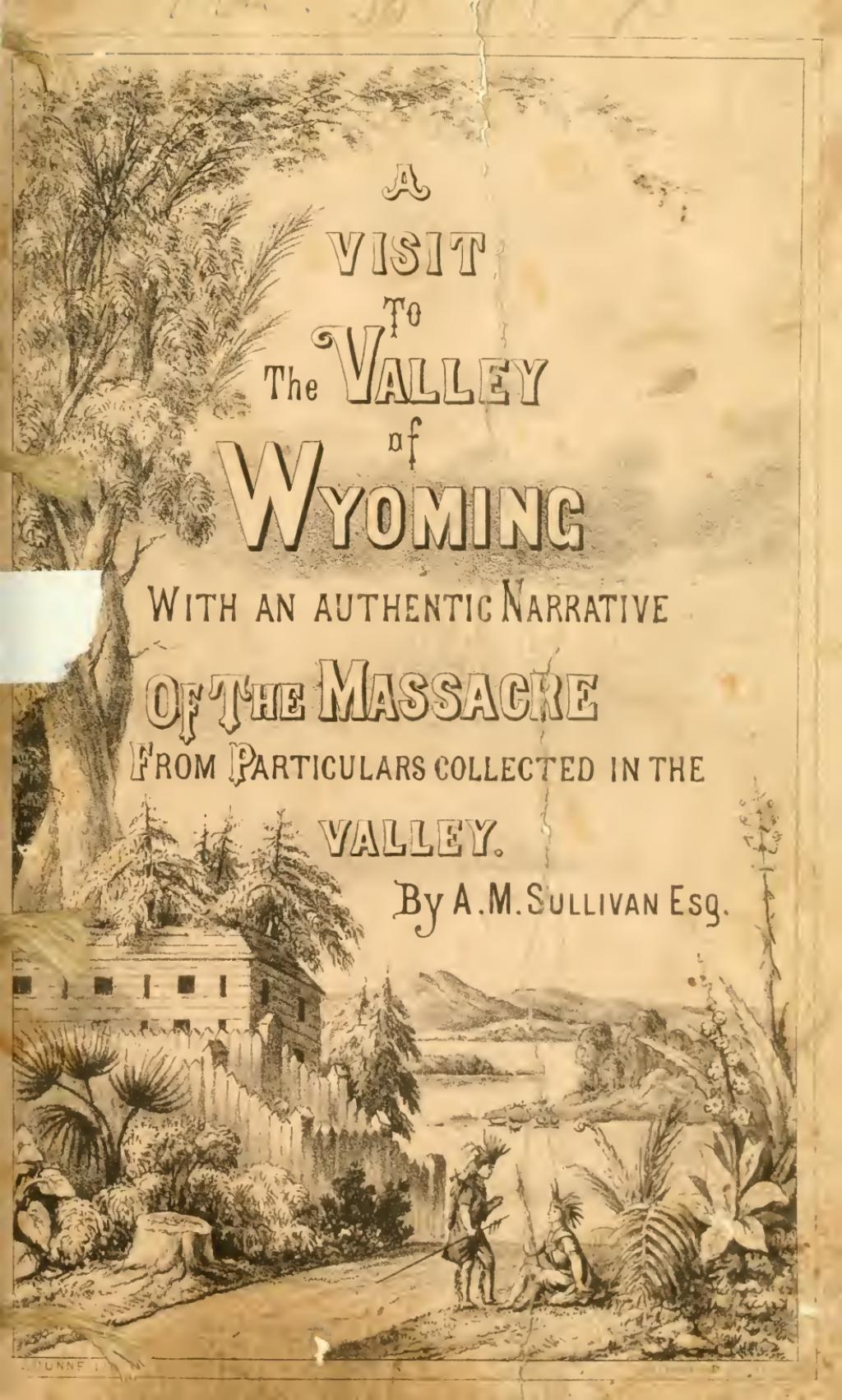


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A
VISIT
To
The VALLEY
of
WYOMING
WITH AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE
OF THE MASSACRE
FROM PARTICULARS COLLECTED IN THE
VALLEY.

By A. M. SULLIVAN Esq.



A VISIT

TO THE

VALLEY OF WYOMING.

BY A. M. SULLIVAN, ESQ.



1870

DUBLIN:
JOHN F. FOWLER, 3 CROW STREET,
DAME STREET.
MDCCCLXV.

1988

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A V I S I T
TO
THE VALLEY OF WYOMING.

“On Susquehanna’s side, fair Wyoming,
Although the wild flower on thy ruined wall
And roofless homes a sad remembrance bring
Of what thy gentle people did befall;
Yet thou wert once the loveliest land of all
That see the Atlantic wave their morn restore!
Sweet land! may I thy lost delights recall,
And paint thy Gertrude in her bowers of yore,
Whose beauty was the pride of Pennsylvania’s shore!”

CAMPBELL.

FOR half a century the sad story of Wyoming,* embalmed in Campbell’s charming poem, has made the name of that fair valley familiar to the world. In the “advertisement” prefixed to the poem, Campbell briefly refers to the facts upon which it was founded, in the following words: “Most of the popular histories of England, as well as those of the American war, give an authentic account of the desolation of Wyoming, in Pennsylvania, which took place in 1778, by an incursion of the Indians. The scenery and incidents of the following poem are connected with that event. The testimonies of historians and travellers concur in describing the infant colony as one of the happiest spots of human existence; for the hospitable and innocent manners of the inhabitants,

* In pronouncing this word, the inhabitants of the valley lay the accent on the second syllable, instead of on the last, as Campbell’s rhyme and rhythm suggest. It is an Indian word—Wy-o-ming—and would more properly rhyme to “roaming”.

the beauty of the country, and the luxuriant fertility of the soil, and climate. In an evil hour the junction of European with Indian arms converted this terrestrial paradise into a frightful waste. Mr. Isaac Weld informs us, that the ruins of many of the villages, perforated with balls, and bearing the marks of conflagration, were still preserved by the recent inhabitants, when he travelled through America in 1796".

Even this short reference to the simple facts sufficed to surround Wyoming with an interest for me, which the colouring of poetic fiction could scarcely deepen ; and when, one summer day in 1857, I found myself on "Pennsylvania's shore", I rejoiced, as may be supposed, at the opportunity of visiting the scene which imagination was fain to conjure up whilst following the narrative of Campbell's verse. I was curious to track out for myself the vestiges of that desolation, if any still remained, and, amidst the simple homesteads of the valley, listen to the stories and traditions of the event which survived amongst the people. Accordingly one fine evening in the first week of June, 1857, I left "the cars" on the Delaware and Lackawana railroad at Scranton, and surrendered myself and baggage to the omnibus in waiting from the hotel. From this town a small branch railway—a single rail, if my memory serves me—pierces through the defiles of the Delaware Mountains, and penetrates Wyoming. It reaches, I believe, as far as Wilkesbarre, the extreme point at the other end of the valley ; but, as I myself quitted it at the entrance to Wyoming, and "pedestrianized" the further distance, I cannot speak positively. I determined to spend the evening in Scranton, and start next morning for the valley, expecting, meantime, to gather some information respecting the district, and possibly, a good deal relating to the events which had made it memorable.

I sallied out to see the town. Scranton is a considerable town in Western Pennsylvania, in the centre of the vast coal-field, which constitutes this district the colliery of the Northern States. Numerous extensive and actively-worked coal mines and iron mines surround the town ; and iron smelting is carried on, I believe, on a very large scale.

I was told that the “largest steam-engine in the world” was to be seen at work in Scranton, at a blast-furnace ; and through the courtesy of the superintendent of the establishment to which it belonged, I was enabled to see this wonder.

I was assured that a visit to the interior of some of the mines—opportunity for which was kindly offered me—would amply repay the loss of a day. I was however too anxious to push on, and could devote to Scranton but the afternoon and evening of my arrival.

After a saunter through the town I returned to the hotel. A few hours later, I was “in the dreaming land”, amidst a sad confusion of Wyoming, Dublin, and Scranton ; the crash of steam-engines and the rattle of musketry—wandering amid scenes that might be those of my native home, three thousand miles away, or the glades and forests of Alleghanian slopes, “that heard the Indian’s song”.

At an early hour next morning, I had reached the near end of the valley, at which I meant to quit the cars and commit myself to the fortunes of pedestrian adventure through the country beyond. As the train moved off, and the last puff of the engine faded from my ear, I stood alone on the track, gazing towards the mass of forest and mountain stretching into the distance before me ; and for a moment I experienced an unpleasant sense of isolation, loneliness, helplessness—a doubt of the wisdom, the prudence of trusting myself in this plight on such a venture in such a place. Alone—without companion or guide other than a pocket map,—an unknown stranger, and all around unknown to me, I was setting forth on foot into a tract of country remote and secluded, almost a solitude, without the faintest idea of how I should fare as to shelter, food, or safety, other than my faith in the general character of the simple and hospitable people of whom the valley was the home. At evening, to shape my course for the nearest smoke, and prefer a wayfarer’s claim, was my sole reliance, in the event of being unable to make stages, between sunrise and sunset, of any hamlets or villages where, possibly, more regular “entertainment for travellers” might be obtainable. However, I wasted little

time in musing. I buckled on my knapsack, grasped firm my staff, and set off. For some distance, clearances had gashed into the dark clothing of forest that covered the hills around; the fields dotted with "stumps" proclaiming the comparatively recent occupation of the ground. Zig-zag fences skirted the road; and now and again a challenge from a vigilant watch-dog gave notice of the farm-house—wooden in every instance, of course, and each one, large or small, set off with a verandah, or "stoup". These wooden, or "frame" houses, as they are called, have a neatness of appearance which it is difficult to convey by description. They are almost invariably painted white, the exterior Venetian shutters to the windows being coloured green. Timber being of little or no value, it costs little to indulge in tasteful and sometimes fantastic construction and ornamentation in these buildings; and the humblest farm-house, accordingly, makes a pretty feature in the landscape. After two or three hours, these homesteads became more few and far between; and I walked for miles without a sound or a sign to indicate that human existence was nigh. But for one very marked sign of civilization, I might have imagined myself thousands of miles from humanity's reach. *The road* was of quite unusual excellence, and by no means to be compared to those wretched waggon tracks which form the highways in the interior districts of America. Yet it bore all the indications of having been constructed long before the present generation was born. For, probably, thirty miles through the valley runs this road, or rather avenue, nearly as wide as Sackville Street; certainly one of the finest highways I have ever travelled, though in some places grass-grown all over save a track in the middle. Onward, right onward, through wild forest and level plain, through solitude and settlement, it winds; for most of the way embowered with foliage of the most beautiful variety, and skirted with trees of gigantic size. But for the consideration that it was laid out when land was of comparatively little value here, I should have considered so wide a thoroughfare in such a place a simple waste of ground; for traffic there was none, now at least, to require it. This road, however,

remains a monument of the public spirit, skill, and industry of the first settlers in the valley; and, doubtless, it was to them of the last importance that, amidst the almost impenetrable forest, there should be a safe, wide, and clear way from fort to fort between Pittstown and Wilkesbarre.

The day was far gone, and already I began to think I had been somewhat misled as to the distance of New Troy, where I was told there was a church, a school, and a rustic inn, beside several farmhouses, amongst which I was certain of accommodation. I still pushed on. It was one of those magnificent evenings which follow a bright glowing day in June. Everything seemed luxuriant with the verdure of summer; the air was cooled by a gentle breeze, and the landscape was suffused with that peculiar tone of colour which the sunset of a clear warm summer day throws over it. The mellow streams of the evening sun came through the trees upon the deeply-shaded road, like gleams of gold; and the fragrance of wild flowers, which clustered in masses along the way, spread a perfume all around. I struck off from the road and pushed my way through lightly-timbered ground, to the crest of a hill on the left hand, which promised to afford me an extensive view. Little more than half-an-hour sufficed to bring me to the top. Never shall I forget the sensations with which I gazed on the scene around me! Below, on the right hand, was the avenue I had quitted; quite close beneath, on the left, in calm majestic grandeur, flowed the Susquehanna! Vain are words to paint the emotions with which a traveller beholds through the forest one of those mighty rivers—so vast, so silent, so solemn; yet conveying the idea of great power and majesty. I had seen the Susquehanna before, a couple of hundred miles farther up, ere its junction with the Tioga swelled it to this size. At Binghamton it seemed a mighty tide, but here it was of twice the width and volume. There was something mysteriously impressive in the steady, calm, but rapid flow of this immense body of water, amidst the wild and solitary but beautiful scene surrounding. Where the river, at a bend, pressed upon the bank, it rose into a “bluff”;

but elsewhere the waters laved the branches from the wooded shore. Turning my gaze towards the front, a scene as welcome met my view. Through an opening about two miles ahead, I could see stretching into the dim distance, a valley which I needed little scrutiny to identify with the description given me at Scranton of "Wyoming Flats", or the valley proper, the scene of the massacre. Woodland scenery more exquisitely beautiful I never beheld, if I except, perhaps, some portions of Killarney. From a long strip of table-land, level as a bowling-green, and probably better than a mile in width, the ground rose at each side. The plain was studded apparently with rich corn fields and meadows, thickly interspersed with groves of trees, which at that distance I thought were hawthorn, but which, on subsequent approach, I found to be fruit trees. In fact the "flats" of the valley, extending for miles, seem to form one vast orchard, broken here and there by corn fields, pasture, or meadows. Peeping through the orchard groves, and marked by surrounding wood of taller and heavier kind, could be discerned the snow-white speck which scarcely required the attendant wreath of blue smoke curling upwards to proclaim a Wyoming farmhouse. On the left or east side, divided from the flats by an undulating ridge of ground, flowed the river, behind which hill after hill rose and stretched away, wooded to the summit. On the right or west side of the level land the ground rose gradually, and for a mile or two up the slope, was apparently in occupation. From thence upward, rising somewhat more quickly, the mountains, covered with forest and varied in outline, reached into distance which the eye could not follow—the hues of the forest foliage changing with the distance into misty blue, that grew lighter and lighter, fainter and fainter, until I could not tell where the hills ceased and the sky began. I sat down by the trunk of a huge tree, gnarled with age and fantastic in figure, of massive trunk and crooked limb, and gazed long and wistfully on the picture spread out before me. Immediately at hand, the "trackless shade", perhaps untrodden since Indian feet had scared the squirrel from his play. Farther on, sylvan scenery, little suggestive in its present seclusion and

peacefulness that it could ever have been the theatre of man's demoniac revenge and ruthless desolation. The mind irrepressibly wandered back to Wyoming's happy time, and peopled the scene with the glad-some hearts of whom it once was the home.

This is the forest primeval ; but where are the hearts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe when he hears in the woodland the voice of the huntsman ?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers,
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of Heaven !
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers for ever departed ;
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of October
Seize them and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er the ocean !

The sun had almost touched the summit of the western mountain range ere I rose to regain the road and reach the end of my day's journey, now happily within view. In less than an hour I had entered the long amphitheatre of which I had just previously obtained a view. I pushed onward still a mile or so further, until a branch road turned off to the right across the valley ; and at this point I found myself amidst human habitations and kindly faces once more. Here stood a neat and unpretending little church, built of wood from base to spire ; and, near at hand, a building which was both the minister's residence and the district school. Two or three cottages were within view close by ; and, at the junction of the roads, stood a "store" and hotel of very moderate dimensions. Another "hotel", described to me as larger, and kept by a man who "knew a good deal about the massacre", stood at the other side of the valley, and to it I directed my steps, not, however, until I had rested awhile on the bench beneath a tree outside the little hostel, finding myself an object of much curiosity to the rustic group attracted by my arrival, and from whom I gathered a great deal that interested me to know. The church, I was informed, was the only one in this section of the valley, and was "Presbyterian". The school close by, kept by the minister—the Rev. Edward A. Lawrence—a good and amiable man, who baptized, taught, married, preached to, and

buried the simple people around him, was the "Luzerne Presbyterian Institute", deriving the topographical portion of its title, not directly from the Swiss canton so called, but from the name of the county in which Wyoming is situate. I experienced ready and polite attention, kindness, and courtesy at the hands of this gentleman, which I should be ungrateful indeed not to remember. With all the quiet, simple, and unaffected manners which became the place, I found him a man of highly educated mind and tastes; and for many particulars of the brief narrative which follows—and in which I compress the results of my several adventures, inquiries, investigations, and conversations throughout the district during my stay—I am indebted to the Rev. Mr. Lawrence. The few days I spent in this valley were certainly amongst the happiest of my existence. All I had heard or read of the character of the people was fully realized in their simple, honest nature, and their kindly hospitality. They were indeed "behind the age" in many respects; they lacked many of the luxuries and fashions, and all the vices and deceits of "modern civilization". Were it not for their extremely staid and undemonstrative manner, I should have imagined myself amongst my own countrymen, so cheerful was their welcome—so sincere their pleasure in dispensing the simple hospitality of their home to a stranger. More than once, as evening fell, I have boldly made my way towards the nearest farm-house in view, announced myself as a traveller who had come to see the valley, and instantly I was made at home. The good people seemed, indeed, to regard as quite a treat the appearance of a stranger from the outer world, who could tell all the news of late times. When they learned I had quite recently come from "the old countries", as Europe is always called, their curiosity was heightened; but it was when they found that I had been attracted to Wyoming by the sad story "of what its gentle people did befall", they appeared as if called upon to testify downright gratitude. My sketch book, containing drawings of the most notable spots in the valley, was quite an exhibition in its way; and in the evenings, sitting under the verandah before the door, the whole household would gather around, each one contrib-

buting his or her scrap of tradition or hearsay of the great calamity. Sometimes "old Josh" was sent for—"old Josh" being represented to me as the man who "could tell all about it; for his father was in the battle". At several places old manuscript "accounts", by eye-witnesses, treasured in the family, were cheerfully shown me; and a pamphlet narrative, published in 1784, shown me at New Troy, proved highly useful and interesting, though contradicted in a few particulars by the traditions I found most prevalent. The first day of my visit to the valley sufficed to show me that Campbell—unlike Moore, who devoted so great a length of time to reading books of Eastern travel, and familiarising himself with oriental manners and customs, before writing *Lalla Rookh*—had apparently neglected to take even the most ordinary precautions against blunders or absurdities of description or allusion in his poem. A prominent peak on a mountain cliff overlooking the valley, not far from Pittstown, bears the name of "Campbell's Seat", bestowed thereupon, it appears, in honour of the poet. But Campbell never sat in that seat. He never visited Wyoming. If he had, the errors complained of would not have crept into his poem. Whatever excuse, however, may be advanced for the poet, none surely can be imagined for the artists who, undertaking to "illustrate" the beautiful edition of *Gertrude* published by Routledge, of London, in 1857, have imported features into their illustrations which make them utterly ridiculous in the eyes of any one who has visited the scenes purported to be depicted. The anachronisms and errors of Campbell are more numerous, but more excusable, as may be gathered from the true story of Wyoming, gathered in the valley from the descendants of those who escaped the massacre.*

* I am persuaded that my own attempt to construct a consecutive narrative out of the materials thus collected, must now result in exhibiting to persons more fully acquainted with the subject some errors and defects. Eight years have elapsed since my visit to Wyoming; in the interval a few of my "notes and jottings" have been lost, and memory has not in every instance enabled me satisfactorily to supply the missing links of my story. Such as it is, however, I have resolved to "tell it";

When first the "pale-faces" were seen upon those mountains, it is not easy to determine; but the singular fact appears that a "settlement" existed in Wyoming long previous to any colonization of the surrounding country. And not only was the infant settlement thus isolated in the midst of Indian territory, but the colony of which it was an offshoot was not any of those nearest to or adjoining it—Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, New York, or New Jersey—but *Connecticut*, distant nearly two hundred miles. This led to some singular complications and conflicts in times subsequent to those with whose events I have to deal; the Wyomingers refusing to yield allegiance to the State of Pennsylvania, within whose borders they were placed, and acknowledging only the jurisdiction of the far-off parent-colony or State of Connecticut. The circumstances under which this early settlement was planted in the remote depths of Indian territory, were, as may be supposed, of the most pacific nature. But it is said that the negotiations were painful and protracted; the white man pressing the tempting price, and the Indians yielding most reluctantly; for, of all their homes, haunts, or hunting grounds, none had such a hold on their affections as Wyoming the Beautiful. Their huts dotted the rich alluvial flats, cropped with golden corn; their canoes covered the fishful river close by; and on the mountains surrounding the valley the Indian hunter found game abounding. But the eye of the white man also noted every rich advantage and rare attraction; and he longed to grasp, as the Indian was loath to part with, so valuable a prize. Gold, silver, arms, ammunition, "fire water", brilliant dresses, glittering ornaments, all plied the red man perseveringly, until at last "Wyoming the Beautiful" was sold. Some years afterwards the settlers were surprised and disquieted by the reappearance of the Indians in the neighbourhood. Being questioned, they could only reply, moodily and discontentedly, that they could not be happy away

since I believe it will be found substantially accurate, and there has not been any attempt on our side of the Atlantic to familiarize European readers with the authentic part colors of this sad episode since Wells wrote and Campbell sang.

from Wyoming: that they could not live in their new home. The settlers spoke them kindly and sympathetically, spoke of the more extensive hunting grounds far west, and reasoned with them to urge departure. But the old Indian chief shook his head mournfully, and replied, that "though they should wander for ever in the track of the setting sun, another Wyoming they should never find". There was not observable, however, in the demeanour of the Indians any trace of hostility, or purpose of questioning the validity of the sale: still their presence was embarrassing and not without peril. Ultimately they were induced to depart once more, the settlers bestowing on them a goodly store of useful presents. Long subsequently to this incident the settlement was again and more seriously disturbed by the reappearance of the displaced tribe—this time led by the younger and fiercer chiefs who had succeeded the generation that effected the sale, and who were not above disputing it. There was some trouble and angry disputation, if not conflict, with these visitors: but they were eventually driven off, and the valley resumed its wonted peace and quietude.

In those days communication with the outer world was slow and infrequent, and it was not until blood had been shed at Concord that the pastoral community at Wyoming learnt that strife had arisen between the colonies and "the mother country". Responding, however, to the levy of the parent colony, Connecticut, Wyoming sent its quota into the continental ranks: contributing, in the second year of the struggle, several distinct regiments. It is alleged on the British side, that this was a rash invocation of violence against themselves by the Wyomingers: that they had hitherto been markedly exempted from attack by the royalists, and would have been allowed to observe an unarmed neutrality in consideration of their peculiar position and circumstances. But when some of the best troops under Washington were found to be Wyoming regiments, it was, say those arguments, nothing more than a fair inevitability of war that reprisal should be taken on the valley.

Early in the spring of 1777 Congress received information of a meditated attack on Wyoming by the British and their Indian allies. Nothing, however, appears to have been done. Perhaps the intelligence was discredited; perhaps, and more likely, the colonial armies, then sorely pressed elsewhere, could not afford depletion for the defence of such a distant spot devoid of mere strategic importance. Some rumour of the threatened descent on the valley reached the Wyoming regiments, then away in Connecticut, and the most painful anxiety and alarm spread through their ranks. Application was made by those regiments for permission to hasten homewards. They pleaded earnestly that their homes and families were utterly defenceless, and were now menaced by a terrible danger. The commander-in-chief, however, could not accede to the application. The powerful armies of the enemy were then overrunning the colonies in various directions; and if he allowed the troops contributed by districts to scatter, each regiment to defend its own particular home, there was an end of the only army at his disposal. He accordingly demanded of the Wyoming regiments that they should remain at the post of duty, and trust to Congress to protect all its territories and all its subjects. This expostulation had some effect in quieting the excitement in the regiments; nevertheless, several officers and men resigned and hastened homewards.

In the valley itself, meanwhile, so completely was it shut out from ready access to intelligence of events passing beyond its own confines, that, while the cloud was gathering for its destruction, no word of the impending danger reached the menaced settlement. The men of fighting age were away; and nearly all the agricultural labour of the valley was done by the women. They dug and delved, they planted and reaped, mowed the hay and "husked" the corn, while husband, son, and father were away fighting the battles of their country. Towards the close of April, however, some faint shadow of the approaching peril appears to have gloomed upon the valley—some vague rumour of a meditated attack. It is not clear that much credence was

attached to this first murmur of the terrible truth ; but the old patriarchs remaining at home (exempted by age from war service) decided upon the wise precaution of sending out daily scouting parties. In May they found the first absolute proof of the danger at hand, and then almost at their threshold. The scouting parties on all sides, at a regular distance of about twenty miles from the valley, fell in with parties of the enemy, who suffered none to pass their cordon. It was soon found that the settlement was encircled by the foe, plainly intent on cutting off all communication, lest intelligence of the hostile preparations up the river should be carried to the doomed valley. Day by day the encircling line was contracted ; parties of the settlers out in the woods were fired upon and killed ; and in the shout of the assailants they but too plainly recognized the war-whoop of the Six Nations. One of the Wyoming parties captured some of the Indians, and the prisoners were identified as having been of the menacing party that visited and caused such trouble some years before. They were set drunk and plied with questions, when the terrible revelation was freely and boastfully made that their braves in full force were around the valley, waiting for "the king's army" to come down from Tioga "on a thousand canoes", when the valley was to be given up to fire and sword ! Consternation and dismay burst upon the settlers. Those dwelling in the outlying homesteads commenced rapidly to quit, and to seek the protection of the forts. These defences were very unlike the battlemented towers pictured in Campbell's poem and Routledge's illustrations. They were stockade forts. Around a strong block-house, or a group of such block-houses, ran two or more lines of heavy palisading, with convenient "sally-ports" ; the palisades as well as the block-houses being pierced for rifles. Such was the fort ; intended mainly as a strong refuge in time of danger ; being used in time of peace as a public magazine, guarded by a nominal garrison. To these refuges now flocked fugitives from the more distant parts of the valley. Inside, in the space around the block-houses and between the lines of palisades, tents were erected for the accommodation of the crowds of

women and children, while the adult males bivouacked close by outside. Trusty messengers were instantly despatched to the Wyoming regiments, entreating of them to hasten home with all speed. Some of these couriers were of course captured by the surrounding Indian force ; but others succeeded in escaping and reaching the army in Connecticut. The effect of their news on the Wyoming regiments may be imagined. Officers and men were alike thrown into agonizing alarm. Again—this time in the most passionate terms—they besought leave to hasten to Wyoming, ere yet it was too late ; for already the knife was whetted and the torch lighted for the destruction of all on earth they held dear. Still the commander-in-chief was inexorable ; but this time he undertook that Congress would instantly take measures for the defence of the valley. This did not appease the Wyoming regiments. The companies became almost disorganized. Every commissioned officer but two resigned.

Congress now interposed. Aid was ordered to Wyoming. But it was all too late ! Every day, every hour, the helpless settlers received but too strong proofs that their doom was rapidly closing upon them. Scouts, who succeeded in penetrating up the river to Tioga (the point indicated by the drunken Indian prisoners), returned with intelligence of the concentration there of a powerful force of British regulars, loyalist colonials, and Indian allies. and of the rapid and extensive construction of boats, rafts, and other means of transport by water and by land. It was now clear that all hope of human aid was vain, and that the settlement itself, with such scant means of defence as it possessed, should face the terrible odds before it. The command of affairs, in this dire emergency, was committed to Colonel Zebulon Butler. It is a curious fact, that the commander of the invading force not only bore the same name and title—Colonel (John) Butler—but was a relative of the patriot defender of the valley ; both being scions of the Kilkenny (Ormonde) Butlers.* The people of Wyoming distinguish them when

* “ It was a strange chance in that memorable massacre, that the British commander was Colonel John Butler, a remote relative of the American defender

speaking of them, as “*British Butler*” and “*Wyoming Butler*”. The resources of the valley for such an emergency as had arisen, were, as might be supposed, hopelessly and disastrously inadequate. There was one cannon—old, rusty, and useless—at Wilkesbarre. Of muskets there was a fair supply; of powder but a small quantity. This defect, however, the ingenuity and zeal of the settlers overcame. The women of Wyoming occupied themselves day and night *making powder*, by a very rude but effective process, which I doubt my ability to explain as it was detailed to me. “They took up the floors, dug the earth, put it into casks, and ran water through it; then took ashes in another cask and made lye; mixed the water from the earth with weak lye; boiled it; set it to cool, and the saltpetre rose to the top. Charcoal and sulphur were then used, and powder produced for public division”. Everything that could be devised was done; every weapon in the valley was reckoned; every means of defence or protection studied. Meantime the forts were rapidly being filled to inconvenience by the fugitive families from the distant portions of the valley. Care and anxiety weighed on every heart; yet every one, aged and young, laboured with cheerful spirit at the allotted work of preparation. Every one had his or her place assigned; and all were ordered to be ready at a moment’s signal from the scouting parties on the hills.

With the June “fresh” the enemy came down the river from Tioga Point on a flotilla of rafts and boats. They landed not far below the mouth of Bowman’s Creek, a small river which flows into the Susquehanna about twenty miles to the north of Wyoming. The river here makes a bend, forming an arc of probably thirty-five or forty miles, Colonel Zebulon Butler. If the Indian slaughter at that siege has aspersed with blood the name of the one, it has covered with glory that of the other. This family of Butler, destined to give so many distinguished names to America, originated in Kilkenny. The founder of the Pennsylvania house of that name emigrated as agent for Indian affairs, towards the close of the seventeenth century. Attracted probably by his example, other cadets of the Ormonde stock had settled in Carolina and Kentucky, from whom many generals and senators have been furnished to the Union”—M’Gee’s *History of the Irish Settlers in North America*.

the cord of which would be about twenty. It was (British) Butler's plan to march overland by this short way from Bowman's Creek to Wyoming. Accordingly, making secure his boats and leaving a small party in charge of them, his whole expedition crossed the peninsula, and arrived on the mountains overlooking the valley on the western side, on the evening of Monday, the 29th June. More than half, or probably two-thirds, of the force were Indians of the Six Nations; one tribe being led, strange to say, by an Amazonian commander, whose sex did not prevent her mingling in the thickest of the fight, nor cause her one trace of compassion amidst the subsequent butchery. This was the Indian queen, "Queen Esther". Leading a powerful and numerous tribe, however, was the Mohawk chief Gi-en-guah-toh,

"the foe, the monster Brandt,
With all his howling, desolating band".*

The white troops in the expedition were in great part made up of colonial royalist militia, to which circumstance may be ascribed the shocking realization with literal exactitude of that picture of civil war which depicts "a brother shedding his own brother's blood", exhibited in the course of the proceedings under narration.

* Here I am compelled to notice Campbell's published "apology" for introducing Gi-en-guah-toh, or Brandt, into his poem as a leading agent in the massacre of Wyoming. Campbell states: "Some years after this poem appeared, the son of Brandt, a most interesting and intelligent youth, came over to England, and I formed an acquaintance with him on which I still look back with pleasure". Young Brandt, the poet says, satisfied him completely that his father "was not even present at that scene of desolation"; and adds: "The name of Brandt therefore remains in my poem a pure and declared character of fiction". I have no means of judging the evidence by which young Brandt convinced Campbell; but of this I make firm assertion, that the evidence not alone of Brandt's "presence" at, but of his dark complicity in, that scene, is to be gathered abundantly in Wyoming. By every fireside in the valley his name is mentioned as the most savage and merciless of the leaders in the massacre; and, in reply to my repeated inquiries, I was assured that the few survivors of the massacre always referred to him as such when speaking with my informants.

Butler, as I have stated, arrived on the mountains overlooking Wyoming on the evening of 29th June. At the head of the valley, a family of settlers named Wintermoot, who were in secret strong partizans of the British, had erected a fort. Onehow or another their neighbours had misgivings about these people; and indeed if the Wyomingers were not the simplest of men, they might have discerned early what the Wintermoots were about. But the latter took care to keep on a smooth face, and do all they could to disarm suspicion. There lived close by, however, an old worthy, referred to always in the fireside traditions of Wyoming as "Old Jenkins". Old Jenkins' mind was not altogether at ease about the Wintermoots and their fort; so he set to work, and erected another close at hand to watch it. This was called Fort Jenkins. Old Jenkins, of course, pretended no suspicion to his neighbours the Wintermoots. He built his fort and kept his mind to himself.

To Fort Wintermoot, as to the other forts in the valley, some of the neighbouring farmers with their families fled for protection; and amongst these was a Mr. Ingersoll. When it became known that the enemy had reached the valley at a point immediately close by, Ingersoll and some of the others commenced preparation for resistance; but now the Wintermoots threw off the mask, and gave Ingersoll to understand that the fort was "held for King George". Ingersoll and his friends were at once put under guard as prisoners; and they found that a perfect understanding existed between the Wintermoots and the enemy. In fact, Butler, on reaching the valley, marched with a small portion of his force directly to Fort Wintermoot, and occupied it, quite evidently by pre-arrangement.

Early next day, Tuesday, some of the party of Fort Jenkins, quite unconscious that the neighbouring fort was now actually in the occupation of the British, had gone out on some duty. Suddenly they found themselves attacked and surrounded on all sides. They made a desperate effort to reach their fort, but failed. They were slaughtered to a man. The noble old hero himself, with two grandchildren—mere

boys—reached close to and almost within sight of the fort, but the enemy got between it and them. They stood then to die, since escape there was none. Placing themselves by a tree, they made desperate resistance, until one by one they fell covered with wounds. No attempt was made just then to attack Fort Jenkins. It was only on the next evening, apparently, that the whole of the invading force had come down from their first halting place.

At a fort called "Forty Fort", Colonel Zebulon Butler and the main force of the Wyoming men were under arms. Forty Fort was the central and chief defence of its kind in the valley, being by far the largest and best constructed. It figures most prominently of all in the events of that time. I devoted a day to visiting its site and taking drawings of and from it, as by far the most interesting point in the valley. Not a vestige of the fort itself now remains, though the name still attaches to the spot. Exactly on the site of Forty Fort two or three small woodhouses, inhabited by very humble people, now stand. The Susquehanna, after passing close by Fort Wintermoot, at the upper end of the valley, flows southward in almost a direct line to the spot whereon Forty Fort stood. A small island, called Maconacee Island, beautifully wooded, rising in the centre of the stream, half way down or about a mile up the river from the fort. At this latter point the river turns at a sharp angle to the left or east, continues this bent for barely a furlong or less, and turns quickly southward once more, thence-forward towards Wilkesbarre making many windings. Where the river after its straight course takes the first sharp turn to the east, the bank against which the full force of the current therefore beats, rises almost precipitously from the water's brink to a height of about forty or fifty feet. On the edge of this brow, looking directly up the river, Forty Fort stood. The main road through the valley passed quite close behind. It would seem to have been a large work, defended with double lines of very high and heavy stockades, clay and stones filling the interstices between the timber. A well, which still remains, stood within the fort: although the river washed beneath its northern face,

VIEW ON THE SUSQUEHANNA, WYOMING VALLEY
LOOKING UP THE RIVER FROM THE SITE OF FORTYFORT



as already described, and a "water gate" led down to it. Here Col. Zeb. Butler had his head quarters; and here, in fact, the bulk of the population had flocked for safety.

News reached Colonel Butler that the party from Fort Jenkins had been destroyed in the woods. He set out on Wednesday with a strong reconnoitering force, and after some time came up to the scene of the rencontre, where the victims lay unburied. No enemy was in view or could be found just then. Colonel Butler gathered the bodies and buried them, and then returned in the afternoon to Forty Fort without encountering any parties of the enemy. Next day, however, the entire invading force filled the upper end of the valley. Fort Jenkins was assaulted, and after a brief but fierce struggle was captured. All within it were slaughtered by Queen Esther's Indians. Next morning (Friday, 3rd July), British Butler despatched Mr. Ingersoll (who had been made a prisoner at Wintermoot) with a message to Col. Z. Butler, demanding the surrender at discretion of the whole valley with its several forts, etc., from Pittstown to Wilkesbarre. Ingersoll reached Forty Fort with his summons about ten or eleven o'clock in the forenoon. He found the place choked with a crowd of women and children, the men being chiefly encamped around the fort on the outside. Col. Butler and his little band heard the summons with emotions that may be imagined. At last the dreaded hour had come! What was meant by surrender "at discretion" to a force composed mainly of Indians, they but too well knew. A council was held, and every possible contingency, project, and plan was anxiously discussed.

The prevailing opinion was that the enemy would attack the forts piecemeal, and that it was better go out and meet him at once with all the force that could be gathered. Alas, it was the dark alternative! Then began leave-taking, every heart feeling that it was on an almost hopeless chance the little phalanx was setting forth. At twelve o'clock noon they marched out, three hundred in all, not a fifth of the number being between the ages of eighteen and fifty years! The women crowded the palisades watching their departing footsteps until

they could no longer be seen amidst the trees; then in a crowd fell on their knees and prayed and sobbed aloud.

Every movement of Colonel Butler was watched by Indian scouts and quickly reported to British Butler, who, therefore, had full and ample notice of the advance. He instantly sent word to one of his brigades engaged in destroying Fort Jenkins, to come down with all speed, and he himself with his own force marched out of Fort Wintermoot, firing it behind him. This was about two o'clock in the afternoon. As the Wyoming troops approached, they saw Fort Wintermoot in flames, and found the enemy in line of battle before them. At this point a bank or slope about fifteen or twenty feet high runs diagonally along the valley, dividing the level into two flats or plains, one so many feet higher than the other. Fort Wintermoot was situate on the edge of this bank, dividing what were called the upper and lower flats. Colonel Butler advanced resting his right on this bank, the left extending across the gravel flat to a morass thick with timber and brush, that separated the bottom land from the mountain. Yellow pitch-pine, firs, and oak shrub were scattered all over the plain. The right wing of the Wyoming party was under Colonel Zebulon Butler himself, the left under Colonel Dennison.

The left of the British force rested on Wintermoot Fort (now in flames), commanded by British Butler himself. This officer was, it would seem, quite a favourite with the Indian natives, with whom he had had a long and close intercourse, and over whom he had acquired great influence. He conformed to their manners and customs to so great an extent as to be looked up to very much as one of their own chiefs, speaking their several languages with fluency, and usually wearing semi-Indian costume, a head-dress of feathers, etc. On this occasion, however, he appeared on the scene of action divested of all his feathers and finery, wearing a cotton or silk handkerchief tied on his head. A strong flanking party of Indian marksmen were concealed among some logs and bushes under the bank. The Indians under Gi-en-guah-toh formed the right wing of the invading force, and ex-

tended to the morass or swamp already referred to. Such was the disposition of the battle field. From Wintermoot to the river in a straight line, would be about eighty rods, to Maconacee Island in a southwardly direction, about a mile. The weather was clear and calm.

About four p.m. the battle began. Colonel Z. Butler directed his men to fire and advance, stopping at each discharge. As they pressed on, the English line gave way, but the Indian flanking party on the right kept up a galling fire. For about half an hour the battle raged hotly, one continued peal of musketry, the Wyomingers pressing forward with daring ardour, sometimes checked, occasionally though rarely pushed back for a moment; but on the whole driving the British slowly before them. Three-quarters of an hour of this close and desperate musketry work could not but tell on the numbers engaged; and now the vastly superior strength of the enemy began to show. Still fighting with the energy of despair, the Wyoming men maintained the unequal duel without waver or pause. At length the Indians threw a strong body into the swamp on the Wyoming left, stealing along amongst the shrub and brushwood, until suddenly Colonel Dennison found himself completely outflanked. He tried to wheel round his force to a right angle with the main line, so as to front the flanking attack. But here the absence of military discipline was fatal. Unused to the performance of evolutions, the Wyomingers mistook his movement for retreat. They wavered, confusion and uncertainty spread amongst them. Suddenly with a wild yell the whole Indian force rushed in upon them in a compact and resistless torrent — and all was lost! In less time than it takes to relate it, the scene changed from a desperately contested and well maintained struggle, to utter rout, flight, and slaughter. There was little fire-arm work now; it was all hand to hand death struggle with knife and tomahawk. The Indian party rapidly pushed forward in the rear of the Wyomingers, and cut off their retreat to Forty Fort; then on all sides pressed them towards the river.

Volumes might be compiled from the stories related to me of the individual heroism which marked the bloody afterlude that now set in.

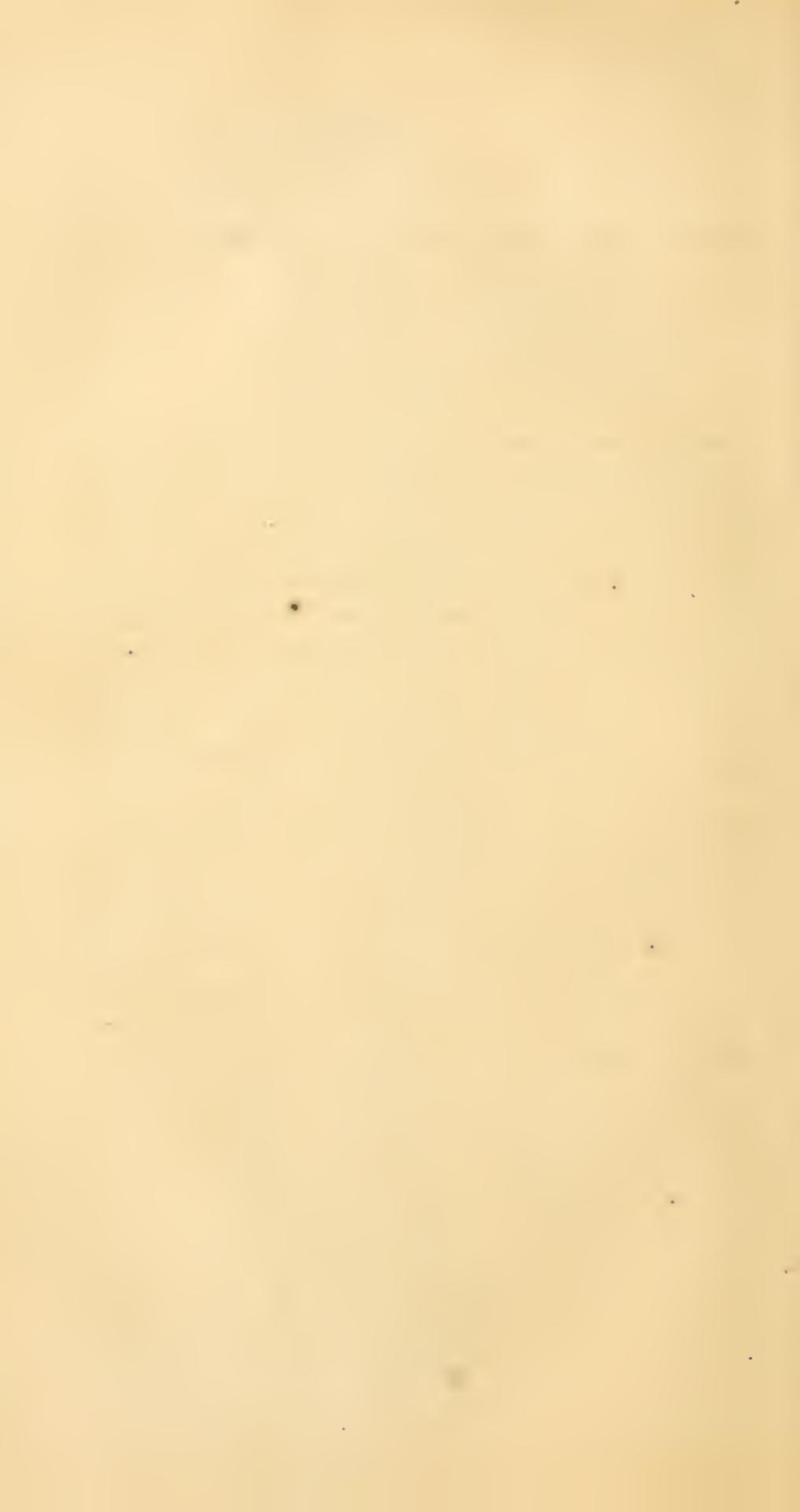
Tracking all the way with their blood, the Wyomingers, every man selling his life as dearly as possible, fell back towards the river, the stream of flight pouring through the woods towards Maconacee Island. At the river there opposite the island the Wyomingers say the slaughter was awful. In the water and on the brink the hapless fugitives were struck down right and left, the river for a yard or two from the shore being coloured from the blood. Several, however, succeeded in swimming to Maconacee, and thence to the opposite side, fearing that if they remained on the island the Indians would gather on each shore and capture them. A great many were drowned in the endeavour to reach the island. A Wyoming officer named Bigford, a very active young man, close pressed by an Indian, gained the shore from the woods, and dashed in to swim to Maconacee. The Indian rushed into the river after him. Bigford turned back and faced the Indian. They closed in deadly struggle in the water. Bigford wrenched the spear from the Indian's hand, grasped him by the neck, and threw him. At that instant another Indian rushed up behind him and ran Bigford through the heart, and his dead body floated away. The case of William Pensil is pretty well known, having found mention, I understand, in some English publications. It is certainly horrible enough. Pensil succeeded in swimming to the island, and hid himself in a clump of willows. Some of the enemy, late in the day, swam over, searching the island for fugitives, finding a few and killing them; but Pensil was securely concealed. At length he beheld, searching, gun in hand, *his own brother*, who had fought that day in the English ranks, having some time previously joined a loyalist corps in Connecticut. With a cry of joy Pensil jumped out from his concealment, for in his own brother he had found, as he thought, sure protection at least for his life. The brother, however, drew back and cocked his gun. "George, George!" shrieked the unfortunate man, flinging himself on his knees at the other's feet—"it is *I*, it is *I*, William; oh save me, save me!" "No, damned rebel, not *I*," was the answer; and he *shot him dead!*

All that afternoon and evening the Indian troops, in numerous small



FIG. 1. - E. SUSQUEHANNA. WYOMING VALLEY

SHAWNEE MOUNTAINS
VALLEY OF THE
SUSQUEHANNA



scouring parties, occupied themselves in searching the woods for hidden or wounded Wyomingers; and by nightfall, besides those who had been slain throughout the day, there was a goodly number of prisoners. It is stated that several, taken under solemn promise of quarter by the English troops, were given up also to the Indian allies. When night fell a horrible ceremony commenced. Around a rude pillar-shaped rock, pointed out to this day as "Queen Esther's Rock",* the white prisoners were bound, the materials for a huge fire being piled at their feet. The Indians, with camp-fires all round, were assembled in great array for the spectacle. When all was ready, Queen Esther, decked out in the most profuse finery of beads and feathers, approached at the head of a long file of braves, all chanting songs of triumph, full of taunt against the white captives. Circling round and round the group of bound victims, as she passed each one her hatchet gave the initiatory stroke, which each of her attendant braves followed, the air resounding alike with the shriek and cry of the dying, and the shout and song of the torturers. Late into the night these orgies continued, while others of like hue companioned them. Parties of the invaders had spread all over the valley, rifling and firing the deserted habitations of the settlers, until the midnight air was aglow with the numerous conflagrations. Not a house escaped, not a barn nor a shed. Crops, corn, cattle-fodder—everything was destroyed, not a roof escaped; nought but bare and blackened walls and charred *debris*, smoking and mouldering for days afterwards marked the once happy homes of Wyoming.

It was an anxious time in Forty Fort after Colonel Butler and his band marched out to give the invaders battle. "When the fight began they could hear the firing", said an old Wyominger to me; "and

* I succeeded in making out this rock. The field in which it is situated was tilled to its very base, which rather shocked me, considering that this particular spot was a very shambles of slaughter on the night of the 3rd July. The rock—whether from sinking in the earth, or from the soil being raised in farming operations around it—is now much buried in the soil, barely a few feet of it being visible over ground.

O heaven! they were wild with excitement and suspense. As long as the firing was steady they had hopes, but when it became straggling, 'Ah, God, God!' was the cry, 'all is lost'. Alas! the river current quickly brought down woful confirmation of their fears. One by one it bore beneath to the very walls of the fort, mangled and bleeding, the corpse of some husband, son, or brother, struck down in the battue near Maconacee. A straggling fugitive or two soon after reached with the terrible news from the battle-field. Then all was agony and despair, and a wail loud and bitter rose from the forlorn crowd. Towards evening the wreck of the Wyoming army that survived the day—a broken, straggling band, "few and faint", weary and despairing—reached the fort. Their brave commander, Colonel Zebulon Butler, who led them out, did not return. He lay on the bloody field, where he fell at the head of his little army in the noblest cause for which a man could fall. Indeed the slaughter of officers was most severe. Every captain who led a company into action was slain, and in every instance fell on or close by the front of the fire, before the line was broken. When Colonel Dennison, on whom now devolved the command, reckoned the remnant who reached the fort, he found barely a few score surviving. That night, however, a welcome reinforcement of thirty-five men, comprising "the Huntingdon and Salem Company" arrived from a neighbouring settlement. This gave some little firmness to the distracted occupants of Forty Fort. No one slept that night; none could sleep; and as they watched through the long hours of that dreadful night they could see in the skies around lurid signs of the deadly work going on all over the valley. A consultation was once more held; such a council as might be held on the deck of a sinking ship—anxious, earnest, distracted. Still the spirit of brave men shone out amidst all the gloom of their position. It was resolved to hold out to the last, concentrating all the strength and resources of the whole settlement at Forty Fort. To this end it was decided to send to Wilkes-barre for the one cannon already referred to, and call in all the parties in smaller forts or stations throughout the valley. Messengers were ac-

cordingly sent off with these instructions ; but they soon returned announcing that the valley was impassable. The enemy has spread it over on all sides, and a scene of horror and desolation extended for miles around. Fugitives were flying in all directions to the hiding of the almost impenetrable forest, or were daring the wild and hopeless attempt of escaping through its miles of morass and tangled juniper to some friendly settlement beyond. The few paths through the swamp which extended to the south-east, were thronged with the flying settlers. Few took provisions, and all were destitute of everything, save personal clothing. In fine all was lost, and further hope was vain. The Settlement of Wyoming was no more. Then Colonel Dennison and his gallant band at the fort realised the full anguish of their fate—

“ As mute they watched till morning's beam
Should rise and give them light to die”.

Early on the morning after the battle British Butler sent a detachment up the river to Fort Brown, near Pittstown, with a demand for surrender. This was complied with on very fair terms of capitulation. It is said that in order to mark those prisoners from those not thus protected by terms, they were marked by the Indians with paint on the face, and told to carry a bit of white linen in their caps or hats, that they might be known as protected, and not killed.

British Butler now sent messengers to Forty Fort with a summons of capitulation. Colonel Dennison went out to meet him and ascertain and discuss the terms. The meeting took place in Butler's tent at his head quarters at Wintermoots. It is said that Butler really showed himself by no means harsh in the negotiation, considering all the circumstances ; and indeed I rejoice to state, as the result of my most diligent inquiries throughout the valley, that, apart from the odium of leading such an expedition at all, the British commander appears to have been a fair and even a humane man. This may seem a strange opinion to express of the leader in one of the most atrocious and

barbarous episodes of semi-civilized warfare ; and I myself entered Wyoming with the settled preconceived impression that the British commander was a diabolical wretch, who revelled in the massacre of the helpless and defenceless. But justice is the right of all men ; and I feel bound to state that, from all I heard in the valley, Colonel Butler was personally not a bad man, apart from the fault of consenting at all to undertake for his masters so infamous an errand. Perhaps, like the British commander sent to despoil and disperse the innocent and inoffensive people of Accadia, exactly twenty-two years before, he might have exclaimed :

"To my natural make and my temper
Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be grievous ;
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our monarch".

During the night of the massacre after the battle, a wounded Wyominger lying concealed amidst the brushwood on the battlefield near Wintermoots, overheard two officers walking close by conversing. One was the British commander, and the other was alluding to the havoc going on at the moment all around. Butler exclaimed with much emotion : "I cannot help it ; I cannot prevent it. Would to God I could stop it, for there has been already too much blood spilt".

His conduct in the negotiations of surrender would seem to corroborate these representations of his character. After better than half an hour's discussion Colonel Dennison and Butler finally agreed upon terms for the surrender of Forty Fort. Butler, however, had no writing materials ; but he said the treaty could be committed to writing in the fort when surrendering.

Colonel Dennison returned to Forty Fort and announced the terms. The two gates of the fort were now thrown open, and the arms, etc., possessed by the Wyoningers piled in the centre of the space inside. About half-past four in the afternoon, the victors approached with colours flying and music playing : the white men, four abreast, on the left ; the Indians, in four files, led by Queen Esther, on the right.

Some previous rencontre must have occurred between her and the settlers ; perhaps she was of the party who some time previously had (as I have elsewhere mentioned) to be driven off from the valley ; for on entering Forty Fort now, Queen Esther turning exclaimed :

“ You told me to bring more Indians, Colonel Dennison ; see here I have brought you all these”.

“ Be silent”, said British Butler in a voice of command (evidently apprehensive of the results of any altercation at that moment)— “ be silent ; ‘ women should be seen, not heard’ ”.

The victors were now drawn up inside the Fort ; British Butler with the Rangers, the Royal Greens, and Tories * at the north gate ; Brandt and Queen Esther with the Indians occupied the south gate. Immediately on entering, the Tories seized the piled arms as trophies ; but Butler instantly ordered them to be replaced every one. Then turning to the Indians with a smile, and pointing to the file of arms, he said : “ See, a present the Yankees have made you !” Evidently highly gratified, they seized the arms and divided them amongst themselves. Here, according to a story told me by several residents in the valley (but which I suspect to be a confused tradition of an incident well authenticated as having occurred at quite a different place and at quite a different time), Butler’s eye fell upon Lieutenant Boyd, of the Wyoming army standing in the gateway. Boyd, they say, had once served in a royal corps under Butler, but went across to the rebels.

“ Boyd”, said Butler, “ go to that tree”.

“ I hope, sir, you will consider me a prisoner of war”.

“ Go to that tree, sir !”

Boyd walked to the spot appointed ; at a signal from Butler the Indians poured in a volley, and he fell dead, literally riddled with bullets.

The Wyomingers were to have been allowed till next day to leave the place, and take with them everything in the way of property which they could remove. But Butler was dealing with critical elements in

* Colonial Loyalist Militia, or Volunteers. All the colonists who sided with the mother country in the struggle, were called “ Tories”.

his Indian auxiliaries, and he seems himself to have known that it needed the utmost tact and care in managing them to prevent their flinging off his control altogether. So far, they kept to some extent within restraint ; but they could not understand being prevented from plunder. They broke from the ranks despite all Butler could do, and commenced to sack the fort, seizing its disarmed and defenceless occupants, and tearing from them any property they carried on their persons. The scene that ensued may be imagined. Helpless as a flock of sheep. amidst an array of butchers, the hapless people rushed from the fort. The white troops under Butler attempted to help and save them as far as possible. Many, however, fell ; all were plundered. A great number were kept by the Indians to be carried home as war captives. When morning dawned, of the once numerous population of Wyoming there survived, beside the captives, but the wretched and distracted fugitives who crowded the neighbouring morass and forests. Of this flight the stories and traditions in the valley are numerous enough to make an interesting volume. Old men and women beyond seventy years, tottering along ; mothers with infants at their breast, and others carried on their back ; fathers with little ones on their arms, and others led by the hand ; terror in every face and in every heart. Several perished of exhaustion on the way ; and there were instances where births as well as deaths marked the track of the flight. In three or four cases children were born in the swamp during the escape on that night and the days following, fright, fatigue, and hardship having prematurely brought on the pains of maternity. One woman who had made her way for some miles through the tangled path with a sick child in her arms, at length found the little one was dying. Though “on, on”, was the word on every lip, she begged to be allowed to sit down on a stone to see her child die. She laid it on her lap, and in speechless anguish watched its last faint sigh escape ; then covering up the little corpse, carried it in her arms through all that dreadful time for thirty miles, till she reached a German settlement, where her sorrowful burden was taken from her hands and decently interred !

VIEW ON THE SUSQUEHANNA, WYOMING VALLEY
MACON, C. E. S. ANI. THE BANK OF SLAUGHTER ON THE EAST



The dark forest-swamp through which this flight was made is called to this day, in memory of the event, "The Shades of Death".

My notes, taken in the valley, are full of tragic occurrences of this dispersion, and of the truly curious as well as painful incidents which arose out of the separation of members of families during the flight, etc. Twenty years afterwards there were living amongst the Indian tribes, in the far west, men and women who had been brought away children captives from Wyoming, but of whose parentage, etc., no identification could be effected, notwithstanding many and anxious efforts. In one instance, a father who had spent fifteen years in unbroken endeavours to find out an only and cherished child, whom he had reason to believe was alive and "adopted" amongst the red men, at length found her a grown woman, speaking the Indian language and no other, and remembering nothing of her infant days. Nothing could prevail on her to leave the tribe! Almost by force her father brought her away; but she effected her escape and rejoined her adopted people!

On Wednesday, the 8th July, Butler and his forces withdrew from Wyoming. The Indians, I believe, remained for a short time longer. They found the valley an earthly paradise: they left it a smoking ruin.

But an Avenger was at hand. Perhaps some tidings of his approach quickened their retreat. News of the destruction of the settlement soon reached Congress, and throughout all the colonies the sensation it occasioned was intense. It was at once determined to considerably enlarge the strength and extend the objects of the expedition which had originally been ordered to Wyoming so tardily; and as it was late to save, be strong to avenge it. Nothing less than following up the Indians to their own country and "sowing salt" upon their own hearths would appease the storm of grief and indignation which spread from the Carolinas to New England. It was a serious work to undertake the absolute destruction and dispersion of the Six Nations, the most formidable Indian power on the continent; yet this it was resolved to attempt; and General Washington himself, it is said, recommended to Congress, for command of the expedition, a man on whom has been

conferred a glorious title, bravely and nobly won, "General John Sullivan, the Avenger of Wyoming".*

An army of some 4,000 men was rapidly assembled under his command, equipped as fully as the straitened resources of the republic at the moment would allow. On the 31st July, the expedition started, the artillery and military stores, etc., by water, the infantry and cavalry by land. It is said that the line of boats extended two and a-half miles on the river, and that 2,000 pack horses accompanied the army. Before starting, General Sullivan assembled the entire force, and addressed them in a speech which it is said caused strong men to weep like children, yet to clutch their arms and clench their teeth with vengeful resolve. He drew the picture of Wyoming as it had been but one short year before, and how they should find it now. In vivid language he told the tale of the massacre, and reminded them that he and they were setting forth to exact a just and terrible vengeance for that crime. It is easy to understand the powerful effect of a speech like this, spoken under such circumstances, when

"A thousand maddening memories
Steeled each heart and nerved each blow".

The flotilla proceeded up the river, the army following close by through the woods on shore. On reaching Wyoming—now silent and desolate—a mournful and touching ceremonial was observed. The entire army, with reversed arms and drooped colours, and the long line of boats, with flags half-staff high, proceeded with funereal solemnity through the valley, the bands playing a dirge. Passing Maconacee Island, it is said, the procession slowed its pace, and the emotion

* Few names, next to that of the illustrious commander-in-chief himself, shine out more prominently in the American War of Independence than that of General Sullivan, in honour of whom "Sullivan's Island" in Charleston Harbour, and "Sullivan County" in more than one state, have been so named. He was, it is needless to say, an Irishman, and belonged to a family which, from the days of Donal of Dunboy to later times, has produced many gifted, good, and brave men.

of the men overpowered all efforts of restraint. It certainly was a spectacle well calculated to touch the sternest heart; for there, moulderling on the shore where they fell in the last struggle, lay the mangled corpses of the ill-fated Wyomingers! The expedition halted to perform the last sad offices of humanity for all that remained of the devoted band, and then pushed rapidly forward to avenge them. The events of the brief but brilliant campaign that ensued do not fairly come within the scope of this narrative. They fill a bright page in the history of the American struggle. General Sullivan literally hewed his way through hundreds of miles of country, destitute of roads or bridges, and defended by a brave, powerful, numerous, and well-equipped force of Indians, numbering nearly three to one of his little army. After two or three lesser encounters, though fierce, desperate, and costly enough, the Indians in all their force stood for a decisive engagement on the 29th August, 1778. The ground was of their own choosing. Fully ten thousand "braves"—trained marksmen, armed with English rifles, and led by skilled British officers—confronted Sullivan. The result may be told in a curt extract from *The State Chronicles of Pennsylvania*:-

"29th August, 1778.—General Sullivan defeats the Six Nations with desperate slaughter; an overthrow which they never afterwards recovered".

Utterly broken and routed, they next day sued for peace. But to every messenger only one word was given in answer, and that word was "*Wyoming*". What it meant, the Indians but too well knew. Sullivan pushed on to reach the central villages of the Six Nations; and to obstruct this purpose, the broken remnants of the Indian force made the most desperate and bloody endeavours—alternately supplicating (in vain) for peace, and fighting with the madness of despair. But slowly, steadily, mercilessly, the Nemesis of Wyoming advanced, until, early in September, the avenging army encamped in the hitherto inviolate "capital" of the Six Nation territory. The women and children were treated with all possible kindness; but the men were

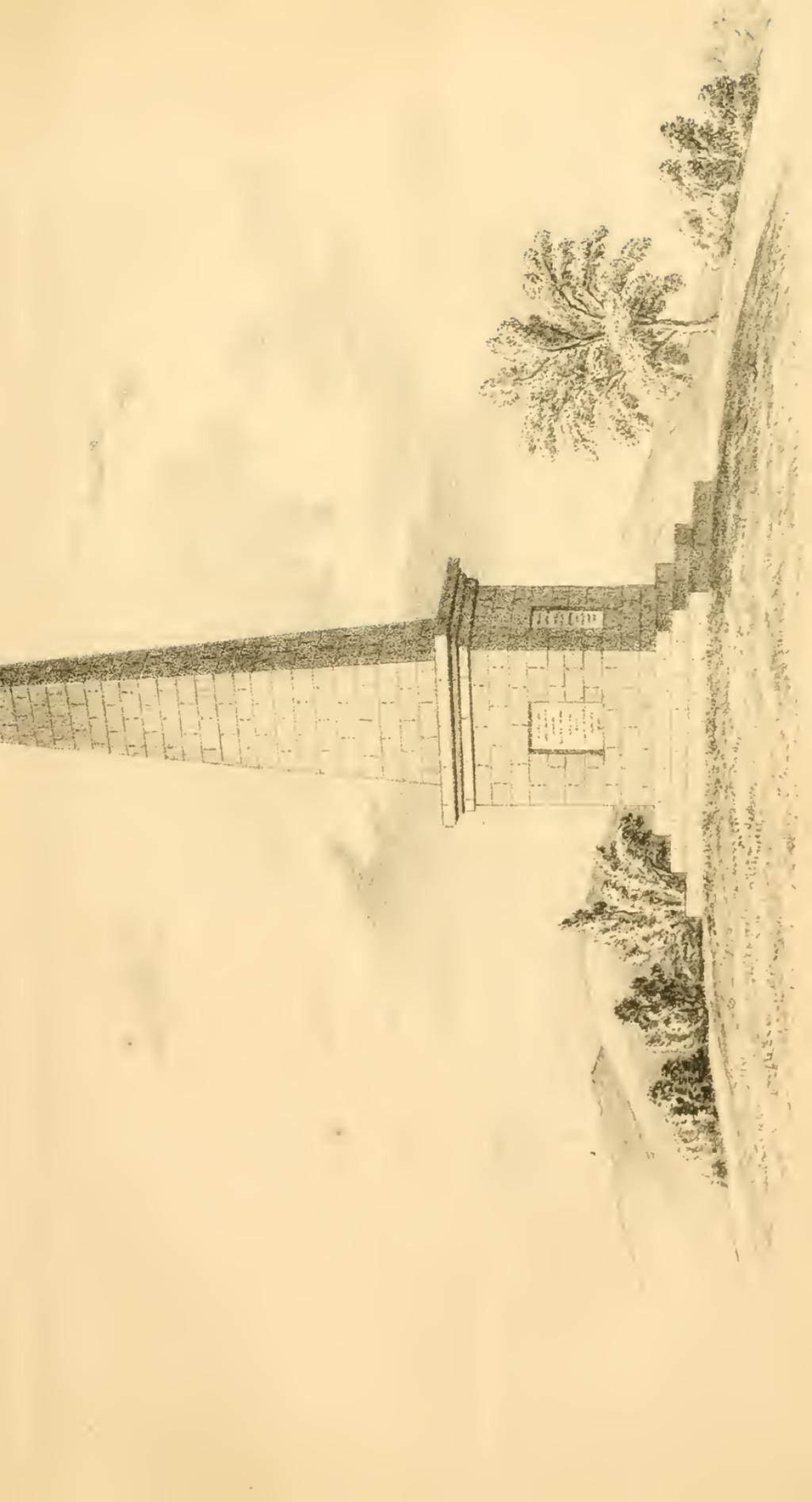
brought away as captives or hostages, their canoes destroyed, their arms seized, their crops burned ; and every entreaty to "spare the graves of their fathers" (the sanctity of which seemed dearer to them than life) was refused. The villages were razed to the ground, and not a vestige allowed to remain that could mark the spot as the site of human habitation. In fact, this was the extinction of the Six Nations. They never again "raised their heads" as a power, to threaten or befriend. One might almost sympathise with them under a fate so severe and sudden, if it were not so just, so manifest, and so direly provoked a retribution.

Having rested a few days to recruit the strength of his men,* and repair his losses of transport appliances, General Sullivan set forth on his return on the 5th October. This time the army was transported wholly by water, the flotilla being easily and rapidly borne down the river by the current. On reaching Wyoming, the expedition halted

* From the following extract, which I made from an old pamphlet shown me in the valley, it will be seen that the army could improvise "grand festivities" when occasion demanded. It will also be seen that even at that distant date the native country of General Sullivan occupied very much the same place in American sympathies which she fills to-day :—

" Saturday, 25th September, 1778, news reached the expedition of the recognition of the United States by Spain, and the Franco-American alliance. General Sullivan ordered a general rejoicing in the expedition. Bullocks were roasted whole ; banners and flags floated from every tent, and were hung on the trees around, the bands performing American, French, Spanish, and *Irish* national airs. The army was drawn up in review, a *feu de joie* fired first from the thirteen cannon with the expedition, and next from the whole line of infantry, the men giving three cheers for 'the friends of American liberty'. In the evening there was a grand banquet, at which the following six toasts were proposed :—

1. " 'The Thirteen States and their Sponsors'.
2. " 'The American Congress'.
3. " 'General Washington and the Army'.
4. " 'The Commander-in-Chief of the Western Expedition (General Sullivan)'.
5. " 'Our faithful allies—the united Houses of France and Spain'.
6. " 'May the Kingdom of Ireland merit a stripe in the American standard'.



and remained for a long period, fatigue parties being daily occupied in searching the valley for unburied bodies and bringing them in for interment. All that were thus collected were buried together, and over their remains the "Wyoming Monument" now stands. During this period it was that General Sullivan laid out and had constructed by his army corps a military road, running eastward from the valley, which still bears his name.

Of "the monument" frequent mention has been made. It is not only a prominent feature in the landscape now, but is invariably referred to by the people of the valley whenever they converse on "the massacre". "The monument" of course was one of the first objects which I hastened to see. I had been told that the names of the men who fought and fell would be recorded on the tablets it contained; and at the close of a warm day's rambles spent exploring the scene of the battle, I sighted this sad memorial. It is a plain and simple obelisk, of cut stone, not more than twenty-five or thirty feet in height, springing from a panelled pedestal, perhaps fifteen feet high. It stands in a field, close by the road, on the left hand, about a mile from the little manse and church which I have already mentioned. With my sympathies wrought to the highest pitch for the heroic band whose names it was to reveal, I found myself dwelling earnestly on an unspoken question which had long haunted my mind—"Should I find any of my own countrymen named on that roll of honour?" I felt as if it would be one of the proudest moments of my life if I should discover that amongst the rest *an Irishman* had borne a true man's part in the defence of Wyoming: for that my countrymen, if any were in the district at all in that early time, would side with the weak as against the strong, I felt convinced. But all the probabilities were against any of our people having penetrated to Wyoming at that early period. I had never heard that any had borne a part in the defence, of the valley; and I had often noticed that Campbell, in his poem, *Gertrude of Wyoming*, pictures the settlers as belonging to nearly *every* European country *except Ireland*:

“ For here the exile met from every clime,
 And spoke in friendship every distant tongue.
 Men from the blood of warring Europe sprung
 Were but divided by the running brook:
 And happy where no Rhenish trumpet sung,
 On plains no sieging mines volcano shook,
The blue-eyed German changed his sword to pruning-hook.

* * * * *

Nor far some *Andalusian* saraband
 Would sound to many a native roundelay;
 But who is he that yet a dearer land
 Remembers ‘over hills and far away ?

* * * * *

Alas! poor *Caledonia*’s mountaineer,
 That Want’s stern edict e’er and feudal grief
 Had forced him from a home he loved so dear—
 Yet found he here a home and glad relief,
 And plied the beverage from his own fair sheaf,
 That fired his Highland blood with muckle glee;
 And *England* sent her men, of men the chief,
 Who thought those sires of empire yet to be
 To plant the tree of life, to plant fair Freedom’s tree!

* * * * *

They came of every race the swarm:

* * * * *

Sprung from the wood a bold athletic mass,
 Whom virtue fires and liberty combines:
 And first the wild *Moravian* yagers pass;
 His plumed hosts the dark *Iberian* joins;
 And *Scotia*’s sword beneath the Highland thistle shines”.

Of course I took it to be *the fact*, and only regretted it accordingly, that amongst the “ blue-eyed Germans”, the “Andalusians”, the “men of England”, and “Scotia’s mountaineers”, the Hibernian exile had no place or mention—he of whom, indeed, with sorrowful truth it might be exclaimed, then as now, that “Want’s stern edict” had forced him from a home he loved so dear. “Well, well, had he been here, I know where his place would have been”, was my only solacing reflection as

I walked up to the monument, repeating aloud the verses I have quoted, my mind, however, occupied with the subject I have indicated. But lo! what do I behold? What names are those on the monumental table? Certainly not "blue-eyed German", not "Andalusian", not "Caledonian", certainly not "English" at all:

"Thomas O'Neill".
"John Murphy",
"Wm. Dunn".
"George Downing".
"James Devine".
"C. Reynolds".
"C. MacCarthy".

Ah Campbell! most worthy British poet! you served out most worthy British justice to my poor countrymen who gave their lives for Wyoming! It may have been very foolish of me, but I confess I nearly cried with joy as I read over the names of the poor fellows of whose sacrifice the world had never heard before, and whom the worthy English bard (perhaps more from ignorance than prejudice) had robbed as far as he could of the little requital the world now could give for that sacrifice! I believe a staid and sober-minded farmer, who was, as I afterwards discovered, observing me over the neighbouring fence, half suspected I was "eccentric" to say the least; for I took off my cap, flung it into the air, bounded like a schoolboy, and gave "three cheers". In fine, I found in this instance, as in so many others, that the English poetic and artistic versions of Wyoming were very pretty, but very unreliable; very far from the truth, but, like the razors, "made to sell" amongst the British public.

The western panel on the monument holds a tablet with this inscription:—

"Near this spot was fought,
On the afternoon of Friday, the 3rd day of July, 1778,
The Battle of Wyoming;
In which a small band of patriot Americans,
Chiefly the undisciplined, the youthful, and the aged,

Spared by inefficiency from the distant ranks of the Republic,
Led by Colonel Zebulon Butler and Colonel Nathan Dennison,

With a courage that deserved success,

Boldly met and bravely fought

A combined British, Tory, and Indian force
Of thrice their number.

Numerical strength alone gave success to the Invader,
and

Wide-spread havoc, desolation, and ruin

Marked his savage and bloodthirsty footsteps through the Valley.

This Monument,

Commemorative of those events,

And of the actors in them,

Has been erected

By their descendants and others, who gratefully appreciated
The services and sacrifices of their ancestors".

On the north panel is a tablet with the following:

“FIELD OFFICERS:

Lieutenant Colonel George Dorrance,

Major John Garratt.

CAPTAINS:

Robert Durkee, James Bedlack, jun.

William M'Kerrican, Lavarus Stewart,

Dethie Hewitt, Asaph Whittlesay,

Aboliah Buck, Resin Geer.

Samuel Ransom.

LIEUTENANTS:

James Wells, Perrin Ross, Aaron Jaylord,

L. Stewart, jun., A. Atherton, Elijah Shomaker,

S. Bowen, F. Waterman, Timothy Pierce,

Asa Stephens.

ENSIGNS:

Asa Gore, Silas Gore, William White,

Jeremiah Bigford, Titus Kinman.

On the southern panel is a tablet with the names of the non-commissioned officers and privates, and of the volunteers who went out to battle with them, and fell. This is a lengthy list ; the following names sufficiently attest the native land of the brave fellows who bore them :

William Dunn, Thomas O'Neill, James Devine, Sam. Hutchinson, John Hutchinson, John Murphy, Geo. Downing, Charles MacCarthy, C. Reynolds, etc.

Yes ; they were there, those poor exiles ; there, as everywhere all over the world, since the dispersion of their nation by misfortune and oppression, they were in the gap of danger, “fearless, frank, and free”—

“Marching to death with military glee”.

Enough it was for them that the land of their adoption was to be defended—a stroke to be struck for the cause of liberty and against the sceptre that had driven them from the home of their fathers. How they bore themselves is well attested. If the English poet is silent, the chronicles and traditions of the valley are loud and eloquent in testimony of the cheerful and chivalrous bravery of the Irish defenders of Wyoming. “Captain M’Kerrichan”, says Hazellon, “was a native of Belfast, in the north part of Ireland”. He fell at almost the first volley, bravely leading his men, on the fatal 3rd. He was a man of considerable means, and was greatly revered in the settlement. The chronicler above named concludes a glowing tribute to his worth, as follows : “Farewell to the brave, the generous, the true-hearted Irishman, who in the midst of gathering honours and accumulating prosperity, in the very prime of manhood, laid down his life for Wyoming”.

Of O’Neill, however, I found the most vivid and general traditions. In an old manuscript, *Recollections of the Massacre*, shown me, he is described as “a native of Ireland”, and said to be “the most learned and highly educated man in the settlement”. Other accounts mention that he was “a devout Roman Catholic”, and state that he was

a "very handsome man", but "rather vain and particular in his dress", and of "very gentlemanlike manner and deportment". It is very generally told in the valley, that on the morning of the battle, though (why, I cannot understand) he was not at all bound to go out, and might have remained in the fort, he appeared in the ranks with his sword by his side, and dressed as if for some most particular occasion—wearing ruffles, white silk stockings, velvet breeches, silver buckles, and thin shoes. But O'Neill, for all this, was no "vain carpet knight", as those who beheld him owned ere the day was done. Some one remarked to him, while in the ranks and ere they started for the encounter, that *he* was exempt and might remain. O'Neill looked proudly and almost angrily at the speaker, and said: "What! remain behind while these men fight to defend helpless women and children! Sir, *I am an Irishman!*" Of all who fought and fell on that day, it is said, he was the most daring and reckless of life—loading and discharging his rifle with deadly aim in the hottest of the fight, as coolly as if he were only practising at a target. The last seen of him was with his back to a tree, sword in hand, but badly wounded, in desperate encounter with four or five of the enemy. Six weeks after, his body, covered with wounds, was found on the same spot—recognizable only as that of the heroic Irishman O'Neill, by the finery of the dress which he wore!

Several years passed by before Wyoming again became occupied to any great extent. Indeed so recently as fifty years after the events above described "the ruined wall and roofless homes", remained all over the valley, overgrown with grass and wild flowers. A great many of the farms or homesteads returned to a state of nature; and although the population has, comparatively speaking, much increased within the past half century, the place seems never to have completely shaken off an air of loneliness and utter seclusion which is almost suggestive of its sad history. Relics of the struggle are still discovered daily. The Reverend Mr. Laurence showed me some skulls in his little museum, which the farmers close by had turned up in the course of their agri-

cultural operations. Each skull had an ominous cleft, too plainly telling where the Indian tomahawk crushed through. The people inhabiting the houses on the site of Forty Fort told me that quite a store of valuables had recently been found at the bottom of the Well, and had been taken off to a State Museum, either in Philadelphia or Washington. Bullets and Indian spear and arrow-heads are quite frequently found around the site of Wintermoots. The site of Fort Wintermoot, I should add, is now occupied by a wood house, in which resides an old woman (named Frances Slocumb, I think), daughter of parents who escaped from Forty Fort on the day of capitulation. I talked with her for a long time. She was almost deaf, but seemed very ready to tell all about "the massacre" and "the fight", giving me anecdotes and reminiscences of those events in abundance, gathered from her father and mother, on whose memory terror had engraven them deeply.

A few days later, and I was homeward bound from Wyoming. I had yet the great Niagara to see, and many another scene to visit and explore. But when I had seen them all, had heard the never-ceasing thunders of "the Falls", and admired the panoramic splendours of the Hudson, I but repeated the Indian story, that "from the rising to the setting sun another Wyoming we should never find". Whether it was its scenery alone, its utter seclusion, its peaceful calm, its sylvan shades, its noble river, its aged forests and wooded mountains, or whether it was its tragic story, or yet the simple, kindly, hospitable character of its people, or all these combined, that so wrought upon my feelings, I cannot tell; but when I turned to take my farewell of the valley, I felt regret and sadness to think I might see it no more. To-day I but fulfil a promise made to one of its venerable patriarchs, kindliest where all were kindly to me, that if I lived to see my own country again, I would one day tell to Europe "The True Story of Wyoming!"



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