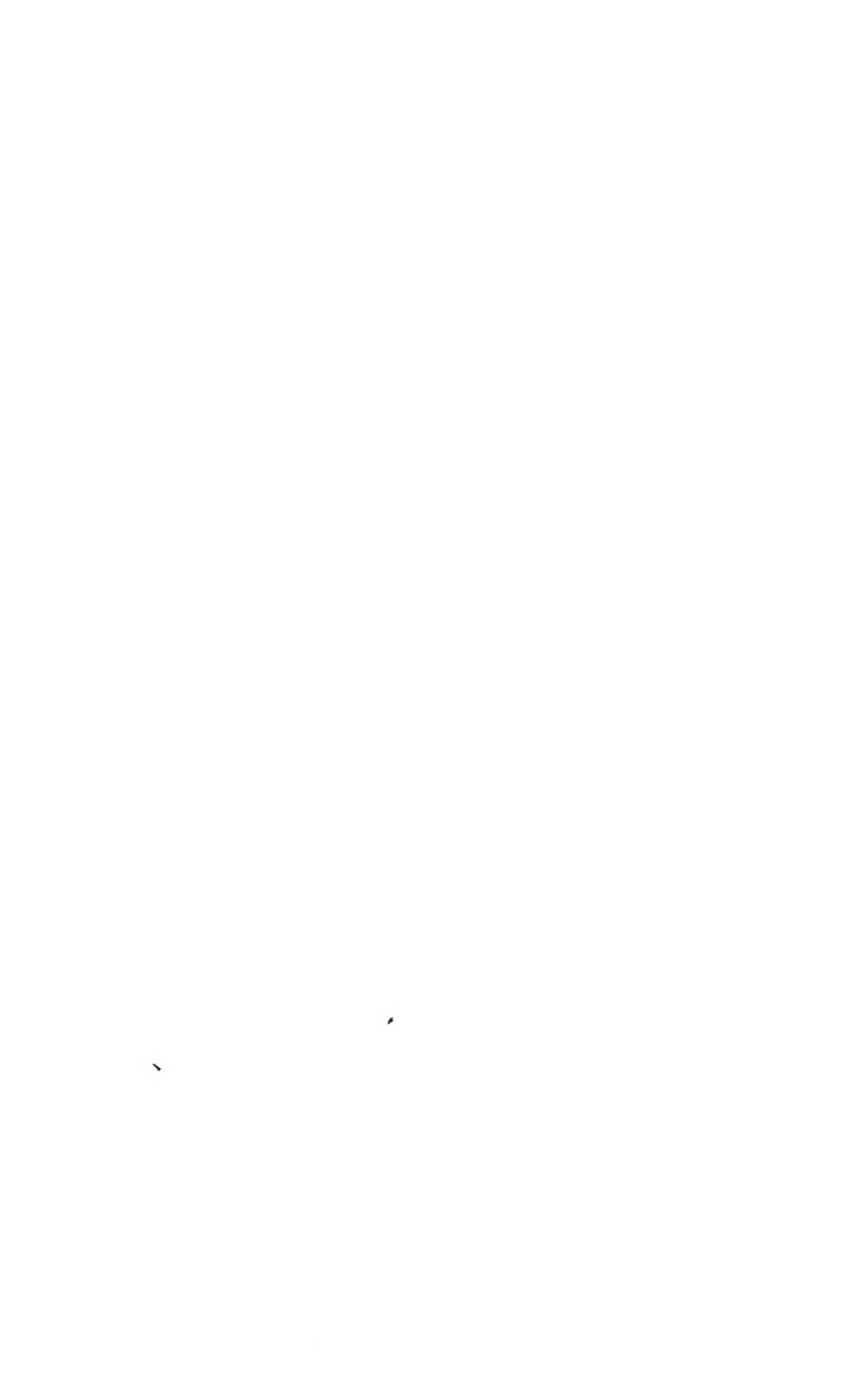
DANIEL SULLIVAN'S VISITS,

MAY AND JUNE, 1781,

TO

GENERAL JOHN SULLIVAN,

IN PHILADELPHIA.



DANIEL SULLIVAN'S VISITS,

MAY AND JUNE, 1781,

TO

GENERAL JOHN SULLIVAN,

IN PHILADELPHIA,

TO EXPLAIN

DECLARATIONS IN SIR HENRY CLINTON'S
SECRET JOURNAL.

BY THOMAS C. AMORY.

[REPRINTED FROM A PAPER READ TO THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL
SOCIETY, MARCH, 1884.]

WITH ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.

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CLINTON'S SECRET JOURNAL.

AT a meeting of the MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, held Feb. 14, 1884, Mr. THOMAS C. AMORY communicated the following paper:—

It is desirable to have in print, where conscientious historians may find it, any information we may possess to explain what, unexplained, may work injustice. The secret journal of Sir Henry Clinton, now in process of publication in the "Magazine of American History," is an important contribution to the material of our Revolutionary annals. Such journals are liable, from their character, to convey erroneous impressions; and regard for the memory of the dead and the happiness of the living imposes a duty upon societies like our own, to set right what may affect reputation. Present generations, more familiar with events comparatively recent, may be better able to prevent mistakes creeping into history than those that follow them.

Daniel Sullivan, the elder brother of General John Sullivan of the Continental army, and of James, one of the founders and the first president of this Society, during the War for Independence commanded a force of minute-men, about one hundred in number, raised near his home in Sullivan, on the east shore of Frenchman's Bay, opposite Mount Desert. They protected the neighborhood from depredation, became aggressive when there was cause, and formed an excellent school for recruits for the army. They took part in the attack on Castine in 1779, and rendered on other occasions efficient service. Soon after, the execution of André provoking a feeling of

resentment and a disposition to retaliate, the frigate "Allegiance," in February, 1781, landed a party at night on the shore near Daniel's dwelling, at Waukeag Point. They surrounded his house while he was sleeping, cast into the snow his wife and children, burnt the buildings, and carried him prisoner to Castine.

Declining the usual proffers of rank and reward if he would swear allegiance to the crown, he was sent to New York, and committed to the Jersey Hulks. These prison ships were noted for their foulness, and few came out from them alive. Daniel, accustomed to the pure air and freedom of his farm, anxious for his family left shelterless, their home in ashes, lost health and spirits, and was naturally eager for deliverance. While thus confined, Stephen Holland, at one time clerk of the Hillsborough County Courts in New Hampshire, who had left the State in 1778 under suspicion of disaffection, who had then gone to New York, and was now a major in the British army, went to see him. As before the war he had known General Sullivan, whose extensive professional practice carried him into the different counties, he visited Daniel, perhaps of his own motion, or he may have been sent by his superior officers. Having heard Daniel's story and witnessed his distress, he procured for him, from Clinton, permission to visit his brother John, then a member of Congress at Philadelphia, to effect his exchange.

General Sullivan was then serving a second term in the Congress. From September, 1774, to June, 1775, he had taken an active part in that body, in organizing resistance to the encroachments of the British Government upon the just rights of the colonies. With Washington he joined the army besieging Boston, in July, 1775, and with General Greene served as Brigadier-General under General Lee, who commanded the left wing. During the following winter the Connecticut line, its period of enlistment ended, went home; and his efforts and influence were largely instrumental in replacing them with two thousand troops from his own State. After Howe evacuated Boston, in March, 1776, General Sullivan was sent to Canada, and there extricated our army, weakened by disease, from their perilous position, the force opposed to them being greatly superior. Recalled to New York, now Major-General, with McDougal and Lord Sterling as his brigadiers, they did

what they could with five thousand men, to withstand four-fold their numbers, and, with Sterling, Sullivan was taken prisoner.

Exchanged for Prescott, he was honorably noticed in general orders for his services in West Chester, and after Lee's capture in December marched his troops to join Washington on the Delaware. A few days afterwards he took part as commander of the right wing in the battles of Trenton and Princeton. He made, in August, an attack at night on Staten Island, which a court of inquiry decided deserved the approbation of the country. At the battle of the Brandywine, in command of the right wing, he was opposed, with five thousand men, to double their force, whom he kept for two hours at bay, — for half that time, to use his own expression, muzzle to muzzle. Again at Germantown he commanded on the right, and drove the enemy opposed to him, when fog and smoke and mistakes in other parts of the field led to retreat. The army then went into winter quarters at Valley Forge, where he was engaged in building a bridge over the Schuylkill.

Ordered to Rhode Island towards the spring of 1778, as the welcome intelligence arrived of the treaty of alliance with France, he commanded, at the siege of Newport, ten thousand men, whom he helped in raising to co-operate with D'Estaing and his fleet. The appearance of a large British naval force drew out the French fleet to pursue them. The fleet, shattered by the storm and partial conflicts, returned only to announce the necessity of their going to Boston to refit. The American army, diminished by the departure home of the militia and volunteers whose term of enlistment had expired, withdrew to Butt's Hill, at the north end of the island. There, and on the way, was fought, on the 29th of August, what Lafayette pronounced the best-fought battle of the war. It began at about seven in the morning, and lasted, with little intermission, if any, till four in the afternoon, ending in a bayonet charge which drove the enemy to their intrenchments on Quaker Hill and Anthony's. The British loss that day exceeded one thousand men, the troops engaged being about six thousand on each side.

The following year Sullivan commanded an expedition of four thousand men into Western New York. One object was to punish the Indian tribes for their atrocities at Wyoming and

along the frontier, and deter them from repetition ; another was to open the paths for the invasion of Canada if D'Estaing returned in season to co-operate. D'Estaing was belated in the West Indies, made a hurried and unsuccessful attack on Savannah, and returned wounded to France. Sullivan, by an accident and the exposures in the campaign, had become incapacitated for the time for active service, and resigned from the army as the year closed. The letter of Washington in reply to the communication of his resignation testified to the high estimate he held of Sullivan's services in the army.

He was slowly recovering from serious illness when, without his knowledge and against his wishes, as his family needed his professional services for their support, he was chosen a delegate again to the Congress. Among other duties which devolved upon him, he was directed and empowered to defend the title of New Hampshire to fifty or more townships of land east of the Connecticut. New York claimed them, as she did Vermont, as part of her domain, and sent four of her ablest advocates to urge her rights. After twenty arguments of the cause before Congress, Sullivan succeeded in securing the townships for his State. From his long experience in the field, he was able to institute many useful reforms in the army, as also in other departments of the public service. He took an active part on the committees for furnishing means for the war by improving the currency, restoring credit, inducing the State to impose taxes, and procuring loans and subsidies.

These measures took months to mature ; and as they were becoming ripe for adoption, the Continental currency reached its last stages of collapse. In various places occurred popular demonstrations of discontent, and on the 6th of May, 1781, the day Daniel Sullivan reached Philadelphia, similar disturbances took place in its public streets. That night, as he was supping with his brother, Daniel gave him a letter from Major Holland. Its contents, as it was immediately destroyed, are only known by what John told Luzerne a few days after. It is reasonable to presume that one principal subject of Holland's letter was Daniel's exchange or liberation. But he took occasion after complimenting the general upon his intelligence and talents, and the high esteem in which he was held by the English, to add that they regarded him as the fittest man to negotiate a reconciliation between the mother country and the

English colonies ; that they wished him to make known his sentiments on the subject ; that all overtures on his part would be received with the consideration which they deserved ; that he had only to state his wishes ; that the person who wrote to him was fully empowered to open a special negotiation with him, and he might count upon the profoundest secrecy. Such a proposal of secret correspondence with the enemy so soon after Arnold's defection might well have aroused his indignation as a reflection upon his good sense as well as upon his honor. He burnt the letter before the face of Daniel, and begged him to tell those that sent him that their overtures had been received with the deepest scorn.

Still eager to effect Daniel's liberation, John wrote Holland an answer to his letter and gave it to his brother to carry to him. But upon reflection, lest it should compromise Daniel or be misconstrued, he sent next morning for him, as he was taking his departure for New York, and took the letter away, saying he would find some other means to communicate it to Holland. What John said in this interview as Daniel was starting on his journey, in the midst of John's various engagements, in a place subject to interruption and open to observation, Daniel might well have misunderstood. In his desire to save his brother from captivity and not to wound his sensitiveness by want of cordiality, John's words might have been construed to mean more than he ever thought of attaching to them.

Some ten days later, after Daniel's return to New York, Holland drew up the paper purporting to give an account of what took place between the brothers in Philadelphia. If in the intervening period John had been heard from, the declaration would not have been needed. Its obvious object was to obtain Daniel's deliverance, and this by representing John as "having good intentions towards the English." It abounds in improbabilities and exaggerations, and distorts language, possibly uttered in other connections and susceptible of very different explanation, into an import inconsistent with the whole tenor of John's previous life and his subsequent conduct. For no sooner had Daniel taken his departure than John went to Luzerne, the French minister, the last person he would have selected for his confidant if he had entertained any disloyal intentions, and told him all that had taken place, with some

slight reserve as to what might compromise Daniel as an American officer or a British prisoner. He may have related the circumstances also to his friends in Congress, or to that body; but of this we have no evidence. His whole language to Luzerne, as set forth in that minister's letter to Vergennes, dated May 13, the following Sunday, was that of a man of honor and of too much good sense, knowingly, to be placed in a false position.

Sullivan was under obligation to Luzerne. When, in 1774, at the age of thirty-four, he went to the Congress, he had already accumulated, by his professional labors and judicious investments, ten thousand pounds. For seven years he had been constantly in the public service, civil or military, and he continued in it as long as he lived. His property depreciated; he was considerate of his debtors; he had a family to support. For the last three years of his military service, although in command of separate departments, he had received in all fifteen hundred dollars for his pay and expenses, besides rations; the last year but forty dollars, as indicated by the paymaster's account. One hundred dollars had been advanced to him in 1780 by New Hampshire towards defraying his travelling expenses to Congress. His means speedily exhausted, he wrote to Weare, president of the State, for remittances. His letter, intercepted, was carried to New York and printed in the "Gazette." It came thus to the knowledge of Luzerne, who of his own accord offered him a loan of what was equivalent to a year's pay at a dollar a day, or seventy guineas. This may have actuated his choice of a confidant when puzzled as to what was best to be done in May, 1781.

The acceptance of this loan in his need has been censured. But Sullivan was on friendly terms with Luzerne. France was our ally, with no conflicting interests. Six weeks later, when the Pennsylvania line, with its pay long in arrears, became disaffected, a committee composed of Sullivan, Wither-
spoon, and Matthews, went to confer with Governor Reed of that State. Sullivan wrote to Luzerne an account of what had taken place, from Trenton, Jan. 13, 1781. His letter closed with the following postscript:—

"One circumstance ought not to be omitted, which in my opinion does the insurgents much honor. When they delivered up the British

emissaries, Governor Reed offered them a hundred golden guineas, which they refused, saying that what they did was only a duty they owed to their country, and that they neither wanted nor would receive any reward but the approbation of that country for which they had so often fought and bled."

He would hardly have thus written to Luzerne if the loan made to him seven weeks before had been tainted for either by any thought of corruption; and some of the most honorable men in the country, presidents of historical societies, have placed on record their sense of its entire propriety.

The Government owed him six thousand dollars for pay and advances while in the army. Though the whole sum was finally paid him, fifteen hundred only was voted, July 31, 1781; and of this the public treasury could spare, for several months, but two hundred. His friends were busily engaged in bringing about a more cordial feeling between himself and Burke, of North Carolina, who were still at variance about the battle of Brandywine, four years before. Burke thought that Sullivan's five thousand men in the right wing should have subdued twice or thrice that number of British veterans, who were far better armed and equipped. Probably neither of them allowed any personal feeling to interfere with his public functions; but, as they were constantly on the same committees, it seemed better they should make peace. This was effected by General McDougal and Mr. Shiel at this very time; the former's letter, giving an account of their reconciliation, bearing date the 22d of May. It is difficult to believe that any one, even if generally actuated by selfish considerations, would have incurred the risk of forfeiting the esteem of his associates, on whose good opinion so much depended, by any questionable proceedings.

Daniel at an early age had joined his wife's kinsfolk and neighbors, the Beans, Gordons, Hammonds, Plaisdells, and Prebles, in procuring a grant of thirty thousand acres, — now Hancock and Sullivan, on Frenchman's Bay, — and on a farm three or four miles south of the present principal settlement was extensively engaged in sawing lumber. Not originally so well educated as his three brothers, who were bred to the bar and were all successful lawyers, he may have been less sensitive to John's public obligations and the consequences of their

violation. The transactions of Congress were manifold in their nature, and recorded in separate journals. One of them for foreign affairs was secret, as also another for domestic; but those entered on the public journal were generally known. What transpired in Philadelphia soon found its way to New York; and he may have had in mind the newspapers in suggesting that John should send Holland news of what took place.

His anxiety was not without cause. Public opinion in England clamored for retribution for the execution of André. The Government lost temper at their ill success; their prisoners were sent to England, and there, as here, subjected to inexcusable barbarities. The brutal murder of Colonel Hayne in August had already been preceded by like atrocities, which at this time or soon after justified the appropriation of the Simsbury Mines in Connecticut for a prison house. Daniel's principal concern was to regain his freedom, of which he had been unwarrantably deprived, while he might, and go home to the protection of his family. His brother, conscious of his own integrity, which had never been impeached, might well have risked reputation for such an object, though nothing would have tempted him to forfeit his honor.

The declaration drawn up by Holland to effect this object by conveying the impression of John's good intentions to the Crown, may have been influenced by a wish to range John on his own side of the contest. Both Holland and Clinton probably knew of the overtures to peace communicated by Vergennes from Paris sixty days before. Independence even to them must have seemed assured; and an influential friend like General Sullivan might save Holland in that event from the exile which ended in his death in Ireland as the war closed. There is no evidence or reason to suppose, however, that General Sullivan in any way authorized Holland to misrepresent his dispositions towards England, or did aught to save Daniel except through the legitimate channels of exchange.

Four years before, Judge Livius, also a refugee loyalist from New Hampshire, wrote him a letter of like character to that of Holland. Many of the leaders were similarly approached, but Arnold was almost the solitary instance of defection. In burning Holland's letter when he received it, General Sullivan had expressed himself in terms sufficiently explicit of his indignation. If the next morning, as alleged

in the declaration, Daniel said that what Holland wished was information as to the transactions of Congress and advice as to what steps to take, and that he might name his own terms, John certainly did not agree to give either. In his kindly feeling towards his brother, at what might have proved their last parting, he probably did not think any repetition of what he had said the night before called for. If he used such phrases as set forth in the declaration, "that he was sorry it was too late," "that he would ride a hundred miles to see Holland and learn his views about politics," "that he would seek an occasion for sending Daniel to him," which is very problematical, they were quite likely used in some other connection, and fell short of any proof or reasonable evidence of any agreement to do aught inconsistent with his existing obligations.

He did not lose sight of the important consideration as to how much Daniel's safety depended upon Holland's kind offices. Holland's disposition towards himself seemed friendly, and he may have made some allowance for what was dishonoring in the proposal of terms. He may have considered, as suggested to Luzerne a few days after, the opportunity too favorable not to be improved for procuring information of the enemy's designs and movements. This idea, if entertained, soon yielded to the counsels of Luzerne and his own reflection on its imprudence. These various reasons explain why, if the declaration be a true account of what took place in Philadelphia when they parted, which does not seem probable, John did not again resent, in terms more indignant, the proposition of Clinton and Holland, through Daniel, when repeated that morning.

Luzerne's letter to Vergennes, dated the 13th. of May, shows plainly enough that he had no disloyal intentions. "It is fortunate for his memory that these two documents—one from England, the other from France, each giving one side of the same transaction, each separately brought back to America about a century after their dates—should so completely explain each other:" showing that General Sullivan was neither corrupt nor disloyal; that under circumstances peculiarly trying his conduct was that of an honest man and affectionate brother; and that he was sensible enough to guard his reputation from the misconstructions and misrepresentations of those who might seek to defame it, by making the minister of

France his confidant and the official correspondence the depository of his abundant justification. Clinton, like Walpole, thought every man had his price ; but it was proved over and over again during the Revolution that this was not true of the American leaders.

As there is no evidence or reason to suppose that John ever gave information or advice to the enemy ; as there were but fifteen days, from the 7th to the 22d of May, 1781, when there was the slightest possibility that he should have had any chance or temptation to do so, and during all this period he was busily engaged with the most honorable gentlemen of Congress, in public affairs taking a leading part in debate and on committees, and on the 26th placed on the Committee for Peace, from which Luzerne, who had the best means of knowing him, might have easily had him excluded by denouncing him, if he had any ground of suspecting his integrity ; as the declaration is susceptible of easy explanation without any impeachment of his honor or reputation, — we think no conscientious writer on American history, having improved all the sources of information that are accessible, as our Proceedings must always be, can upon the evidence honestly question his loyalty and fidelity to all obligations.

The journals of Congress, his own correspondence, and the course of events testify strongly against the likelihood of his ever having in the slightest degree favorably entertained the temptations presented, or of their having been the slightest temptation to him. If he ever took them into his mind, upon the briefest reflection he must have repelled them without hesitation. If flattered at the thought of becoming the mediator of peace when the moment was ripe for such a consummation, he knew that to Congress and our representative at Paris had been committed all peace negotiations. The proposal of selfish inducements was simply an insult. He had been steadfast from the first to the cause of Independence, and he so continued till it was soon afterwards accomplished. For seven years he had been engaged in the conflict, had made for it as great sacrifices, and endured as great hardships, as any other of the patriots. He stood well in the public estimation and with the Congress. What object could he have had to throw away so honorable a record, when fleets and armies were gathering with such reasonable

prospect of obtaining that for which they had so long been contending?

If he was ever in doubt as to the issues of the war, his duties were too absorbing to admit of any thought of discouragement. The journals of Congress, both public and private, exhibit the variety and extent of his occupations. Few of the members were more busily engaged or constantly called upon to do their part in debate or on committees. In October, 1780, he was employed with Madison and Duane in instructing Franklin and Jay to maintain the right of the United States to all the territory held by Great Britain recognized by the Treaty of Paris in 1763, including the navigation of the Mississippi. He had moved at that time that a letter should be addressed to the King of France, urging a more vigorous prosecution of the war. This letter, bearing date the 22d of November, was responded to by the king on the 9th of March, pledging himself to what was requested; his response reaching Philadelphia on the 22d of May, 1781.

In December, intelligence being received of the capture of Henry Laurens, formerly president of the Congress, who had been sent out in July to negotiate a treaty with the States-General, and had been imprisoned on a charge of treason in the Tower, Sullivan moved that an envoy extraordinary should be sent to Paris to solicit the aids requested of the king. John Laurens, who had fought valiantly with him at Newport, and been seriously wounded with D'Estaing at the siege of Savannah, was chosen to go. It was indeed understood that the mission was especially ordered that he might do what he could to effect the release of his father. His mother, and a sister who became afterwards the wife of James Ramsay, the historian, in 1786 likewise president of the Congress, were in Paris. They were in the greatest affliction at the impending danger. Mr. Laurens, one of the most estimable and honored of the Revolutionary leaders, was greatly beloved by all who knew him. The harsh measures and menaces of the British Government naturally overwhelmed his family with the deepest distress.

It is well known how wisely the time was improved in plans for the campaign to come. Dr. Franklin and Vergennes, the king and young Laurens, at Versailles, on those Ides of March mornings, would make an interesting historical picture for some genius in art. Perhaps Necker might

be added to the group, distressed at the royal extravagance; Cornwallis, entering Virginia, pushing on to Yorktown; Clinton, embarking and disembarking his men, not knowing whether to go south or bring Cornwallis north; Lafayette, playing fast and loose, the more to puzzle them; Arnold, burning Virginia tobacco he could not carry off, and Connecticut churches he did not value enough to leave. To keep the bird from startling till De Grasse on the first of August, with the best regiments of France collected in the nooks and corners of the West Indies, should join Washington and Rochambeau, Barras and Lafayette, before the walls of Yorktown, depended on secrecy, punctuality, and chances so various that the slightest mistake might have proved disastrous. All went well; as one of the plotters, Sullivan made no mistakes. At the right moment the French fleets entered the Chesapeake; both Washington and Rochambeau were there.

In helping on this consummation, General Sullivan had an important part to perform in the Congress. The thirteen colonies that had declared their independence in July, 1776, lay now exhausted. They were represented abroad by Dr. Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Henry Laurens, Francis Dana, Ralph Izzard. In executive offices were Sam Adams, Livingston, Cornell; while Washington, Gates, Greene, Sterling, Morgan, Wayne, Sumter, and Marion led in the armies. Several of the most honored, who had been members of the Congress, held high office in the States. Rarely as many as thirty attended Congress. This explains why so many duties devolved upon the few, — why Sullivan was chosen on so many committees. As the first on the list of the most northern State, in which order of precedence they were called upon to vote, Sullivan's was a responsible position to hold, for reasons sufficiently obvious. In military and naval affairs, in the Treasury and Foreign departments, there were few more able or willing. Langdon, President of Harvard, was his frequent correspondent on finance; and with Witherspoon, President of Princeton, he was associated in foreign and financial affairs. With Madison, Varnum, Matthews, Carroll, who served with him on many committees, he was constantly employed upon documents which elicited praise from the most renowned of European diplomatists.

With so few left to share the responsibilities of administration and perform its tasks, many functions naturally devolved on one who had formed part of the government from the beginning. He had his rights, not to abuse, but to use for the cause; and as a general he had been trained to respect the limits of authority too well to be likely to transgress them. If in suggesting to Luzerne the wisdom of using the opportunity presented by Clinton for procuring information, he claimed a larger discretion as one of the Government than he would have thought of exercising simply as a member of the Congress, allowance should be made for the singular condition of the Government of the time, having no head, carrying on a war almost partisan, and the people being almost equally divided.

Our struggle for independence was evidently not to go by default. Dependence on a nation alien in blood, language, and faith had its objections. The approach of the critical moment may have disturbed the settled views of many; but knowing from history what England meant by unconditional surrender, France as a friend and ally, if sometimes exacting, would be preferable to the old oppression. There could have been no advantages, national or individual, which Britain could offer so acceptable as the independence assured by the great European combinations.

From the commencement of his term of service, the previous September, Sullivan, as mentioned, had taken an active part in devising measures for restoring the public credit and replenishing the exhausted treasury. In his correspondence he had consulted Washington as to the selection of Hamilton—who wrought in that department such wonders later—for Superintendent of Finance. Hamilton could not be spared from the army, and the choice fell on Robert Morris. Congress, in committee of the whole, had previously kept control of this branch of the public service as the Committee on Finance. But on the 8th of May, the day after his brother Daniel's departure from Philadelphia, General Sullivan moved that a committee of five be chosen to devise further ways and means to defray the expenses of the ensuing campaign, and to consider what further measures could be adopted for a better regulation of the public finances. Witherspoon, Sullivan, Smith, Clymer, and Rodney constituted this committee.

Two of their recommendations for redeeming the outstand-

ing obligations, which were thought too considerate of the actual holders, met with little favor; but on the 14th Morris accepted the office of Superintendent of Finance, and on the 17th submitted his plan for the Bank of America. This, approved on the 26th, was referred to the committee "to furnish means for the campaign" to mature and carry out. On the 16th, Sullivan, from a special committee, reported the result of an inquiry into the management of the loan offices, and on the 22d his committee "to furnish means for the campaign" offered a resolution, which was accepted, that the war should be carried on upon a specie basis, and that rations be purchased by contract.

On the 21st Sullivan reported an order authorizing General Gates — then awaiting his trial by court-martial for Camden — to repair to head-quarters and take such command as the commander-in-chief should direct; and on the 25th, he reported another, directing the Board of War to take measures to send into New York and Charleston such quantities of tobacco as would discharge the arrears due from American prisoners then in confinement, and to provide for their future support. As chairman of another committee, with Varnum and Bland, to whom had been referred the letter of Washington of the 20th of December, he submitted a rearrangement of the army, amounting to a reorganization. It is not proposed to claim for Sullivan any exclusive credit for these various measures. He did his part with the rest. He co-operated in all the principal reforms which, adopted when our fortunes seemed at their lowest ebb, proved the masterly moves on the chess-board which achieved independence. One of his earliest duties in Congress had been to secure Greene's appointment, whose judicious movements that very month had driven Cornwallis to his trap.

On the 22d Luzerne transmitted to Congress a letter from the king, expressing an intention to prosecute the war with the utmost vigor, and informed them that he had received despatches of great importance, which he should hasten to communicate when deciphered. On the 25th he informed Congress that the second division of the troops, commanded by Count de Rochambeau, could not be expected for the campaign; but measures had been taken to reinforce the army and expedite ships in force to enable the squadron at Newport to put

to sea. The king had granted a subsidy of six million francs, and would enable Dr. Franklin to borrow four millions more. The following day another memorial from the minister announced certain overtures made by Great Britain for peace, through the mediation of the Empress of Russia and the Emperor of Germany, and declared that France was disposed to accept them on the basis of independence for the States; and advised that, while negotiating, the efforts against the enemy should be redoubled. He requested that a committee should be appointed to treat with him for the negotiation.

The committee, consisting of Carroll, Jones, Witherspoon, Sullivan, and Matthews, reported on the 28th and again on the 6th of June. They were engaged in the general direction of the preparations for many weeks, in framing commissions for Dr. Franklin, Henry Laurens, John Jay, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the appointed commissioners, in determining boundaries and other stipulations, and in preparing the instructions for the action of Congress.

In these and similar duties Sullivan was busily engaged till September, when, his year having expired and his successor having been elected the previous April, he went home to New Hampshire. He was there busily occupied in its administration, as major-general in organizing its troops, as attorney-general, as president of the State, or Federal judge, till his death in 1795. This rapid sketch of his public career seems important to be borne in mind in passing judgment upon the likelihood of his ever having swerved from loyalty to his country. It would seem harsh judgment, — even if it should prove that he ever wrote, to save his brother's life, to Holland of which no evidence appears that he ever did — that he should, after such devotion to the cause of Independence, be charged with either corruption or treason.

Judging by the periods it took for intelligence of a secret nature to pass between Philadelphia and New York, the information obtained must have been stale before it reached its destination. On the 16th of May the "Adventure," with nine hundred barrels of flour, was captured by the "Royal Oak," and carried into New York. It had a permit which covered part of its cargo or mail. One of Captain Beckwith's correspondents takes occasion to mention this neglect in a letter of the 19th of June, thirty-four days afterwards. It reached Beck-

with only on the 1st of July, with despatches received in May from France. Its writer mentions subjects under debate in the assembly of his State, which indicate either New York or Pennsylvania as that to which he belonged.

In another letter of the 27th of June, 1781, from a gentleman of Philadelphia to Captain Beckwith, received by him also the first day of July, he speaks of a letter dated May the 30th received on the 23d June. The correspondence could not have been brisk or profitable; and in this particular instance the principal part of the information had long before been spread broadcast over the land, or forestalled by the press. There were times; during that eventful summer, when secret intelligence might have been precious, — for example, in the allied armies' circuit round New York, from Newp^ort to Yorktown, — but what proved of most avail was the truth told by Washington and Rochambeau, which Clinton refused to believe. Leaks, when generals kept their own counsels, were unimportant. That much found in Clinton's secret journal was purposely designed to mislead him, seems obvious enough. There is no evidence that any of the communications printed in the journal had come directly or indirectly from General Sullivan. We only argue that if they had, they betrayed no secret prejudicial to the cause of American independence when received by Clinton.

It was clearly a duty to his brother, cost what it might, to do all that he honorably could to save him in his peril from his imprisonment. He had no means to give him to rebuild his house, burnt without the slightest justification by the British; for the ashes of the Iroquois towns was a retaliation for Wyoming. Their brother James, then judge of the Supreme Bench of Massachusetts, had a large family and scanty means. If, to further Daniel's liberation, John expressed his wish for reconciliation on fair terms and reasonable guaranties, in case independence from reverses proved impossible, there was no treason in that. Daniel was soon exchanged or set free, and died on his way home. There is no evidence that John ever received any bribe or performed any service for the enemy. He was always true to the cause of Independence. Often a successful candidate for public office, no such reproach was ever flung at him or whispered. He retained to the end the confidence of Washington, Greene, Knox, Lafayette, and all

the best of the patriots. The only key to Holland's declaration, signed by Daniel, in Clinton's journal, is that the plain truth was very much perverted for a purpose; that John was faithful to his brother; and that if he feigned more affection to the British than the infamous course of Clinton in his attempts to bribe inspired, his motive was to save Daniel from the pestilential vapors of the hulks and restore him to his wife and children.

Nothing is known to the prejudice of Daniel; but, on the contrary, much in his favor. Judged by his descendants, he was in every way worthy. He was hardly responsible for passages in the declaration to which exception is taken. It is signed by De Lancy, Daniel, and Holland. This does not look as if Daniel signed of his own free will, but from encouragement, perhaps coercion. Perhaps he smelt the blood of the shamble, and instinctively drew back. By threat or in apprehension of what later betided Hayne, he signed under duress of circumstance. It needs no casuistry to hold him blameless, to impeach the credibility of the declaration without questioning the truthfulness of his character. Formal oaths under such conditions are not binding in honor or conscience, and, extorted under threat, have no moral obligation.

JUNE 9, 1884.

Our request to examine the secret journal of Sir Henry Clinton before its publication in the magazine, so that explanation when needed might prevent anticipated prejudice to the memory of General Sullivan, was not granted. Comments, we think, not justified by the text have been embodied in the notes. We have endeavored to follow up the successive instalments of the journal as they appeared from month to month, by the statement of reasons and facts to correct erroneous impressions. We hope this explanation, with the just and candid, will counteract the ungenerous constructions placed on transactions very simple and innocent, forced on General Sullivan by circumstances not of his own seeking and beyond his control. The captivity of his brother Daniel was the work of the enemy, and the visits of Daniel to Philadelphia were evidently at their suggestion.

What other course could the most devoted and conscientious adherent of the cause of independence have taken than he did

under the given conditions? The uncertainties attending the future no one had done more to avert than himself; but he was too sagacious not to estimate aright the possibilities of disaster, of the imperative necessity of submitting to what could not be avoided, should such disaster occur. The brilliant hopes reasonably entertained in the summer of 1778, of reducing Newport and achieving the object of our exhausting efforts, had been frustrated by the defection of D'Estaing. The disappointment of the expectations then indulged might be brought about by some similar mischance. That he should have realized the precarious situation of our condition, and might have alluded to it in confidential conversation with his brother, does not warrant any imputation upon his fidelity to the cause to which he had pledged his allegiance. He may well have replied, in answer to the arguments of Daniel for changing sides, that he should seasonably be prepared for the events thought by Daniel likely to happen; that, in case the Congress should come to confusion as predicted, he was determined to take care of himself, but needed no help from the enemy.

But he knew what Daniel did not, nor Holland, nor De Lancy, nor Clinton, — that arrangements had already been made, through his own efforts and influence (if not mainly, in part), to bring about combinations that would insure the concentration of the fleets and armies of Washington, Rochambeau, and De Grasse in the Chesapeake in front of Yorktown in the month of August, and, by capturing Cornwallis end the war. He knew not only that Great Britain had made overtures for peace, but that France had pledged itself to accept no mediation but on the basis of American independence, and had promised and already remitted means to re-establish our credit and finances, and sent troops and armies to fight our battles; and he could see, though they could not, that the probabilities were more encouraging than ever, that we should effect that for which we had been so long contending. He knew at the same time that success depended on lulling Clinton into a false security that our cause was regarded by ourselves as virtually hopeless.

No reason leads us to doubt that General Sullivan could have revealed what might have defeated our plans, or that he kept this studiously concealed from Clinton. The whole tenor of his words, if he used those that Daniel imputed to

him, tended to show they were making no great effort, and that the Parliament had little to dread or to guard against, but an attack on New York by Washington and Rochambeau. That Clinton knew nothing of the plan of the campaign arranged in Paris in March, and communicated to Congress on the 26th of May, or perhaps confided alone to its committee up to the time (July 4, 1781) embraced in the June number of the magazine, is equally evident. Before making any further comment on the information from Captain Sullivan on the 4th of July, 1781, we append the document itself:—

Information from Captain Sullivan.

JULY 4, 1781.

He arrived at Philadelphia the 12th of June, waited upon his brother General Sullivan, and delivered a letter to him from Captain Holland; after reading it several times the General told him it was very well, but would not descend into particulars, as his coming to Philadelphia twice might give suspicions; and as soon as he had an answer from New Hampshire he would inform him of everything in his power. That Captain Holland might assure the person which he mentioned in his letters to him, in whose full confidence he was, that he would do everything in his power to serve him.

Captain Sullivan asked his brother if Mrs. Holland's visit would be limited to any certain time; he said he had not the least doubt she might stay as long as she pleased; that Captain Holland would follow her in less than six months, and that the purchasers of Holland's property had thrown their money away. That it was his opinion that unless the French made very great exertions in America this summer, the Congress will be torn to pieces, and the people would return to their allegiance; that the Congress was at present in great confusion, and that he was determined to take care of himself. Captain Sullivan further says that in every part of Philadelphia the people were swearing they would pull the Congress house down.

[Signed] DANIEL SULLIVAN.

This purports to give an account of Daniel's second interview with his brother at Philadelphia, on the 12th of June. It is evident that Daniel mistrusted, or affected to distrust, the likelihood of our being able to prolong the contest. He avowed, as one principal object of his coming to Philadelphia, the employment of his brother as counsel or friend in the affairs of Holland in New Hampshire, whose estates there had been sequestered or confiscated upon his taking sides with the

British. It was natural enough that Holland should wish to know whether the property upon which his family depended for support was irretrievably lost. At his request General Sullivan, as such counsel or friend, writes home to ascertain if this were the case; and the information received in reply appears to have satisfied his mind that such was not the result of any legal proceedings instituted. He states his belief that Mrs. Holland would be permitted to stay as long as she pleased in New Hampshire, and adds that Captain Holland would possibly follow her in less than six months, and that the purchasers of Holland's property had thrown their money away. This opinion, no doubt, was that of a lawyer, and predicated upon evidence that the requirements of law had not been complied with. This remark that Holland might in less than six months return to New Hampshire is susceptible of two explanations, — either that in six months the American cause would have become hopeless by British success, as it would seem to signify in New York; or, as he firmly believed himself and as the event justified, that the plan of the campaign would be carried out and result in an overwhelming defeat, as actually happened of the British arms. This was sufficiently guarded to prevent General Clinton or his subordinates surmising what he had in his mind; though, had he supposed that his brother Daniel would have repeated his words, uttered by him in the freedom of fraternal intercourse, he might have been more prudent.

In war the important object is to attain all information possible of the designs and movements of the enemy, and to prevent the enemy from discovering any of our own. From any fear of misconstruction, to shut the door upon opportunity offered for gaining such intelligence would have shown a want of wisdom. Members of the Congress were more interested with the events of the war than even generals commanding in the field. In this instance, without any encouragement of his own, sources of information opened to him which it would have been a neglect of duty not to improve. It would be unfair to the memory of General Sullivan to judge of the propriety of his proceedings without taking into consideration his position, his relations to the country, the part he was actually taking in public affairs. No one was more busily employed or reasonably trusted, or more favorably placed to further suc-

cess ; no one more active or energetic, or eager and earnest to bring it about. Submitted to this test, nothing that as yet has appeared in the secret journal but is susceptible of easy explanation without prejudice to his patriotism ; nor do we believe that anything will be discovered in its future pages incapable of a similar solution.

