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Early Sketches
of
GEORGE WASHINGTON

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Early Sketches
of
GEORGE WASHINGTON

REPRINTED WITH
BIOGRAPHICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL
NOTES

BY

WILLIAM S. BAKER

AUTHOR OF THE ENGRAVED PORTRAITS OF WASHINGTON • MEDALLIC PORTRAITS OF WASHINGTON • CHARACTER PORTRAITS OF WASHINGTON • BIBLIOTHECA WASHINGTONIANA • ITINERARY OF GENERAL WASHINGTON, 1775-1783 • ETC. • ETC.

. . . "that heroic Youth Col. *Washington*, whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a Manner, for some important Service to his Country."—SAMUEL DAVIES, 1755

PHILADELPHIA

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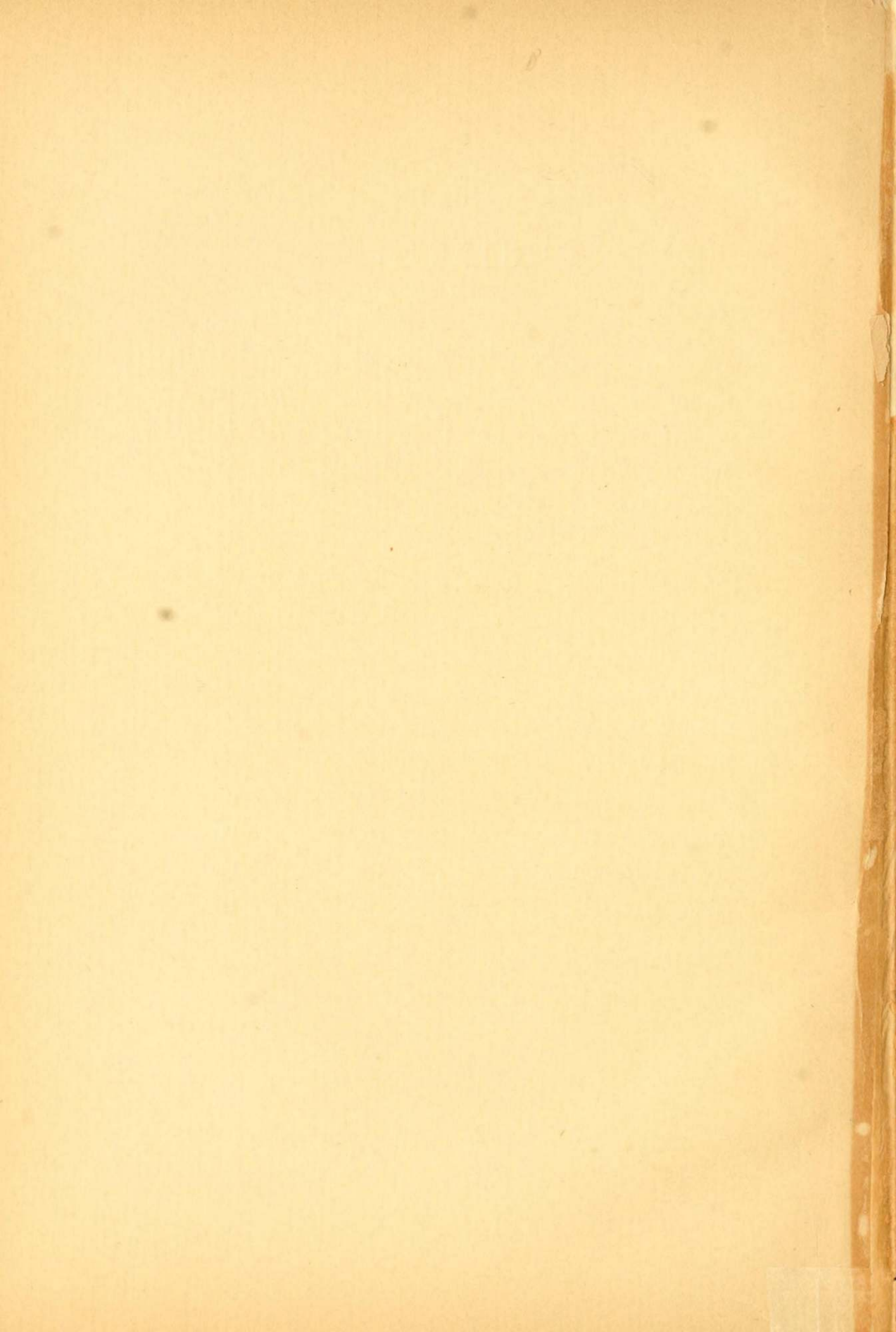
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PREFACE.

THE earliest sketch of Washington which aspires to the dignity of a biography was published at Philadelphia in 1798, the year preceding his death. It appeared in the *Philadelphia Monthly Magazine*, and was entitled "Memoirs of George Washington, Esq., late President of the United States." These Memoirs were compiled by Thomas Condie, a stationer and book-binder of that city, who died about the year 1815; the *Magazine*, published by Mr. Condie at No. 20 Carter's Alley, was issued only for one year,—1798.

Before this date, both in England and America, a number of sketches or notices of more or less interest had appeared in various forms of publication. Such of them as have come to the knowledge of the writer are now reprinted in this volume; the object being to furnish in a compact form the early links, however imperfect, of a chain of study and research which,

since the commencement of the century, has steadily increased in size and importance.

The most complete of these sketches, those by John Bell (1779) and Jedidiah Morse (1789), were freely used by Mr. Condie, his work being rounded out by the introduction of Washington's Journal of 1753; the address of the Provincial Congress of New York, with the answer, June 26, 1775; the Farewell Address to the armies of the United States, November 2, 1783; the resignation of his commission at Annapolis, December 23, 1783; his letter to the Governor of Virginia declining the acceptance of certain shares in an improvement company, October 29, 1785; and his Inaugural Address to Congress, April 30, 1789.

These Memoirs, with considerable additional matter, were afterward published in book-form in 1800, with the title, "Biographical Memoirs of the Illustrious Gen. Geo: Washington, late President of the United States of America, &c., &c. Containing a History of the Principal Events of his Life, with Extracts from his Journals, Speeches to Congress and Public Addresses:— Also a sketch of his Private Life." *Philadel-*

phia: Printed by Charless & Ralston, 1800. 18mo, pp. 232.

Subsequent editions appeared at Philadelphia in 1801 and 1811; at Trenton, New Jersey, 1811; at Brattleborough, Vermont, 1811, 1814; and at Hartford, Connecticut, 1813.

In reprinting in chronological sequence the sketches which preceded the Memoirs by Condie, it will be understood that a strict rendering of each has been given without comment or correction, the biographical and bibliographical notes appended to each reprint being deemed all that was necessary.

The description of the personal appearance of Washington, written in 1760, the twenty-eighth year of his age, and the year after his marriage, may be considered an appropriate introduction.

The portrait prefixed to the volume is a reproduction of the original study by Charles Willson Peale, for the three-quarter length painted at Mount Vernon in May, 1772. This study, the first authentic portrait of Washington, was retained by Mr. Peale, and, at the time of the sale and dispersion of his gallery at Philadelphia, October, 1854, was purchased by

Mr. Charles S. Ogden, of that city, who presented it to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, February 22, 1892. The three-quarter length, representing Washington in the costume of a colonel in the Virginia militia, is now owned by George Washington Custis Lee, eldest son of General Robert E. Lee, and President of Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia.

W. S. BAKER.

PHILADELPHIA.

Nov. 1, 1893.

GEORGE MERCER.

1760.

GEORGE MERCER.

1760.

ALTHOUGH distrusting my ability to give an adequate account of the personal appearance of Col. George Washington, late Commander of the Virginia Provincial troops, I shall, as you request, attempt the portraiture. He may be described as being as straight as an Indian, measuring six feet two inches in his stockings, and weighing 175 pounds when he took his seat in the House of Burgesses in 1759. His frame is padded with well-developed muscles, indicating great strength. His bones and joints are large, as are his feet and hands. He is wide shouldered, but has not a deep or round chest; is neat waisted, but is broad across the hips, and has rather long legs and arms. His head is well shaped though not large, but is gracefully poised on a superb neck. A large and straight rather than a prominent nose; blue-gray penetrating eyes, which are widely separated and overhung by a heavy brow. His face is long rather than

broad, with high round cheek bones, and terminates in a good firm chin. He has a clear though rather a colorless pale skin, which burns with the sun. A pleasing, benevolent, though a commanding countenance, dark brown hair, which he wears in a cue. His mouth is large and generally firmly closed, but which from time to time discloses some defective teeth. His features are regular and placid, with all the muscles of his face under perfect control, though flexible and expressive of deep feeling when moved by emotions. In conversation he looks you full in the face, is deliberate, deferential and engaging. His voice is agreeable rather than strong. His demeanor at all times composed and dignified. His movements and gestures are graceful, his walk majestic, and he is a splendid horseman.

[The above description of the personal appearance of Washington, at the age of twenty-eight, is quoted by Joseph M. Toner, M.D., in "George Washington as an Inventor and Promoter of the Useful Arts," an address delivered at Mount Vernon, April 10, 1891, on the occasion of the visit of the officers and members of the Patent Centennial Celebration. It was transcribed from a copy of a letter written in 1760, by Captain George Mercer, of Virginia, to a friend in Europe.

George Mercer, son of John Mercer, of Marlboro', Virginia, was born June 23, 1733, and served as lieutenant and captain in the regiment of Washington in 1754; he also accompanied Washington to Boston, in February, 1756, on his mission to General Shirley, relative to the precedence of military rank between crown and provincial commissions. Captain Mercer went to England in 1763, as the agent of the Ohio Company, of which his father was secretary, and returned to Virginia in 1765, as collector for the Crown under the Stamp Act, but found the measure so obnoxious that he declined to serve. Going to England again he was appointed (September 17, 1768), Lieutenant-Governor of North Carolina, but soon relinquished the office. He returned to England prior to the Revolution; and died there in April, 1784. —W. S. B.]

ANONYMOUS.

1775.

ANONYMOUS.

1775.

MR. WASHINGTON is a native of Virginia, born about the year 1732; was sent by Governor Dinwiddie in the year 1753, as he had reason to believe the French were encroaching on the western parts of that dominion, to ascertain the fact. Mr. Washington soon returned with information that they had built a log fort on the Ohio, where fort Pitt was afterwards erected. That colony in 1754 raised a regiment in order to dispossess the French. As Mr. Washington was then a very young man, an old gentleman, Mr. Fry, was appointed Commander, but Mr. Washington had discovered so great a degree of intrepidity and fortitude in his journey several hundred miles through a *then* wild and savage country the year before, the Governor appointed him Lieutenant Colonel. Colonel Fry dying on their march, the command devolved on Col. Washington; so that he never was in action below the rank of

Colonel. About the year 1759 he married a lady of very considerable fortune, and resigned his commission. By the death of his elder brother some time before, he got possession of a tolerable good family estate. Add to these the immense tracts of land he has acquired, under the King's and the Governor's proclamation, as first in command, there are but few men in that country possessed of a larger estate than Mr. Washington; he is now in the prime of life, an exceeding fine figure (at least six feet high) and a very good countenance. There is much dignity and modesty in his manner.

[This sketch, the earliest which has come to our notice, was published in vol. xxxviii., p. 408, of the *London Chronicle* for the year 1775, October 24-26. It was written to correct the errors in a paper entitled "Anecdotes of General Washington, the American Commander in Chief," printed in the *Chronicle* under date of October 17-19. The statements, or rather the misstatements, of this paper are as follows: "General Washington was born at Coventry about the year 1709, his father having settled there from Boston in Lincolnshire, the beginning of Queen Ann's reign. His mother was a niece to the famous General Monk, afterwards Duke of Albemarle. At 18 he began a military life, by entering

himself as a private in Wade's troop of horse; he afterwards purchased a cornetcy in the same troop, where he continued to serve till after the late rebellion, when the troop being broke, he went abroad, and at the beginning of the late war was promoted in America, where he served in the capacity of a Colonel with signal courage and fidelity; which so endeared him to that people, that they unanimously chose him to the chief command upon the present contest. Several of his relations now reside at Coventry, and a nephew of his is a member of that corporation."

In his note to the printer of the *Chronicle*, the writer of the sketch says: "I was surprised on reading, in last week's papers, some anecdotes relating to a Gentleman of Mr. Washington's rank, and who is personally known to many distinguished Officers in his Majesty's service, so contrary to fact. The relater of it might with the same degree of truth have told the public that Mr. Washington's *mother was an Alderman and his aunt a Justice of Peace*, as that his mother was niece to General Monk."—W. S. B.]

JONATHAN BOUCHER.

1776.

JONATHAN BOUCHER.

1776.

MR. WASHINGTON was the second of five sons of parents distinguished neither for their rank or fortune. Laurence their eldest son, became a soldier, and went on the expedition to Carthage, where, getting into some scrape with a brother officer, it was said he did not acquit himself quite so well as he might, and so sold out; soon after he died at Barbadoes. George, who, like most people thereabouts at that time, had no other education than reading, writing, and accounts, which he was taught by a convict servant whom his father bought for a schoolmaster, first set out in the world as Surveyor of Orange County, an appointment of about half the value of a Virginia Rectory—*i.e.* perhaps 100 l. a year. When the French made encroachments on our western frontier in 1754, this Washington was sent out to examine on the spot how far what was alleged was true, and to remonstrate on the occasion. He published his journal on this oc-

casian, which, in Virginia at least, drew on him some ridicule. Yet when, soon after, a regiment was raised in Virginia, he had interest enough to be appointed the Lieutenant-Colonel of it, or rather, I believe, at first the Major only. A Colonel Jefferson, who had formerly been grammar master in the College, commanded the regiment, and a Colonel Muse, who had been a sergeant, and therefore knew something of military discipline and exercise, was the second in command. Jefferson soon died, and Muse was disgraced, from some imputations of cowardice, so that the command devolved on Mr. Washington. At Braddock's defeat, and every subsequent occasion throughout the war, he acquitted himself much in the same manner as in my judgment he has since done—*i.e.* decently but never greatly. I did know Mr. Washington well; and though occasions may call forth traits of character that never could have been discovered in the more sequestered scenes of life, I cannot conceive how he could, otherwise than through the interested representations of party, have ever been spoken of as a great man. He is shy, silent, slow, and cautious, but has no quickness of parts, extraor-

dinary penetration, nor an elevated style of thinking. In his moral character he is regular, temperate, strictly just and honest (except that as a Virginian he has lately found out that there is no moral turpitude in not paying what he confesses he owes to a British creditor), and, as I always thought, religious; having heretofore been pretty constant and even exemplary, in his attendance on public worship in the Church of England. But he seems to have nothing generous or affectionate in his nature. Just before the close of the last war he married the widow Custis, and thus came into possession of her large jointure. He never had any children, and lived very much like a gentleman at Mount Vernon, in Fairfax County, where the most distinguished part of his character was that he was an admirable farmer.

[Jonathan Boucher was born at Blencogo, Cumberland County, England, 12 March, 1738, and died at Epsom, 27 April, 1804. He came to America in 1759, and was for some time a private tutor, having under his care, among others, John Parke Custis, the son of Mrs. Washington. He afterward took orders in the Anglican Church, and was appointed rector of Hanover, then of St. Mary's parish, Va., and finally of St. Anne's at Annapolis. Dr. Boucher took a firm

stand in opposition to the prevalent doctrines of independence, and gave such offence to his congregation that he was obliged to return to England in the latter part of the year 1775. At the time of his death he was vicar of Epsom, having been appointed in 1785. Portions of his MS. recollections were published by his grandson, Jonathan Bouchier, in vols. i., v., vi., and ix. of Notes and Queries, Series 5, 1874-78. Our extract is from vol. v., p. 501.—W. S. B.]

BENNET ALLEN.

1776.

BENNET ALLEN.

1776.

WASHINGTON is a native of Virginia; his first employment was as clerk in Lord Fairfax's land-office, who afterwards made him a land-surveyor, in which capacity he took up most of the best vacant land in the Northern Neck of Virginia for himself and his brother. By these and other means he possessed himself of a considerable landed property, and became of consequence enough to obtain a command of the Provincial forces in the last war; at the beginning of which he was defeated at a place known by the name of the Little Meadows. He was likewise in Braddock's defeat, and is said to have been useful in bringing off the remains of that corps. This was all the military experience he had an opportunity of gaining. His abilities are of that mediocrity which creates no jealousy; his natural temper makes him reserved, his want of education renders him diffident, and to these negative qualities he seems to have been as much

indebted for his appointment and the continuance of his command, as to political motives. The New England delegates concurred in making him the offer of the chief command, to secure the fidelity of Virginia, and the southern provinces; and he pretended that political reasons induced him to accept of it, to preserve a balance of power against the northern provinces. He is ambitious, with the fairest professions of moderation, and avaritious under the most specious appearance of disinterestedness—particularly eager in engrossing large tracts of land, though he has no family, but by a widow lady of fortune he married, who bore children by a former husband. He has not perhaps less than two hundred thousand acres surveyed for him on the Ohio, first purchasing officers rights for a trifle, and then procuring an order of the council of Virginia to extend the proclamation of 1763 to the Provincials employed in the last war.* It

* The following extract of a letter from Colonel George Washington to his agent, dated December 27, 1773, will explain a transaction but little known in England. "I have just obtained an order of council to grant lands under the King's proclamation of October, 1763, to the officers and

has been a matter of surprize, that he could so long have made head against the King's forces ;

soldiers, by which a lieutenant is entitled to 2000 acres, but that the Governor would not grant his warrants of survey to any that did not personally apply for them. Numbers, however, are obtaining these warrants, and locating them with the surveyors of Augusta, Botetourt, and Fincastle, by whom and their deputies, all these surveys are to be made.

“Till I see your brother I am at a loss to locate my own lands under the proclamation of 1763, and am sensible that every day's delay may prove hurtful, as I suppose every officer and soldier within the three provinces, either is or will be upon the move to locate their lands, by which means all the valuable spots will be engrossed.

G. W.

“P.S.—No land will be granted to any but officers and soldiers.”

It is evident Washington egregiously outwitted the Governor of Virginia ; his request was singularly modest, to include the Provincial officers and soldiers in the grant, for whom the King's proclamation could not design these lands, for this obvious reason, that the object of the war was answered by securing them in possession of their own lands—and to exclude the British officers and soldiers, for whose reward they were assigned, and to whose distressed families they might hereafter have proved a seasonable refuge, by insisting upon their personal application in Virginia. Many friends of Government likewise on the spot were excluded by the grants being only made to the military—and the

but the circumstances of the country, all favour the want of skill in the General, and of discipline in the troops.

[This sketch, in connection with one of Benjamin Franklin, originally appeared in the *London Morning Post* of June 1, 1779, followed by others of Thomas Johnson, Daniel Dulany, Patrick Henry, and General Lee in the issue of June 29, the introduction stating that they were written on the spot in the year 1776. Exceptions were taken to the sketch of Daniel Dulany by his brother, Lloyd Dulany, a Loyalist, then in London, who challenged through the pages of the paper the unknown writer, afterward discovered to be the Rev. Bennet Allen, and a meeting was arranged in Hyde Park, which resulted in the death of Mr. Dulany. Allen was tried at the Old Bailey, found guilty of manslaughter, and sentenced to a fine of one shilling and six months' imprisonment in Newgate. The sketches, with a history of the duel, were subsequently published in the *Political Magazine*, July, 1782.

Bennet Allen was educated at Wadham College, Oxford, where he took the degree of B.A., 16 November, 1757, and that of M.A., 12 July, 1760. He subsequently appears to have taken holy orders, and officiated for a time in Frederick County, Maryland, but finally settled in London, where his writings and associations prove him to have been singularly unfitted to bear the title of Reverend.—W. S. B.]

possession of these lands, as it will afford a safe asylum to the American leaders, if unsuccessful, so it will enlarge their territory to a boundless extent, if they establish independency.

ANONYMOUS.

1777.

ANONYMOUS.

1777.

CHARACTER OF GENERAL WASHINGTON.

THERE are some men, who seem to be singled out by Heaven as the authors of great good, and others of much misery to their species. Among those so distinguished must be ranked George Washington, commander in chief of the forces, and protector of the united states of America. But whether he ought to be considered as the author of good or ill, we presume not to say: that point we leave to be determined by the historians of future ages.

During the late war in America, this gentleman distinguished himself eminently as a colonel of the provincial militia; and was of singular service to his country in repelling the incursions of the French and Indians, as well as in acting offensively against the enemy. After the peace, he retired to a private station, loaded with honour, and seemingly satisfied with the praise of a good citizen;—the con-

sciousness of having done his duty, and deserved the esteem of his fellow-countrymen, without making use of his superior reputation to usurp over his equals, or of his popularity to disturb the peace of the state. But no sooner was an attempt made to recover by a stamp-duty, some part of the sums expended in protecting America, than Mr. Washington, among others, flew boldly in the face of the British legislature: the progress of the dispute is well known; and as soon as it was judged necessary to repel force by force, he was chosen by the congress to command their armies, along with Mr. Lee.

Whether Mr. Washington had then in prospect that high dignity to which he has now attained, it is impossible to say with certainty; and consequently to determine, whether his opposition to government was dictated by ambition, or inspired by principle. If we may judge from the letters published in his name, the *amor patriæ* seems first to have roused him to action. 'Heaven that knows my heart,' says he, 'knows how truly I love my country; and that I embarked in this arduous enterprise on

the purest motives. But we have overshot our mark: we have grasped at things beyond our reach. It is impossible that we should succeed; and I cannot, with truth, say that I am sorry for it, because I am far from being sure that we deserve to succeed!' He here alludes to the scheme of independency, which it appears he opposed. He afterwards, however, adds, (probably when ambitious passions had insinuated themselves into his heart) 'If it be the will of God that America should be independent of Great Britain, and that this be the season for it, even I, and these unhopeful men around me, may not be thought unworthy instruments in his hands.'

But whatever may be the governing principle of Mr. Washington, in the present contest, he is a man of bold and liberal sentiments, and more of a general than was imagined either by his friends or his enemies. This is alike discoverable in his conduct and his opinion of military matters. 'A good army,' says he, 'is by no means secured, as some seem to reckon, by securing a large number of men. We want soldiers; and between these and

raw undisciplined men there is a wide difference. The question then is, how are these raw and undisciplined men to be formed into good soldiers?—And I am free to give it as my opinion, that, so far from contributing to this end, will strong holds, fortified posts, and deep entrenchments be found, that they will have a direct contrary effect. To be a soldier, is to be inured to, and familiar with danger; to dare to look your enemy in the face, unsheltered and exposed to their fire, and even when repulsed, to rally again with undiminished spirit.—It would almost be worth our while to be defeated, if it were only to train us to stand fire, and to bear a reverse of fortune with a decent magnanimity.’

In a word, whatever fortune may attend Gen. Washington’s operations, or whatever use he may make of those dictatorial powers with which his deluded countrymen have imprudently vested him, we cannot at present justly challenge either his abilities as a soldier, or his principles as a patriot. His own sentiments, in regard to the part he has to act, will not improperly conclude this character. ‘I am prepared

for every event, one only excepted—I mean a dishonourable peace. Rather than that, let me, though it should be with the loss of every thing else I hold dear, continue this horrid trade; and by the most unlikely means, be the unworthy instrument of preserving political security and happiness to them (*Englishmen*) as well as ourselves.—Pity this cannot be accomplished without fixing on me the odious name of rebel! I love my king; you know I do: a soldier, a good man cannot but love him;—how peculiarly hard then is our fortune to be deemed traitors to so good a king! But I am not yet without hopes, that even he will see cause to do me justice: posterity, I am sure, will. Mean while I comfort myself with the reflection, that this has been the fate of the best and bravest men; even of the Barons who obtained Magna Charta, whilst the dispute was depending.—This, (*a reconciliation with his king*) however anxiously I wish for it, is not mine to command. I see my duty, that of standing up for the liberties of my country; and whatever difficulties and discouragements lie in my way, I dare not shrink

from it:—and I rely on that Being, who has left to us the choice of duties, that, whilst I conscientiously discharge mine, I shall not lose my reward. If I really am not A BAD MAN, I shall not long be so SET DOWN.'

[This "Character of General Washington" appears in "The English Magazine; or, Monthly Register of the Civil and Military Transactions, Politics, Literature, Arts, Manners, and Amusements of the Times," for August, 1777. The material for the sketch was drawn from a series of letters published at London in June of that year, under the title of "Letters from General Washington to several of his Friends in the year 1776, in which are set forth a fairer and fuller view of American Politics, than ever yet transpired or the Public could be made acquainted with through any other channel," none of which, however, were written by Washington.

These *Spurious Letters*, purporting to have been written in the months of June and July, 1776, were seven in number, five addressed to Lund Washington, manager of the Mount Vernon estate, one to Mrs. Washington, and one to John Parke Custis, her son; the "first draughts, or foul copies," of which were said to have been found in a small portmanteau, taken from a servant of the General, at Fort Lee, in November, 1776.

These letters were reprinted at New York in 1778, at Philadelphia in 1795, and at London and New York, with other letters, in 1796, with the title: "Epistles, domestic,

confidential, and official from General Washington, etc." The appearance of the latter publication called out a letter from Washington (March 3, 1797) to Timothy Pickering, Secretary of State, in which he declared them to be base forgeries, and that he had never seen or heard of them until they appeared in print.

Independent of this assertion, and apart from the evidence of the letters themselves, their spurious character is fully revealed by an examination of that purporting to have been written to Mrs. Washington, under date of June 24, 1776. In this letter Washington advises his wife to leave Mount Vernon for Philadelphia, in order to undergo inoculation for the small-pox; whereas, the real state of the case was, that Mrs. Washington had already been inoculated at Philadelphia, in the latter part of May, and at the time was with the Commander-in-Chief at headquarters in New York, where she remained until June 30.

An interesting note concerning these letters, and ascribing the authorship to "John Randolph the last royal attorney general of Virginia, and long the ablest lawyer in the colony, who went to England in 1775," will be found in vol. iv., p. 132, of the "Writings of George Washington," edited by Worthington C. Ford. A reprint of the letters, with an extended bibliographical note by Mr. Ford, was published in 1889.—W. S. B.]

AN OLD SOLDIER.

1778.

AN OLD SOLDIER.

1778.

PARTICULARS OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF GENERAL WASHINGTON.

MR. GEORGE WASHINGTON was the second son of a planter in Virginia, whose situation and circumstances in life were such as might have ranked him with that respectable class of men here called the Yeomanry. His mother is still living, and so are three brothers and one sister, all married and decently settled in their native colony as planters. By the death of his elder brother, Mr. Laurence Washington, who was a Captain in the American troops raised for the expedition against Carthagera, and afterwards incorporated with the regulars, he succeeded to the paternal estate. A late celebrated patriot said in Parliament, that Mr. Washington was an independent gentleman of 5000 l. per annum, clear estate. Many such things are said. It is not usual, however, in that country, to estimate mens fortunes by their annual incomes; in fact,

owing to many circumstances not necessary here to recite, it is hardly possible this should be done with any precision. His estate, even under his excellent management, never was, one year with another, worth 500 l. per annum. There are a hundred men in Virginia, who have better estates than Mr. Washington; nay, five hundred. At his first setting out in life, and before the death of his brother, he was Surveyor of the county of Orange; an appointment attended with a good deal of duty, and but little profit. I should imagine it might then (for then it was almost a frontier county, and of course there was more surveying to do) bring him in three or fourscore pounds a year. Having been used to the woods, and being a youth of great sobriety, diligence, and fidelity, on the first encroachments of the French previous to the last war, he was appointed, by the Assembly of Virginia, to go out to enquire into, and make a report of, the true state of the complaints. He published his journal, which did credit to his character for care and industry. His appointment soon after to the command of one of the Provincial regiments, and his very decent con-

duct in that command, are facts of sufficient notoriety. One circumstance, perhaps not so generally known, may be mentioned. The very first engagement in which he was ever concerned, was against his own countrymen. He unexpectedly fell in, in the woods, with a party of the other Virginia regiment in the night, and fifty men were killed before the mistake was found out. The blame was laid (and possibly with great justness) on the darkness of the night. It is remarkable, however, that the same misfortune befel him in his last action at German-Town; the blame was then also laid on a darkness occasioned by a thick fog.

Before the war was over Mr. Washington resigned, urged thereto by his lady, a widow of Mr. Custis, whom he then married, and which certainly was an advantageous match.

It is not to be denied, that he was not then much liked in the army; but it is not less true that no very good reasons were ever given for his being disliked. I attributed it (and I hope I may be allowed to have some pretensions to judge of it, having served with him in that very campaign) to his being a tolerably strict disci-

plinarian; a system which ill suited with the impatient spirits of his headstrong countrymen, who are but little used to restraint. Method and exactness are the *fort* of his character; he gave a very strong proof of this in this very service.

He is not a generous, but a just man; and having, from some idea of propriety, made it a point neither to gain nor lose as an individual in the war, he kept to his purpose, and left the service without either owing a shilling, or being a shilling richer for it.

After his resignation he lived entirely as a country gentleman, distinguished chiefly by his skill and industry in improvements in agriculture. He was a member of the House of Burgesses; respectable but not shining.

At the time of the stamp-act, and during the commencement of the present troubles, he took such a part only as most of his compeers did; save only, that being more industrious, and probably less violent, than most of them, he carried the scheme of manufacturing to a greater height than almost any other man.

When it was determined by some restless men

in the northern colonies to raise an army, they soon foresaw that it would be impossible to effect this without the concurrence of their southern fellow-colonies; they fixed their eyes, in particular, on Virginia, which having long been called his Majesty's ancient dominion, the people, naturally ostentatious, were proud to be considered as taking the lead. They were artfully indulged and humoured in this pardonable instance of human vanity. Mr. Randolph, a Virginian, was made President of the Congress, and Mr. Washington, Commander in Chief; both of them very honest and well-meaning men. Their honesty betrayed them; for it is an undoubted fact, that they would never have accepted of those posts, if they had not entertained the just and strongest suspicions of the unwarrantable views of their northern brethren. Alas! they considered not how difficult, and even impossible it would be for them, after having once passed the strait line of rectitude, to stop short of the utmost wrong. Their seducers were systematic; and having now prevailed on them, in one great instance, to fly in the face of Government, they knew their game too well not to manage so as

to cut off all hopes of a retreat. Things were pushed to so desperate an extremity, that safety was now to be found only in going on; the relinquishment of independency, circumstanced as affairs then were, and were contrived to be, would certainly have been to have relinquished also the first ground of the quarrel, the right of taxation.

All this may appear paradoxical, but it is nevertheless perfectly consistent with the genuine workings of human nature, and these Americans are not singular in having acted the part I am describing. It is an undoubted fact, that Washington and Randolph (who then acted in concert, and who then also greatly influenced the Colony of Virginia, and, of course, the whole Continent) were, at the time I am speaking of, as adverse to independency as (for I would express myself strongly) the heads of the northern faction were bent upon it.

But is not his judgment hereby called in question? If independency be now just and advantageous to his country, it must always have been so, and, of course, always his duty to have promoted it.

Placed at the head of an army and country, which, at least, were great and glorious in the American accounts of them, it is not to be wondered at that Mr. Washington soon began to feel his consequence. His ruling passion is military fame. Nature has certainly given him some military talents, yet it is more than probable he never will be a great soldier. There are insuperable impediments in his way. He is but of slow parts, and these are totally unassisted by any kind of education. Now, though such a character may acquit itself with some sort of eclat, in the poor, pitiful, unsoldier-like war in which he has hitherto been employed, it is romantic to suppose he must not fail, if ever it should be his lot to be opposed by real military skill. He never saw any actual service, but the unfortunate action of Braddock. He never read a book in the art of war of higher value than Bland's Exercises; and it has already been noted, that he is by no means of bright or shining parts. If, then, military knowledge be not unlike all other; or, if it be not totally useless as to all the purposes of actual war, it is impossible that ever Mr. Washington should be a great soldier. In

fact, by the mere dint and bravery of our army alone he has been beaten whenever he has engaged; and that this is left to befall him again, is a problem which, I believe, most military men are utterly at a loss to solve.

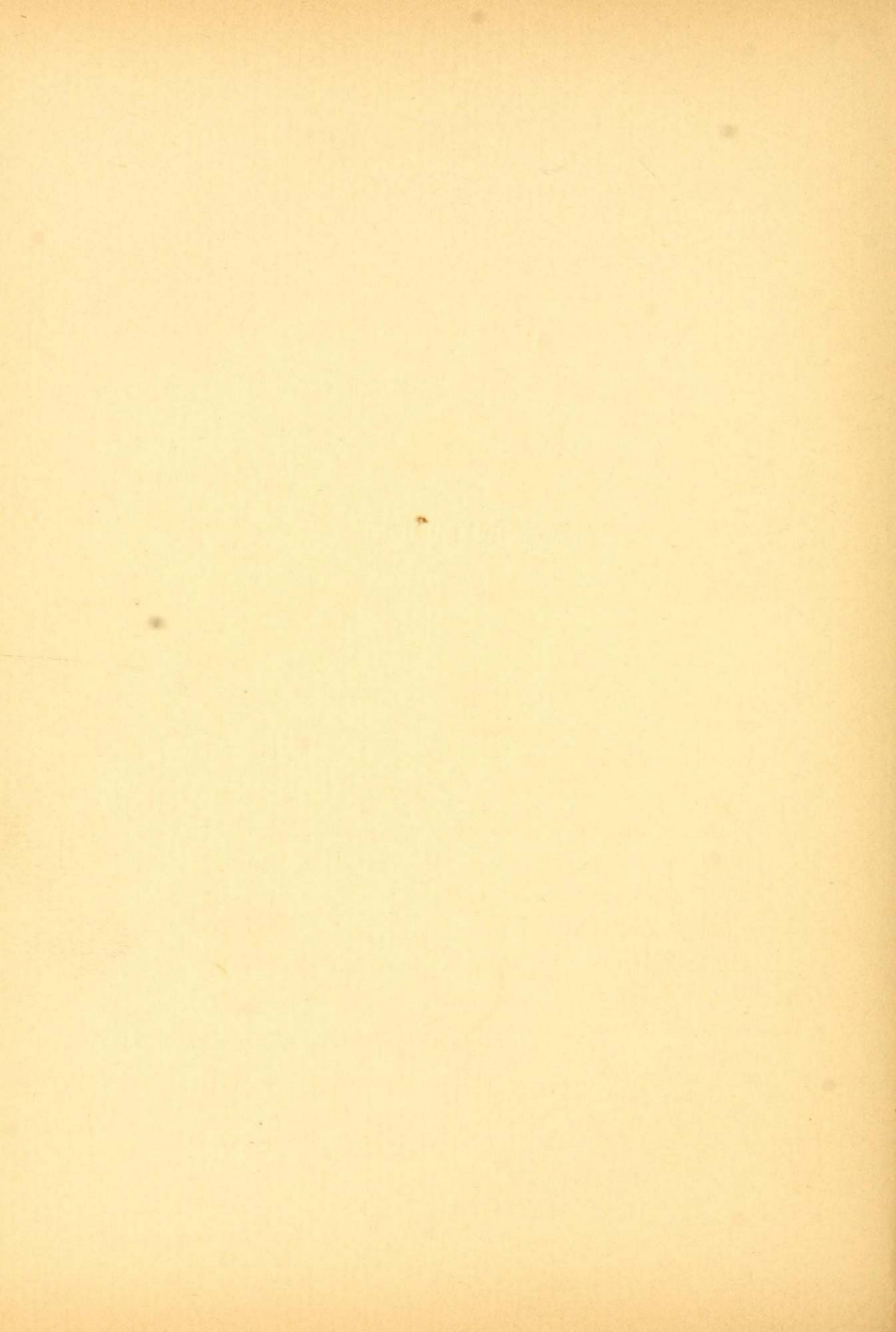
It should not be denied, however, that, all things considered, he really has performed wonders. That he is alive to command an army, or that an army is left him to command, might be sufficient to ensure him the reputation of a great General, if British Generals any longer were what British Generals used to be. In short, I am of the opinion of the Marquis de la Fayette, that any other General in the world than General Howe would have beaten General Washington; and any other General in the world than General Washington, would have beaten General Howe.

[These "Particulars of the Life and Character of General Washington" appear in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1778, extracted from a letter in *Lloyd's Evening Post* of August 17, signed AN OLD SOLDIER. The same sketch with some slight additional matter was also published the same year in the August number of the *Westminster Magazine*. The introduction to the latter reprint runs thus: "The following historical sketch of the Life of General Wash-

ington, is written with such apparent Authenticity and Candour, by one who seems to have an intimate knowledge of his subject, that we presume it will be entertaining and instructive to most of our Readers; we could not therefore withhold from them such a curious Description of a Person who makes a distinguished Figure in the political System of the Globe, and is like to hold the same Rank in future Records of Historians."—W. S. B.]

ANONYMOUS.

1779.



ANONYMOUS.

1779.

GENERAL WASHINGTON, altho' advanced in years, is remarkably healthy, takes a great deal of exercise, and is very fond of riding on a favorite white horse; he is very reserved, and loves retirement. When out of camp he has only a single servant attending him, and when he returns within the lines a few of the light horse escort him to his tent. When he has any great object in view he sends for a few of the officers of whose abilities he has a high opinion, and states his present plan among half a dozen others, to all which they give their separate judgments: by these means he gets all their opinions, without divulging his intentions. He has no tincture of pride, and will often converse with a centinel with more freedom than he would with a general officer. He is very shy and reserved to foreigners, altho' they have letters of recommendation, from the Congress. He punishes neglect of duty

with great severity, but is very tender and indulgent to recruits until they learn the articles of war and their exercise perfectly. He has a great antipathy to spies, although he employs them himself, and has an utter aversion to all Indians. He regularly attends divine service in his tent every morning and evening, and seems very fervent in his prayers. He is so tender-hearted, that no soldiers must be flogged nigh his tent, or if he is walking in the camp, and sees a man tied to the halberds, he will either order him to be taken down, or walk another way to avoid the sight. He has made the art of war his particular study; his plans are in general good and well digested; he is particularly careful always of securing a retreat, but his chief qualifications are steadiness, perseverance, and secrecy; any act of bravery he is sure to reward, and make a short eulogium on the occasion to the person and his fellow soldiers (if it be a soldier) in the ranks. He is humane to the prisoners who fall into his hands, and orders every thing necessary for their relief. He is very temperate in his diet, and the only luxury he indulges himself in, is a few glasses of punch after supper.

[This sketch, entitled "Character of General Washington, by an American Gentleman now in London, who is well acquainted with him," appears in vol. xlvi., p. 288, of the *London Chronicle* for the year 1779, September 21-23. Although, properly speaking, not a biographical sketch, it, however, possesses sufficient interest in this connection to be included in the present volume.—W. S. B.]

JOHN BELL.

1779.

JOHN BELL.

1779.

A SKETCH OF MR. WASHINGTON'S LIFE AND CHARACTER.

GENERAL WASHINGTON is the third son of Mr. Augustine Washington, a man of large property and distinguished reputation in the state of Virginia: an ancestor of this gentleman, about the period of the Revolution, sold his property, near Cave, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and came over to Virginia, where he purchased lands in King George's County; and it was here that our hero was born on the 22d of February in the year 1733. In this county he has at this time three brothers, Samuel, John, and Charles, all gentlemen of considerable landed property, and a sister who is married to colonel Fielding Lewis. His elder brother Lawrence, who went out a captain of the American troops, raised for the Carthage expedition, married the daughter of the honourable William Fairfax of Belvoir, in Virginia, by whom he left one daughter, who dying young, and his second brother also dying

without issue, the general succeeded to the family-seat, which, in compliment to the gallant admiral of that name, is called Mount Vernon, and is delightfully situated on the Potomack River, a few miles below Alexandria. General Washington is the eldest son by a second marriage; and, having never been out of America, was educated (as youths of fortune in this country generally are) under the eye of his father by private tutorage: a slight tincture of the Latin language, a grammatical knowledge of his mother-tongue, and the elements of the mathematics, were the chief objects he was taught to pursue. For a few years after he quitted his tutor, he applied himself to the practical part of surveying (a knowledge of which is essentially requisite to men of landed property in this country) and was appointed surveyor to a certain district in Virginia; an employment rather creditable than lucrative; though it afforded him an opportunity of chusing some valuable tracts of land, and made him thoroughly acquainted with the frontier country.

On the governor and council of Virginia receiving orders from England, in October 1753,

to repel by force the encroachments of the French on the western frontiers, along the rivers Ohio and de Boeuf, Mr. Washington, then a major in the provincial service, and an adjutant-general of their forces, was dispatched by general Dinwiddie, with a letter to the commander in chief of the French on the Ohio, complaining of the inroads they were making in direct violation of the treaties then subsisting between the two crowns; he had also instructions to treat with the six nations and other western tribes of Indians, and to engage them to continue firm in their attachment to England. He set out on this perilous embassy, with about fifteen attendants, late in October 1753; and so far succeeded, that on his return with monsieur de St. Pierre's answer, and his good success in the Indian negociations, he was complimented with the thanks and approbation of his country. His journal of this whole transaction was published in Virginia, and does great credit to his industry, attention, and judgment; and it has since proved of infinite service to those who have been doomed to traverse the same inhospitable tracts.

Soon after this, the designs of the French becoming more manifest, and their movements and conduct more daring, orders were issued out by administration for the colonies to arm and unite in one confederacy. The assembly of Virginia took the lead by voting a sum of money for the public service, and raising a regiment of four hundred men for the protection of the frontiers of the colony. Major Washington, then about twenty-three years of age, was appointed to the command of this regiment, and before the end of May, in the ensuing year, came up with a strong party of the French and Indians, at a place called Redstone, which he effectually routed after having taken and killed fifty men. Among the prisoners were the celebrated woods-man monsieur De La Force and two other officers, from whom colonel Washington had undoubted intelligence, that the French force on the Ohio consisted of upwards of one thousand regulars, and some hundreds of Indians. Upon this intelligence, although his little army was somewhat reduced, and intirely insufficient to act offensively against the French and Indians, yet he pushed on towards his enemy

to a good post; where, in order to wait the arrival of some expected succour from New York and Pennsylvania, he entrenched himself, and built a small fort called Fort Necessity. At this point he remained unmolested, and without any succour until the July following; when his small force, reduced now to less than three hundred men, was attacked by an army of French and Indians of eleven hundred and upwards, under the command of the *Sieur de Villiers*. The Virginians sustained the attack of the enemy's whole force for several hours, and laid near two hundred of them dead in the field, when the French commander, discouraged by such determined resolution, proposed the less dangerous method of dislodging his enemy by a parley, which ended in an honourable capitulation. It was stipulated that colonel Washington should march away with all the honours of war, and be allowed to carry off all his military stores, effects, and baggage. This capitulation was violated from the ungovernable disposition of the savages, whom the French commander could not restrain from plundering the provincials on the onset of their march, and from

making a considerable slaughter of men, cattle, and horses. This breach of the capitulation was strongly remonstrated against by the British ambassador at the Court of Versailles, and may be looked upon as the æra when the French court began to unmask, and to avow (though in a clandestine manner) the conduct of their governors and officers in America: they redoubled their activity and diligence on the Ohio, and in other places during the winter 1754, and the following spring. Virginia had determined to send out a larger force; the forts Cumberland and Loudon were built, and a camp was formed at Wills Creek, from thence to annoy the enemy on the Ohio. In these several services (particularly in the construction of the forts) colonel Washington was principally employed, when he was summoned to attend general Braddock, who with his army arrived at Alexandria, in Virginia, in May 1755. The design of sending out that army, was to penetrate through the country to Fort Du Quesne (now Fort Pitt) by the route of Wills Creek; and as no person was better acquainted with the frontier country than colonel Washington, and

no one in the colony enjoyed so well established a military character, he was judged highly serviceable to general Braddock, and cheerfully quitted his command to act as a volunteer and aid du camp under that unfortunate general. The particulars of the defeat, and almost total ruin of Braddock's army, consisting of two thousand regular British forces, and near eight hundred provincials, are too well known to need a repetition: it is allowed on all sides, that the haughty positive behaviour of the general, his high contempt of the provincial officers and soldiers, and his disdainful obstinacy in rejecting their advice, were the genuine causes of this fatal disaster. With what resolution and steadiness the provincials and their gallant commander behaved on this trying occasion, and in covering the confused retreat of the army,* let every British officer and soldier confess, who were rescued from slaughter on that calamitous day by their valour and conduct.

After general Braddock's disaster, the colony

* See captain Orme's letter to governor Dinwiddie, and also the other accounts of that day.

of Virginia found it necessary to establish her militia, raise more men, strengthen her forts, undertake expeditions to check the inroads of the enemy, &c. &c. &c. In all which important services colonel Washington bore a principal share, and acquitted himself to the utmost satisfaction of his country, by displaying, on every occasion, the most persevering industry, personal courage, and military abilities. He was again appointed to the command of the Virginia troops, and held it with signal credit till his resignation in 1759, when he married the young widow of Mr. Custis, his present lady; with whom he had a fortune of twenty thousand pounds sterling in her own right, besides her dower in one of the principal estates in Virginia. From this period he became as assiduous to serve the state as a senator, as he had hitherto been active to defend it as a soldier. For several years he represented Frederick County, and had a seat for Fairfax County; at the time he was appointed by the assembly, in conformity with the universal wish of the people, to be one of their four delegates at the first general congress. It was with no small reluctance that he engaged

again in the active scenes of life; and I sincerely believe that no motives but such as spring from a most disinterested patriotism could have ever prevailed upon him to relinquish the most refined domestic pleasures, which it was ever in his power to command, and the great delight he took in farming and the improvement of his estate. You well know that general Washington is, perhaps, the greatest landholder in America (the proprietors of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Northern Neck excepted); for besides his lady's fortune, and ten thousand pounds falling to him by the death of her only daughter, he has large tracts of land taken up by himself early in life, some considerable purchases made from officers who had lands allotted them for their services; and has, moreover, made great additions to his estate at Mount Vernon. It is impossible in this country, as in England, to rate the value of estates by their annual rent or income, because they are universally tilled by negroes, and in the hands of landholders. There are many estates in the middle colonies, which never produced a clear income to their owners of five hundred a year, that may be

easily sold for forty thousand pounds. General Washington's, however, will not be over-rated, if set down at a good four thousand pounds English per annum, and his whole property could not be bought for forty years purchase.

When it was determined at length in Congress, after every step towards an accommodation had failed, and every petition from America had been scornfully rejected, to repel by force the invasion from Great Britain, the eyes of the whole Continent were immediately turned upon Mr. Washington. With one common voice he was called forth to the defence of his country; and it is, perhaps, his peculiar glory, that there was not a single inhabitant of these states, except himself, who did not approve the choice, and place the firmest confidence in his integrity and abilities.* He arrived at Cambridge in New England, in July, 1775, and there took the supreme command of the armies of America. He was received at the camp with that heartfelt exultation which superior merit can alone

* It is somewhat singular, that even in England not one reflection was ever cast, or the least disrespectful word uttered against him.

inspire, after having in his progress through the several states received every mark of affection and esteem, which they conceived were due to the man, whom the whole continent looked up to for safety and freedom.

As he always refused to accept of any pecuniary appointment for his public services, no salary has been annexed by Congress to his important command, and he only draws weekly for the expences of his public table and other necessary demands. General Washington having never been in Europe, could not possibly have seen much military service when the armies of Britain were sent to subdue us; yet still, for a variety of reasons, he was by much the most proper man on this continent, and probably any where else, to be placed at the head of an American army. The very high estimation he stood in for integrity and honour, his engaging in the cause of his country from sentiment and a conviction of her wrongs, his moderation in politics, his extensive property, and his approved abilities as a commander, were motives which necessarily obliged the choice of America to fall upon him. That nature has given him extraordinary military tal-

ents will hardly be controverted by his most bitter enemies; and having been early actuated with a warm passion to serve his country in the military line, he has greatly improved them by unwearied industry, and a close application to the best writers upon tactics, and by a more than common method and exactness: and, in reality, when it comes to be considered that at first he only headed a body of men intirely unacquainted with military discipline or operations, somewhat ungovernable in temper, and who at best could only be stiled an alert and good militia, acting under very short enlistments, uncloathed, unaccountred, and at all times very ill supplied with ammunition and artillery; and that with such an army he withstood the ravages and progress of near forty thousand veteran troops, plentifully provided with every necessary article, commanded by the bravest officers in Europe, and supported by a very powerful navy, which effectually prevented all movements by water; when, I say, all this comes to be impartially considered, I think I may venture to pronounce, that general Washington will be regarded by mankind as one of the greatest military ornaments of the present

age, and that his name will command the veneration of the latest posterity.

I would not mention to you the person of this excellent man, were I not convinced that it bears great analogy to the qualifications of his mind. General Washington is now in the forty-seventh year of his age; he is a tall well-made man, rather large boned, and has a tolerably genteel address: his features are manly and bold, his eyes of a blueish cast and very lively; his hair a deep brown, his face rather long and marked with the small pox; his complexion sun-burnt and without much colour, and his countenance sensible, composed, and thoughtful; there is a remarkable air of dignity about him, with a striking degree of gracefulness: he has an excellent understanding without much quickness; is strictly just, vigilant, and generous; an affectionate husband, a faithful friend, a father to the deserving soldier; gentle in his manners, in temper rather reserved; a total stranger to religious prejudices, which have so often excited Christians of one denomination to cut the throats of those of another; in his morals irreproachable; he was never known to exceed the bounds

of the most rigid temperance; in a word, all his friends and acquaintance universally allow, that no man ever united in his own person a more perfect alliance of the virtues of a philosopher with the talents of a general. Candour, sincerity, affability, and simplicity, seem to be the striking features of his character, till an occasion offers of displaying the most determined bravery and independence of spirit.

Such, my good friend, is the man, to whom America has intrusted her important cause. Hitherto she has had every reason to be satisfied with her choice; and most ungrateful would she be to the great Disposer of human events, were she not to render him unremitting thanks for having provided her with such a citizen at such a crisis. Most nations have been favoured with some patriotic deliverer: the Israelites had their Moses; Rome had her Camillus; Greece her Leonidas; Sweden her Gustavus; and England her Hamdens, her Russels, and her Sydneys: but these illustrious heroes, though successful in preserving and defending, did not, like Washington, form or establish empires, which will be the refuge or asylum of Liberty banished from

Europe by luxury and corruption. Must not, therefore, your heart beat with conscious pride at the prospect of your friend's being ranked among (if not above) those illustrious patriots? at the enchanting thought, that He, whom you know and love, shall be acknowledged by present and future generations as their great deliverer, and the chief instrument in the hands of the Almighty for laying the foundation of that freedom and happiness, which, I trust, await the future myriads of this vast continent?

[This "Sketch of Mr. Washington's Life and Character" forms the contents of a letter, from "a gentleman of Maryland," to a friend in Europe, dated May 3, 1779, which was published at London the following year, annexed to "A Poetical Epistle to His Excellency George Washington, Esq., Commander in Chief of the Armies of the United States of America, from an Inhabitant of the State of Maryland." The author of the Epistle was Charles Henry Wharton, D.D., at the time a resident of Worcester, England, and the publication was "for the charitable purpose of raising a few guineas to relieve, in a small measure, the distresses of some hundreds of American prisoners, now suffering confinement in the gaols of England." Of the author of this sketch we have no information other than the statement in the preface to the *Epistle* to Washington, that he was "connected and intimate in the family of that great man."

The sketch was reprinted in the *Westminster Magazine* for August, 1780; in the *New Annual Register* for the same year; in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Philadelphia, November 28, 1781; in connection with the Epistle, at Providence, R. I., in 1781, and at Springfield, Mass., in 1782; in the *Westminster Magazine*, January, 1784, where the name of the author, John Bell, first appears; in the *Massachusetts Magazine*, March, 1791; and at New York, in connection with the Epistle, in 1865. The following lines are quoted from the Epistle.—W. S. B.]

“ Great without pomp, without ambition brave,
Proud, not to conquer fellow-men, but save :
Friend to the weak, a foe to none, but those
Who plan their greatness on their brethren’s woes ;
Aw’d by no titles, undefil’d by lust ;
Free without faction, obstinately just ;
Too wise to learn from Machiavel’s false school,
That truth and perfidy by turns should rule ;
Too rough for flatt’ry, dreading ev’n as death
The baneful influence of Corruption’s breath ;
Warm’d by Religion’s sacred genuine ray,
That points to future bliss th’ unerring way ;
Yet ne’er controul’d by Superstition’s laws,
That worst of tyrants in the noblest cause.”

ANONYMOUS.

1780.

ANONYMOUS.

1780.

GEO. WASHINGTON, Esq. The family from which this gentleman is descended, was originally in Lancashire, but afterwards removed to the city of Coventry where he was born, on the 3d of Sept. 1727. His mother was of the same family with General Monk, who, for his services at the Restoration, was created Duke of Albemarle.

Mr. Washington discovered an early inclination to arms, and first entered as a private man, in general Wade's regiment, in the year 1746, being then not twenty-one, and soon after he bought a cornet's commission in the same regiment, and served against the Scotch rebels. He continued in the service till the peace, when he went abroad to improve himself in the military profession.

When the French war broke out in America, in the year 1755, Mr. Washington went over to that country, where his courage and

military abilities being known, he was raised to the rank of Major in the provincial forces, and was at Fort Edward, under the command of General Webb, when Mons. Montcalm advanced, to take Fort William Henry, on Lake George.

Major Washington having heard of the intended attack, and being apprehensive that lieutenant colonel Monro, who then commanded at Fort William Henry, would not be strong enough to resist the French, eagerly interceded with his General to be sent with his forces to the assistance of Monro. But his ardour was restrained; and the unfortunate commander forced to make the best terms he could with the French general, who afterwards, in violation of the treaty that had been made, permitted the Indian savages to fall upon them, and strip them of everything of value.

The Americans soon afterwards raised Major Washington to the command of a regiment, in which rank he remained till the peace, when he retired to the cultivation and improvement of a very considerable estate he possessed in the province of Virginia.

When the present troubles in America arose on account of the famous Tea Act, colonel Washington was one of the foremost in expressing his detestation in imposing a tax on people who were not represented; and when a General Congress was thought necessary to be convened, he was chosen one of the delegates for the province of Virginia, and in that capacity signed the association on Oct. 20th, 1774, and the other subsequent publications of that body. The Continental Congress appointed General Washington to the supreme command of their armies to which commission was addressed:—‘*To our beloved brother, George Washington, Esq.; Captain General and Commander in chief of all the Forces of the United Colonies.*’ The Congress annexed a very considerable salary to this important post, which he nobly refused to accept, declaring he would not take wages for his services in the Cause of Freedom, but desired only a reimbursement of the necessary expences.

[This brief but singularly inaccurate sketch, which may well be termed a literary curiosity, appears in a volume published at London in 1780, entitled “An Impartial History

of the War in America, between Great Britain and her Colonies, from its Commencement to the end of the year 1779." It is introduced as a note to a reference in the text, page 221, of the appointment of "Geo. Washington, Esq., a gentleman of affluent fortune in Virginia, and who had acquired considerable military experience in the command of different bodies of the provincials during the last war, to be general and commander in chief of all the American forces." The statements that Washington was born at Coventry, and that his mother was of the same family with General Monk, seem to have been taken from the sketch published in the *London Chronicle* for the year 1775, referred to in the note on page 20.—W. S. B.]

JOHN F. D. SMYTH.

1784.

JOHN F. D. SMYTH.

1784.

GENERAL WASHINGTON is descended from a family of good repute, in the middle rank of life, now residing in the settlement of Chotank, every individual planter throughout this numerous and extensive settlement being actually related to him by blood.

He received a common, but by no means liberal education, and made the principal part of his fortune by marriage, although he has no children to inherit it. Mrs. Washington is of a family named Dandridge, some of whom formerly were officers in the royal navy, and was the widow of Colonel Custos, who possessed an immense fortune for Virginia, and having two children by her left her his sole executrix as well as guardian to his children.

By this marriage Mr. Washington obtained possession of the whole of Custos's large estates. Being remarkable for æconomy, industry, and

good management, he soon acquired a fortune for himself nearly equal to that of Custos.

And, in the former war having been an officer in the Virginia regiment, the command of which at length devolved on him, being sensible, cool, and very popular the command of the American Army was offered to him for two reasons; first, because he was the only public man then known, either calculated to command, or proper to be entrusted therewith; and the next reason was, because thereby they secured the attachment of the whole colony of Virginia, the most extensive, the richest, and the most powerful of all the provinces.

Mr. Washington has uniformly cherished, and steadfastly pursued, an apparently mild, steady, but aspiring line of conduct, and views of the highest ambition, under the most specious and effectual of all cloaks, that of moderation, which he has invariably appeared to profess. This has been evinced by a multitude of instances, but particularly by his accepting the continuance of the chief command of the American army, after the Congress had suddenly declared for Independence, of which measure he always before

affected to disapprove, and on that account pretended to be inclined to resign the command, an intention, of all others, the most distant from his mind.

His total want of generous sentiments, and even of common humanity, has appeared notoriously in many instances, and in none more than his sacrifice of the meritorious, but unfortunate Major André.

As a General, he is equally liable to censure, which is well known to every *intelligent Frenchman* who has been in America, as well as to every person whatsoever who has had any opportunity of observing his military operations: nor during his life has he ever performed a single action that could entitle him to the least share of merit or praise, much less of glory. But as a politician he has certainly distinguished himself; having by his political manœuvres, and his cautious plausible management, raised himself to a degree of eminence in his own country unrivalled, and of considerable stability.

However, in his private character, he has always been respectable, and highly esteemed; and has supported a name fair and worthy.

[John F. D. Smyth, a British soldier, settled in Maryland, where for several years prior to the Revolution he engaged in agricultural pursuits. Having become unpopular by his earnest support of the British government, he went to Virginia, and enlisted in the Queen's royal regiment of Norfolk. The officers were seized by a company of riflemen and taken to Frederick, Maryland, but Smyth escaped; he was recaptured and imprisoned in Philadelphia, and afterward in Baltimore. Escaping again, he secured passage on a British vessel off Cape May, New Jersey, and finally reached New York. On his return to England he published in 1784, "A Tour in the United States of America," from vol. ii., p. 148, of which the above notice of Washington is extracted. John Randolph of Roanoke is quoted to have said: "This book, although replete with falsehood and calumny, contains the truest picture of the state of society and manners in Virginia extant."—W. S. B.]

THOMAS JONES.

1785.

THOMAS JONES.

1785.

GEORGE WASHINGTON is a native of Virginia, of a reputable family, and good connections. He has served in the Assembly, and was afterwards a member of his Majesty's Council, for Virginia. Mount Vernon, the place of his residence, he inherits as heir-at-law to a brother who served, and died, on board admiral Vernon's fleet, in the West Indies, in 1742. In 1753, Mr. Dinwiddie, then Governor of Virginia, sent him as an Ambassador to the Commandant of the French forces, then forming a settlement upon the Ohio, to let him know he was encroaching upon the lands of Great Britain, and ordering him to retire, or compulsory methods should be taken. Washington was treated by the French officers with great hospitality, and the utmost politeness. The Commandant told him the Governor's Message should be sent to the Marquis Du Quesne, then Governor of Canada. That the orders of the Marquis would be a law to him, and he should

implicitly obey them. With this answer, Mr. Washington returned. The French not abandoning their project of forming a settlement upon the Ohio, the Government of Virginia undertook to drive them away by force. Three hundred men were raised, and the command given to Mr. Washington, who was appointed a Provincial Major. This little army being completed they rendezvoused and encamped at Will's Creek, upon the frontiers of Virginia. A reconnoitering party, under the Major's own command, fell in with a party from the Ohio, under the sanction of a flag, bound from the Ohio to Virginia, on an embassy from the French Commander there to Governor Dinwiddie. Monsieur Jumonville was the Ambassador. He was to pass through a wilderness of several hundred miles, which many savage and barbarous nations inhabited. An escort was necessary not only to guard against any attack of the barbarians, but to procure provisions during the journey. This French gentleman, with his escort, in perfect security as he thought, were sitting down quietly eating their dinners, with the flag hoisted upon a pole, conspicuously flying. This party, thus

situated, the Major fell in with. Without the least notice he ordered them fired upon. Monsieur Jumonville and several others were killed upon the spot, and the rest made prisoners. The French made horrid complaints of this act, as an infraction and a violation of the laws of nations.* The Virginians excused it under pretence that the French were armed, which is not customary when travelling under the sanction of flags. But when the distance through the wilderness, the savage tribes living in those woods, and the necessity of firearms to procure provisions upon the route, were considered, it was by all moderate men condemned as an iniquitous act. In August, 1754, Major Washington marched from Will's Creek, upon his way to the Ohio. He crossed the Alleghany Mountains, and built a fort at the Little Meadows. The French were soon apprised of his march, and Monsieur De Villiers, the brother-in-law of Ju-

* Wynne, in his history of the British Empire in America, speaks of this matter thus: 'Jumonville and his company were either killed, or made prisoners of by Washington, in a manner contrary to all the rules of war established among civilized nations.'

monville, was sent with a party to meet and attack him. Understanding on the way that Washington had halted at the Little Meadows and built a fort, he went directly there and attacked the fort. The Major soon thought it necessary to capitulate. In one of the articles he acknowledged that he had violated the law of nations, by the assassination of Monsieur Jumonville, when under the protection of a flag. In another he pledged his honour not to bear arms against France for twelve months. This happened in August, 1754. Yet, he fought under the banners of Braddock, upon the Monongahela, in July, 1755. He was afterwards Commander-in-Chief of the American army which commission he held during the war.

After the peace of 1763, he married the widow of a Mr. Custis, a lady of great property, and settled himself down quietly upon his own estate, where he lived till the late American commotions commenced. He was a delegate from Virginia, at the first Congress, in 1774. He took, upon this occasion, a violent and active part against Great Britain. When this Congress was dissolved he returned home, was ap-

pointed Chairman of the Committee of the county in which he resided, and enforced the resolutions and recommendations of Congress with a high hand. Some who refused obedience to the Committee, he ordered punished, and others he imprisoned. He even levied taxes upon the inhabitants, and ordered them collected and paid, by dint of his own power, threatening such as should disobey his illegal and arbitrary mandates with being advertised in the public papers as 'enemies to America and the rights of mankind.' A punishment of this kind, if not death, was certain banishment, the destruction of property, and the ruin of families, of wives, and of innocent children.

When the second Congress met at Philadelphia, in May, 1775, Colonel Washington, was again sent as one of the delegates from Virginia. War was now declared against Great Britain, an army ordered to be raised, and Washington was commissioned by Congress as General. He repaired to Boston, where the British army then lay, and with the assistance of a numerous militia completely blockaded the town. By this means the royal troops were so straight-

ened for fresh provisions, that General Howe, who then had the command, evacuated the place and went to Nova Scotia. Washington, with the rebel army, went to New York. General Howe also went there, in June, 1776. Upon Long Island, in August, the two armies met, and Washington was totally defeated. He abandoned Long Island, evacuated New York, and was again defeated in the upper part of that island. He was repulsed at the White Plains, in Westchester County, and absolutely ferreted through New Jersey, nor did he stop till he got to Philadelphia. The British not passing the Delaware, and going into quarters, he collected some troops from the southward, recrossed the Delaware at Trenton, the latter end of December, 1776, surprised and made prisoners of about 600 Hessians, laden with plunder, under the command of a drunken Colonel. He carried his prisoners to Philadelphia, returned to New Jersey, and at Princeton was defeated by Colonel Mawhood, upon which he precipitately retired, and by a forced march through the country, arrived at, and took possession of the mountains about Morristown. In September 1777, he was

totally defeated at Brandywine. In October following he met with the same fate at Germantown, and in July, 1778, he fared in the same manner at Monmouth, in New Jersey. After this, he retired to inaccessible mountains in the Highlands, on the west side of the Hudson, in the province of New York. In 1781, he passed the river, and a junction was formed between his army and the French army, under Monsieur Rochambeau, from Rhode Island, at the White Plains. The allied army now paraded about the lines at Kingsbridge, to the great terror of the British General in New York; but nothing was done, a little skirmishing between small parties now and then excepted. In September, the allies passed the Hudson, went through the Jerseys, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and entered Virginia, where, being joined by a corps under the Marquis De La Fayette, the militia of the country, and a French army brought from the West Indies, by the Comte De Grasse, under the command of Monsieur de St. Simon, with the assistance of the French fleet, he laid siege to Yorktown and Gloucester, and in about a month compelled Lord Cornwallis, who commanded

there, to capitulate upon honourable terms.* Washington after this returned to the Highlands, in the province of New York, where he continued until a faction in the British Parliament made or rather patched up, a peace upon the most ignominious terms, ceded thirteen colonies to the rebels, with a tract of land not included in any of their grants, comprehending more square acres than half Europe, sacrificed all her loyal subjects by giving away their estates, and recognizing the rebel Acts of Attainders without a term, a condition, or a stipulation in favour of the poor Loyalists. Can Washington be called the conqueror of America? By no means. America was conquered in the British Parliament. Washington *never* could have conquered it. British generals *never* did their duty. The friends of the rebel chief say he has virtues. I suppose he has; I say,

* At this time the situation of rebellion was such that Washington, in a letter to De Grasse, declares, 'that unless a co-operation could take place between his fleet and the army, everything was over, no peace to be expected, and a return to a dependence upon Great Britain the inevitable consequence.'

‘Curse on his virtues! they’ve undone his country.’

[This sketch was written by Thomas Jones, Justice of the Supreme Court of the Province of New York, appointed in 1773. Judge Jones was born in Queens County, New York, April 30, 1731, and in consequence of his adherence to the royal cause, lost his estate under the confiscation act, and was one of the fifty-six gentlemen and three ladies included in the New York Act of Attainder. Judge Jones left the United States in 1781, and died in England, July 25, 1792. During the years 1783–88, he employed his leisure hours in recording the events of the period, the MS. of which was preserved and published at New York in 1879, under the title, “History of New York during the Revolutionary War,” 2 vols., 8vo. Edited by Edward Floyd de Lancey. Included in the work are short sketches of several of the prominent participators in the Revolution, written of course from a loyalist standpoint; the Washington sketch (vol. ii., pp. 344–49) may have been written about the year 1785.

The statements in the sketch that Washington acknowledged a violation of the law of nations in the de Jumonville affair, and that he broke one of the articles of capitulation of Fort Necessity (July 3, 1754), by bearing arms before the expiration of the time agreed upon, were doubtless made by Judge Jones from the French version of the matter. Jared Sparks, in an exhaustive paper on the subject (*Writings of Washington*, vol. ii., pp. 447–468), has given the true history of these occurrences.—W. S. B.]

JEDIDIAH MORSE.

1789.

JEDIDIAH MORSE.

1789.

NOTWITHSTANDING it has often been asserted with confidence, that General Washington was a native of England, certain it is his ancestors came from thence to this country so long ago as the year 1657. He, in the third descent after their migration, was born on the 11th of February, (old style) 1732, at the parish of Washington, in Westmoreland county, in Virginia. His father's family was numerous, and he was the first fruit of a second marriage. His education having been principally conducted by a private tutor, at fifteen years old he was entered a midshipman on board of a British vessel of war stationed on the coast of Virginia, and his baggage prepared for embarkation: but the plan was abandoned on account of the reluctance his mother expressed to his engaging in that profession.

Previous to this transaction, when he was but ten years of age, his father died, and the charge of the family devolved on his eldest

brother. His eldest brother, a young man of the most promising talents, had a command in the colonial troops employed against Carthagena, and on his return from the expedition, named his new patrimonial mansion MOUNT VERNON, in honour of the admiral of that name, from whom he had received many civilities. He was afterwards made Adjutant General of the militia of Virginia, but did not long survive. At his decease (notwithstanding there are heirs of an elder branch who possess a large moiety of the paternal inheritance) the eldest son by the second marriage, inherited this seat and a considerable landed property. In consequence of the extensive limits of the colony, the vacant office of Adjutant General was divided into three districts, and the *future Hero of America*, before he attained his twentieth year, began his military service by a principal appointment in that department, with the rank of major.

When he was little more than twenty one years of age, an event occurred which called his abilities into public notice. In 1753, while the government of the colony was administered by lieutenant governor Dinwiddie, encroachments

were reported to have been made by the French, from Canada, on the territories of the British colonies, at the westward. Young Mr. Washington, who was sent with plenary powers to ascertain the facts, treat with the savages and warn the French to desist from their aggressions, performed the duties of his mission, with singular industry, intelligence and address. His journal, and report to governor Dinwiddie, which were published, announced to the world that correctness of mind, manliness in style and accuracy in the mode of doing business, which have since characterised him in the conduct of more arduous affairs. But it was deemed, by some, an extraordinary circumstance that so juvenile and inexperienced a person should have been employed on a negociation, with which subjects of the greatest importance were involved: subjects which shortly after became the origin of a war between England and France, that raged for many years throughout every part of the globe.

As the troubles still subsisted on the frontiers, the colony of Virginia raised, the next year, a regiment of troops for their defence. Of this

corps, Mr. Fry, one of the professors of the college, was appointed Colonel, and Major Washington received the commission of Lieutenant Colonel. But Colonel Fry died the same summer, without ever having joined; and of course left his regiment and rank to the second in command. Colonel Washington made indefatigable efforts to form the regiment, establish magazines, and open roads so as to pre-occupy the advantageous post at the confluence of the Allegany and Monongahela rivers, which he had recommended for that purpose in his report the preceding year. He was to have been joined by a detachment of independent regulars from the southern colonies, together with some companies of provincials from North Carolina and Maryland. But he perceived the necessity of expedition, and without waiting for their arrival, commenced his march in the month of May. Notwithstanding his precipitated advance, on his ascending the Laurel hill, fifty miles short of his object, he was advised that a body of French had already taken possession and erected a fortification, which they named fort *du Quesne*. He then fell back to a place known by the appella-

tion of *the Great Meadows*, for the sake of forage and supplies. Here he built a temporary stockade, merely to cover his stores; it was from its fate called fort *Necessity*. His force when joined by Captain M'Kay's regulars, did not amount to four hundred effectives. Upon receiving information from his scouts that a considerable party was approaching to reconnoitre his post, he sallied and defeated them. But in return he was attacked by an army, computed to have been fifteen hundred strong, and after a gallant defence, in which more than one third of his men were killed and wounded, was forced to capitulate. The garrison marched out with the honours of war, but were plundered by the Indians, in violation of the articles of capitulation. After this disaster, the remains of the Virginia regiment returned to Alexandria to be recruited and furnished with necessary supplies.

In the year 1755, the British government sent to this country general Braddock, who, by the junction of two veteran regiments from Ireland, with the independent and provincial corps in America, was to repel the French from the confines of the English settlements. Upon a royal

arrangement of rank, by which 'no officer who did not *immediately* derive his commission from the king, could command one who did,' Col. Washington relinquished his regiment and went as an extra aid de camp into the family of general Braddock. In this capacity, at the battle of Monongahela, he attended that general, whose life was gallantly sacrificed in attempting to extricate his troops from the fatal ambush into which his over-weening confidence had conducted them. Braddock had several horses shot under him, before he fell himself; and there was not an officer, whose duty obliged him to be on horseback that day, excepting Colonel Washington, who was not either killed or wounded. This circumstance enabled him to display greater abilities in covering the retreat and saving the wreck of the army, than he could otherwise have done. As soon as he had secured their passage over the ford of the Monongahela, and found they were not pursued, he hastened to concert measures for their further security with Colonel Dunbar, who had remained with the second division and heavy baggage at some distance in the rear. To effect this, he travelled

with two guides, all night, through an almost impervious wilderness, notwithstanding the fatigues he had undergone in the day, and notwithstanding he had so imperfectly recovered from sickness that he was obliged in the morning to be supported with cushions on his horse. The public accounts in England and America were not parsimonious of applause for the essential service he had rendered on so trying an occasion.

Not long after this time, the regulation of rank, which had been so injurious to the Colonial officers, was changed to their satisfaction, in consequence of the discontent of the officers and the remonstrance of Colonel Washington; and the supreme authority of Virginia, impressed with a due sense of his merits, gave him, in a new and extensive commission, the command of all the troops raised and to be raised in that colony.

It would not comport with the intended brevity of this sketch, to mention in detail the plans he suggested or the system he pursued for defending the frontiers, until the year 1758, when he commanded the van brigade of General Forbes's army in the capture of Fort Du

Quesne. A similar reason will preclude the recital of the personal hazards and achievements which happened in the course of his service. The tranquillity on the frontiers of the middle colonies having been restored by the success of this campaign, and the health of Colonel Washington having become extremely debilitated by an inveterate pulmonary complaint, in 1759 he resigned his military appointment. Authentic documents are not wanting to shew the tender regret which the Virginia line expressed at parting with their commander, and the affectionate regard which he entertained for them.

His health was gradually re-established. He married Mrs. Custis,* a handsome and amiable young widow, possessed of an ample jointure; and settled as a planter and farmer on the estate where he now resides in Fairfax county. After some years he gave up planting tobacco, and went altogether into the farming business. He has raised seven thousand bushels of wheat, and ten thousand of Indian corn in one year.

* General and Mrs. Washington were both born in the same year.

Although he has confined his own cultivation to this domestic tract of about nine thousand acres, yet he possesses excellent lands, in large quantities, in several other counties. His judgment in the quality of soils, his command of money to avail himself of purchases, and his occasional employment in early life as a surveyor, gave him opportunities of making advantageous locations; many of which are much improved.

After he left the army, until the year 1775, he thus cultivated the arts of peace. He was constantly a member of assembly, a magistrate of his county, and a judge of the court. He was elected a delegate to the first Congress in 1774; as well as to that which assembled in the year following. Soon after the war broke out, he was appointed by Congress commander in chief of the forces of the United Colonies.

It is the less necessary to particularize, in this place, his transactions in the course of the late war, because the impression which they made is yet fresh in every mind. But it is hoped posterity will be taught, in what manner he transformed an undisciplined body of peasantry into

a regular army of soldiers. Commentaries on his campaigns would undoubtedly be highly interesting and instructive to future generations. The conduct of the first campaign, in compelling the British troops to abandon Boston by a bloodless victory, will merit minute narration. But a volume would scarcely contain the mortifications he experienced and the hazards to which he was exposed in 1776 and 1777, in contending against the prowess of Britain, with an inadequate force. His good destiny and consummate prudence prevented want of success from producing want of confidence on the part of the public; for want of success is apt to lead to the adoption of pernicious counsels through the levity of the people or the ambition of their demagogues. Shortly after this period, sprang up the only cabal, that ever existed during his public life, to rob him of his reputation and command. It proved as impotent in effect, as it was audacious in design. In the three succeeding years the germ of discipline unfolded; and the resources of America having been called into co-operation with the land and naval armies of France, produced the glorious conclusion of

the campaign in 1781. From this time the gloom began to disappear from our political horizon, and the affairs of the union proceeded in a meliorating train, until a peace was most ably negotiated by our ambassadors in Europe, in 1783.

No person, who had not the advantage of being present when general Washington received the intelligence of peace, and who did not accompany him to his domestic retirement, can describe the relief which that joyful event brought to his labouring mind, or the supreme satisfaction with which he withdrew to private life. From his triumphal entry into New York, upon the evacuation of that city by the British army, to his arrival at Mount Vernon, after the resignation of his commission to Congress, festive crowds impeded his passage through all the populous towns, the devotion of a whole people pursued him with prayers to Heaven for blessings on his head, while their gratitude sought the most expressive language of manifesting itself to him, as their common father and benefactor. When he became a private citizen he had the unusual felicity to find that

his native state was among the most zealous in doing justice to his merits; and that stronger demonstrations of affectionate esteem (if possible) were given by the citizens of his neighborhood, than by any other description of men on the continent. But he has constantly declined accepting any compensation for his services, or provision for the augmented expences which have been incurred by him in consequence of his public employment, although proposals have been made in the most delicate manner, particularly by the states of Virginia and Pennsylvania.

The virtuous simplicity which distinguishes the private life of General Washington, though less known than the dazzling splendor of his military achievements, is not less edifying in example, or worthy the attention of his countrymen. The conspicuous character he has acted on the theatre of human affairs, the uniform dignity with which he sustained his part amidst difficulties of the most discouraging nature, and the glory of having arrived through them at the hour of triumph, have made many official and literary persons, on both sides of the ocean,

ambitious of a correspondence with him. These correspondencies unavoidably engross a great portion of his time; and the communications contained in them, combined with the numerous periodical publications and news papers which he peruses, render him, as it were, the *focus of political intelligence for the new world*. Nor are his conversations with well-informed men less conducive to bring him acquainted with the various events which happen in different countries of the globe. Every foreigner of distinction, who travels in America, makes it a point to visit him. Members of Congress and other dignified personages do not pass his house, without calling to pay their respects. As another source of information it may be mentioned, that many literary productions are sent to him annually by their authors in Europe; and that there is scarcely one work written in America on any art, science, or subject, which does not seek his protection, or which is not offered to him as a token of gratitude. Mechanical inventions are frequently submitted to him for his approbation, and natural curiosities presented for his investigation. But the multiplicity of epistolary applications,

often on the remains of some business which happened when he was commander in chief, sometimes on subjects foreign to his situation, frivolous in their nature, and intended merely to gratify the vanity of the writers by drawing answers from him, is truly distressing and almost incredible. His benignity in answering, perhaps, encreases the number. Did he not husband every moment to the best advantage, it would not be in his power to notice the vast variety of subjects that claim his attention. Here a minuter description of his domestic life may be expected.

To apply a life, at best but short, to the most useful purposes; he lives as he has ever done, in the unvarying habits of regularity, temperance and industry. He rises, in winter as well as summer, at the dawn of day; and generally reads or writes some time before breakfast. He breakfasts about seven o'clock, on three small indian hoe-cakes and as many dishes of tea. He rides immediately to his different farms, and remains with his labourers until a little past two o'clock, when he returns and dresses. At three he dines, commonly on a single dish, and drinks

from half a pint to a pint of Madeira wine. This, with one small glass of punch, a draught of beer, and two dishes of tea (which he takes half an hour before sun-setting) constitutes his whole sustenance until the next day. Whether there be company or not, the table is always prepared by its elegance and exuberance for their reception; and the General remains at it for an hour after dinner, in familiar conversation and convivial hilarity. It is then that every one present is called upon to give some absent friend as a toast; the name not unfrequently awakens a pleasing remembrance of past events, and gives a new turn to the animated colloquy. General Washington is more chearful than he was in the army. Although his temper is rather of a serious cast and his countenance commonly carries the impression of thoughtfulness, yet he perfectly relishes a pleasant story, an unaffected sally of wit, or a burlesque description which surprises by its suddenness and incongruity with the ordinary appearance of the object described. After this sociable and innocent relaxation, he applies himself to business; and about nine o'clock retires to rest. This is the *rotine*, and this the hour

he observes, when no one but his family is present; at other times he attends politely upon his company until they wish to withdraw. Notwithstanding he has no offspring, his actual family consists of eight persons.* It is seldom alone. He keeps a pack of hounds, and in the season indulges himself with hunting once in a week; at which diversion the gentlemen of Alexandria often assist.

AGRICULTURE is the favourite employment of General Washington, in which he wishes to pass the remainder of his days. To acquire and communicate practical knowledge, he corresponds with Mr. Arthur Young, who has written so sensibly on the subject, and also with many agricultural gentlemen in this country. As improvement is known to be his passion, he re-

* *The family of General Washington, in addition to the General and his Lady, consists of Major George Washington, (Nephew to the General and late Aid de Camp to the Marquis de la Fayette) with his wife, who is a niece to the General's Lady—Col. Humphreys, formerly Aid de Camp to the General—Mr. Lear, a gentleman of liberal education, private secretary to the General—and two Grand Children of Mrs. Washington.*

ceives envoys with rare seeds and results of new projects from every quarter. He likewise makes copious notes, relative to his own experiments, the state of the seasons, the nature of soils, the effects of different kinds of manure, and such other topics as may throw light on the farming business.

On Saturday in the afternoon, every week, reports are made by all his overseers, and registered in books kept for the purpose: so that at the end of the year, the quantity of labour and produce may be accurately known. Order and æconomy are established in all the departments within and without doors. His lands are inclosed in lots of equal dimensions, and crops are assigned to each for many years. Every thing is undertaken on a great scale: but with a view to introduce or augment the culture of such articles as he conceives will become most beneficial in their consequence to the country. He has, this year, raised two hundred lambs, sowed twenty seven bushels of flax-seed, and planted more than seven hundred bushels of potatoes. In the mean time, the public may rest persuaded that there is manufactured, under his roof, linen and woollen cloth,

nearly or quite sufficient for the use of his numerous household.

[This sketch appears on pages 127-132 of the "American Geography, or, a view of the present situation of the United States of America." By Jedidiah Morse. Published at Elizabethtown, New Jersey, in 1789. It is introduced as a note to a reference in the text of the appointment of "George Washington, Esq., a native of Virginia, to the chief command of the American army." Washington is alluded to in the text as follows: "This gentleman had been a distinguished and successful officer in the preceding war, and he seemed destined by heaven to be the savior of his country. He accepted the appointment with a diffidence which was a proof of his prudence and his greatness. He refused any pay for eight years' laborious and arduous service; and by his matchless skill, fortitude, and perseverance, conducted America through indescribable difficulties, to independence and peace. While true merit is esteemed, or virtue honored, mankind will never cease to revere the memory of this Hero; and while gratitude remains in the human breast, the praises of WASHINGTON shall dwell on every American tongue."

The sketch was reprinted in the *Massachusetts Magazine* for May, 1789; at London in 1792, appended to an oration on the discovery of America by Elhanan Winchester; and at Philadelphia, in 1794, in a 24mo volume, pp. 36, in connection with a sketch of General Montgomery, from the same volume of the "American Geography." It was also appended, but more in detail, to "A Prayer and Sermon delivered at Charlestown (Mass.), December 31, 1799, on the

death of George Washington, by Jedidiah Morse, D.D., Pastor of the Church in Charlestown," published at Charlestown and London the following year. In this extended form it was reprinted in the "Washingtoniana," Baltimore, 1800; in the "Memory of Washington," Newport, R. I., 1800; in "Washington's Political Legacies," New York, 1800; and in Dutch, with the sermon, at Harlem, Holland, in 1801.

Jedidiah Morse, D.D., was born at Woodstock, Conn., August 23, 1761, and died at New Haven, June 9, 1826. He graduated at Yale College in 1783, was licensed to preach in 1785, and installed minister of the First Congregational Church, Charlestown, Mass., in 1789, which he resigned in 1820. In the twenty-third year of his age (1784), Dr. Morse prepared at New Haven a small geography for the use of schools, which was the first work of the kind in America. This was followed by larger geographies and gazetteers of the United States. He has been termed the "father of American geography."—W. S. B.]

DAVID RAMSAY.

1789.

DAVID RAMSAY.

1789.

GEORGE WASHINGTON was, by an unanimous vote appointed, commander in chief of all the forces raised, or to be raised, for the defence of the colonies. It was a fortunate circumstance attending his election, that it was accompanied with no competition, and followed by no envy. That same general impulse on the public mind, which led the colonists to agree in many other particulars, pointed to him as the most proper person for presiding over the military arrangements of America. Not only Congress but the inhabitants in the east and west, in the north and south, as well before as at the time of embodying a continental army were in a great degree unanimous in his favour. An attempt to draw the character of this truly great man would look like flattery. Posterity will doubtless do it justice. His actions, especially now, while fresh in remembrance, are his amplest panegyric. Suffice it, in his lifetime, only to

particularise those qualities, which being more common, may be mentioned without offending the delicate sensibility of the most modest of men.

General Washington was born on the 11th of February, 1732. His education was such as favoured the production of a solid mind and a vigorous body. Mountain air, abundant exercise in the open country—the wholesome toils of the chase, and the delightful scenes of rural life, expanded his limbs to an unusual but graceful and well proportioned size. His youth was spent in the acquisition of useful knowledge, and in pursuits, tending to the improvement of his fortune, or the benefit of his country. Fitted more for active, than for speculative life, he devoted the greater proportion of his time to the former, but this was amply compensated by his being frequently in such situations, as called forth the powers of his mind, and strengthened them by repeated exercise. Early in life, in obedience to his country's call, he entered the military line, and began his career of fame in opposing that power, in concert with whose troops, he has acquired his last and most dis-

tinguished honours. He was with general Braddock in 1755, when that unfortunate officer from an excess of bravery, chose rather to sacrifice his army than retreat from an unseen foe. The remains of that unfortunate corps were brought off the field of battle chiefly by the address and good conduct of Colonel Washington. After the peace of Paris 1763, he retired to his estate, and with great industry and success pursued the arts of peaceful life. When the proceedings of the British parliament alarmed the colonists with apprehensions that a blow was levelled at their liberties, he again came forward into public view, and was appointed a delegate to the Congress, which met in September 1774. Possessed of a large proportion of common sense directed by a sound judgment, he was better fitted for the exalted station to which he was called, than many others who to a greater brilliancy of parts frequently add the eccentricity of original genius. Engaged in the busy scenes of life, he knew human nature, and the most proper method of accomplishing proposed objects. His passions were subdued and kept in subjection to reason. His soul superior to party

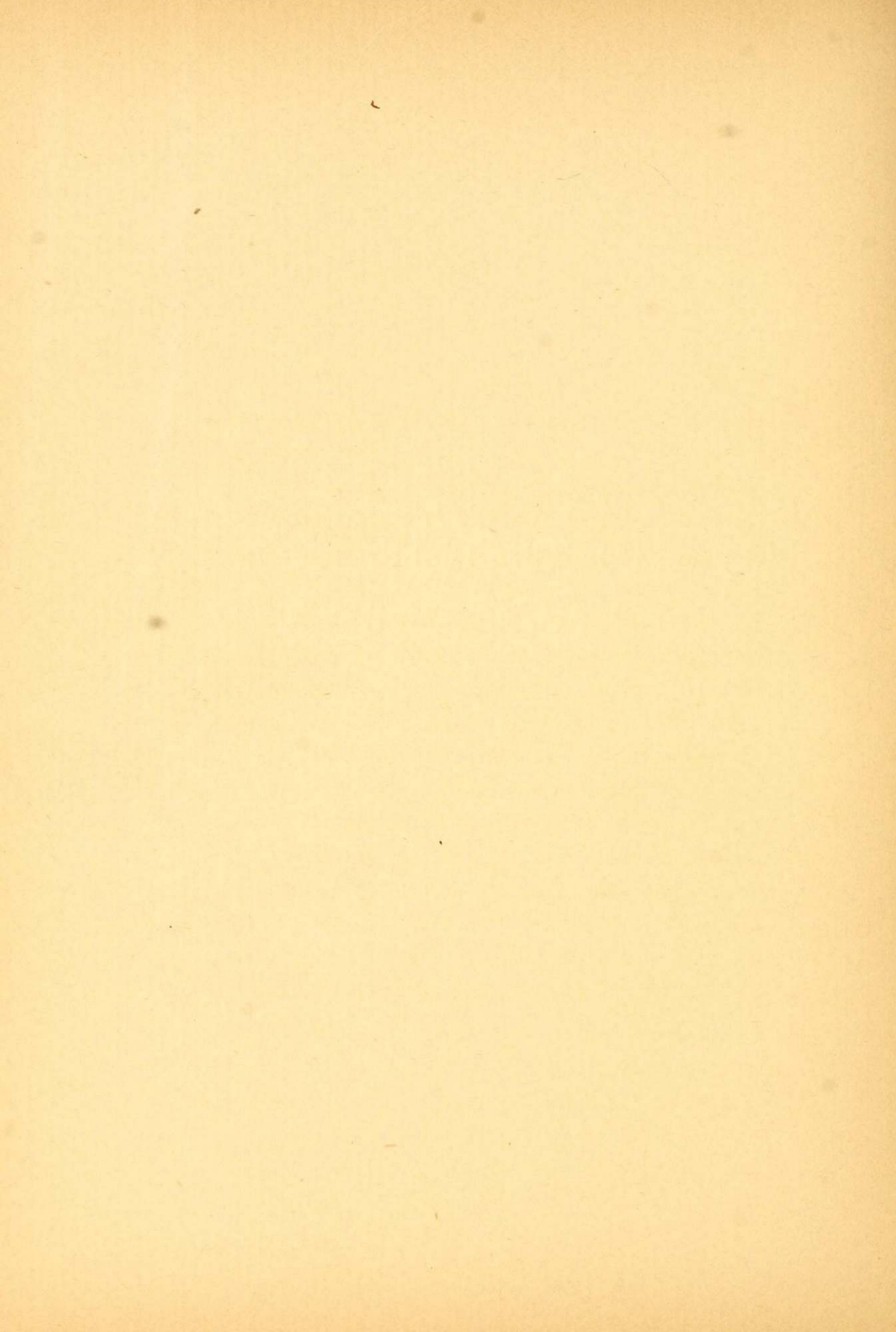
spirit, to prejudice and illiberal views, moved according to the impulses it received from an honest heart, a good understanding, common sense, and a sound judgment. He was habituated to view things on every side, to consider them in all relations, and to trace the possible and probable consequences of proposed measures. Much addicted to close thinking, his mind was constantly employed. By frequent exercise, his understanding and judgment expanded so as to be able to discern truth, and to know what was proper to be done in the most difficult conjunctures.

[David Ramsay, M.D., was born in Lancaster County, Pa., 2 April, 1749, and died in Charleston, S. C., 8 May, 1815. He was graduated at the College of New Jersey in 1765, and at the medical department of the College of Philadelphia in 1773. Settling in Charleston, he soon acquired celebrity as a physician, and was also active with his pen in behalf of colonial rights. Dr. Ramsay was a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1782-86, during which time he collected the materials for his "History of the American Revolution," published at Philadelphia in 1789, 2 vols., 8vo, from which the above character of Washington is taken. It was also published at London, 1791 and 1793; Dublin, 1793; Trenton, 1811; in French; in Dutch, 1792; and in German, 1794.

Dr. Ramsay was the author of a number of historical works; among them may be mentioned a "Life of George Washington," New York and London, 1807, 8vo. Of this publication there were many subsequent editions. Boston, 1811; Baltimore, 1814, 1815, 1818, 1825, 1832; Ithaca, N. Y., 1840; in French at Paris, 1809; and in Spanish at Paris, 1819; New York, 1825; Philadelphia, 1826; and Barcelona, 1842.—W. S. B.]

SAMUEL STEARNS.

1791.



SAMUEL STEARNS.

1791.

THE CHARACTER OF GENERAL WASHINGTON.

GENERAL WASHINGTON was born February 11, O. S. 1732, in the parish of Washington in Westmoreland County, in Virginia: His ancestors were from England as long ago as 1657: He had his education principally from a private tutor; learnt some Latin, and the art of surveying. When he was fifteen years of age, he entered as a midshipman on board a British vessel of war, that was stationed on the coast of Virginia; but the plan was abandoned, on account of the reluctance his mother had against it.

He was appointed a Major of a regiment before he was twenty years old; and as the French had made encroachments on the English settlements, he was sent in 1753, by Lieutenant-Governor Dinwiddie, then Commander of the Province, to treat with the French and Indians, and to warn them against making encroachments

&c. He performed the duties of his mission with fidelity.

In 1754 the Colony of Virginia raised a regiment for its defence, which was put under the command of Colonel Fry, and Major Washington was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel of the same; but the Colonel died that Summer, without joining the regiment, and the command fell to the Lieutenant-Colonel.

After forming his regiment, establishing magazines, opening roads, and sundry marches, he built a temporary stockade, at a place called the Great Meadows; and though his forces did not amount to four hundred effective men, he sallied out, and defeated a number of the enemy, who were coming to reconnoitre his post; but on his return was attacked by an army about 1500 strong; and after a gallant defence, in which more than one third of his men were killed and wounded, he was obliged to capitulate. The garrison marched out with the honours of war, but were plundered by the Indians, in violation of the articles of the capitulation. After this the remains of his regiment returned to Alexandria, in Virginia, to be recruited, &c.

In 1755, 'as no officer who did not immediately derive his commission from the King could command one who did,' Colonel Washington relinquished his regiment, and went as an *extra Aid-de-Camp* into the family of *General Braddock*, who was sent to drive the French, &c. from the borders of the English settlements.

The General was afterwards killed at the battle of Monongahela, and his army defeated, where Colonel Washington displayed his abilities, in covering a retreat, and saving the remains of the army.

Afterwards the supreme authority of Virginia gave him a new and extensive commission, whereby he was appointed Commander of all the troops raised, and to be raised, in that Colony.

He conducted as a good officer in defending the frontiers against the enemy, and in 1758 he commanded the *van brigade* of General Forbes's army, in the capture of Fort du Quesne; and, by his prudent conduct, the tranquillity of the frontiers of the middle Colonies was restored. But he resigned his military appointment in 1759, by reason of his being ill of a pulmonic complaint.

As his health was afterwards gradually restored, he married a Mrs. Custis, who was born the same year that he was: She was a handsome and an amiable young widow, possessed of an ample jointure, and he settled as a planter and a farmer on the estate where he now resides, in Fairfax county. After some years, he gave up planting tobacco, and went altogether into the farming business. He has raised 7000 bushels of wheat and 10,000 of Indian corn in one year. His domestic plantation contains about 9000 acres, and he possesses large quantities of excellent lands in several other counties.

He thus spent his time in cultivating the arts of peace, but was constantly a Member of the Assembly, a Magistrate of his county, and a Judge of the Court. In 1774, he was elected a Delegate to the first Congress, and was chosen again in 1775; the same year he was appointed by Congress Commander in Chief of the Forces of the United Colonies.

His conduct as a General is so well known, that it is needless for me to say much upon the subject. He went through many hardships, perils, and dangers, and conducted his military opera-

tions with such great skill, that at last a peace commenced in 1783, whereby thirteen of the American Colonies were established as Sovereign and Independent States.

Afterwards he resigned his commission to Congress, and retired to his plantation in Virginia.

Some time after the peace commenced, he received a *diploma* from the University at Cambridge, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, constituting him a *Doctor of Laws*.

He is very regular, temperate, and industrious; rises in Winter and Summer at the dawn of the day; generally reads or writes some time before breakfast; breakfasts about seven o'clock on three small Indian hoe cakes and as many dishes of tea, and often rides immediately to his different farms, and remains with his labourers till a little after two o'clock, then returns and dresses. At three he dines, commonly on a single dish, and drinks from half a pint to a pint of Madeira wine. This, with one small glass of punch, a draught of beer, and two dishes of tea (which he takes half an hour before the setting of the Sun) constitutes his whole sustenance until the next day. But his table is always furnished with

elegance and exuberance; and whether he has company or not, he remains at the table an hour in familiar conversation, then every one present is called upon to give some absent friend as a toast.

His temper is of a serious cast, and his countenance carries the impression of thoughtfulness; yet he perfectly relishes a pleasant story, an unaffected sally of wit, or a burlesque description, which surprises by its suddenness and incongruity, with the ordinary appearance of the object described. After he has dined he applies himself to business, and about nine retires to rest; but when he has company, he attends politely upon them till they wish to withdraw.

His family consists of eight persons, but he has no children: He keeps a pack of hounds, and in the season goes a hunting once in a week, in company with some of the gentlemen of Alexandria.

Agriculture is his favorite employment. He makes observations concerning the produce of his lands, and endeavours to throw light upon the farmer's business.

Linen and woollen cloths are manufactured

under his roof, and order and œconomy are established in all his departments, both within and without doors.

In 1787, he was chosen President of the Federal Convention that met at Philadelphia, and framed the new Constitution; and since that time he has been chosen President of Congress, and has a salary of twenty-five thousand dollars *per annum*.

Some have pretended that he is a native of England; but I understand that he never was in Europe.

[This "Character of General Washington" appears in a volume published at London and New York, in 1791, under the title of "The American Oracle, Comprehending an Account of Recent Discoveries in the Arts and Sciences, with a Variety of Religious, Political, Physical, and Philosophical Subjects, necessary to be known in all Families, for the promotion of their present Felicity and future Happiness. By the Honourable Samuel Stearns, L.L.D. and Doctor of Physic; Astronomer to the Province of Quebec and New Brunswick; also to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the State of Vermont in America."]

Samuel Stearns, the author of this remarkable book, was born in Bolton, Mass., in 1747. He became a physician and astronomer, practising his profession first in Worcester, Mass., then in New York, and finally in Brattleborough,

Vermont, where he died, August 8, 1819. For his supposed loyalty to King George III., he suffered greatly from the persistent attacks of the Sons of Liberty, and was confined for nearly three years in a prison in Worcester. While he was a resident of New York he made the calculations for the first nautical almanac in this country, which he published December 20, 1782. He edited the "Philadelphia Magazine" in 1789, and beside the "American Oracle," published "Tour to London and Paris," London, 1790; "Mystery of Animal Magnetism," 1791; and "The American Herbal, or Materia Medica," Walpole, N. H., 1801. He labored twenty-eight years on a "Medical Dispensatory," and to obtain information for it travelled for nine years in Europe and this country. On the list of subscribers for this work were the names of George Washington and Dr. Benjamin Rush.

The following notice is taken from vol. ii., p. 278, of "Literary Memoirs of Living Authors of Great Britain, &c.," London, 1798. "HON. SAMUEL STEARNES, M.D., L.L.D., Astronomer to his Majesty's provinces of Quebec and New Brunswick, &c. Author of a very singular and, for the most part, a very absurd book, entitled 'The American Oracle,' published in an octavo volume, in 1791. In this work he has given a new and ingenious hypothesis of the *Aurora Borealis*; but his vanity and his poetry are insupportable. Mr. Stearnes is one of the props of Animal Magnetism, and was a coadjutor of Mr. Cue in working magnetic Miracles."

The Washington sketch (the latter portion of which, describing his personal habits and the daily routine at Mount Vernon, is taken from the sketch by Jedidiah Morse, page

120), was reprinted in the *Edinburgh Magazine* for September, 1792, and also in the *British Review* for the same year; to the latter reprint the character sketch of Washington by the Marquis de Chastellux, and Brissot de Warville's account of his visit to Mount Vernon in 1788, are added.

The diploma from Harvard College, conferring the degree of Doctor of Laws on Washington, referred to on page 141, was dated April 3, 1776, shortly after the evacuation of Boston by the British.—W. S. B.]

JAMES HARDIE.

1795.

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1795.

GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON, the father of his country and the friend of mankind, was born in Virginia, Feb. 22, 1732; commanded a party of about 400 Americans and defeated the French at Fort Du Quesne 1754; after Braddoc's defeat and death, July 9, 1755, covered the retreat and saved the wreck of the American army with great abilities and prudence; unanimously elected commander in chief of the American forces by Congress, June 16, 1775; arrived at Cambridge and took command of the army, July 2, following; continued as commander in chief till Dec. 23, 1783; when having by acts of the greatest wisdom and fortitude, vanquished the enemies of his country and thus procured for it the blessings of liberty and independence, he delivered his commission to the President of Congress at Annapolis; unanimously elected President of the federal convention, which sat at Philadelphia from May 25, to Sept. 17, 1787;

unanimously elected President of the United States, April 6, 1789: again unanimously re-elected 1793.

[The above brief sketch appears in "The American Remembrancer, and Universal Tablet of Memory," by James Hardie, A.M., published at Philadelphia in 1795. James Hardie was a native of Scotland, born about 1750. He was a graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen, and an inmate of the family of the poet Beattie, who persuaded him to remove to New York, where he was tutor in Columbia College from 1787 till 1790. He died in that city in 1832. Mr. Hardie was the author of a number of works beside "The American Remembrancer;" among these may be noted "The New Universal Biographical Dictionary," 4 vols., 8vo, published at New York in 1805, in which the Washington sketch is of much greater importance.—W. S. B.]



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