

make every exertion to effect his junction with the garrison. Gansevoort directed lieutenant-colonel Willet to make a sally upon the British lines, in order to favor the attempt of Harkimer; but the English commander, perceiving how dangerous it was to receive the enemy in his intrenchments, and knowing full well how much better the Indians were adapted for the attack than for acting upon the defensive, detached colonel Johnson, with a part of the regular troops and the Indians, to intercept the Americans upon their approach. General Harkimer advanced with extreme negligence, without examination of his ground, without a reconnoitering party in front, and without rangers upon his flanks; a thing the more surprising, as he could not have been ignorant how liable he was to ambuscades from the nature of the country, and the singular adroitness of the savages in that mode of war. These barbarians soon found occasion to give him a sanguinary proof of it. They concealed themselves with a detachment of regulars in the woods near the road by which the Americans approached. The moment the column had passed, they suddenly fell upon the rear guard with inconceivable fury. After the first fire the Indians rushed on with their spears and hatchets, and killed with the same cruelty those who resisted and those who surrendered. The disorder became extreme; the carnage was frightful; and even the horrible aspect of the principal actors, contributed to heighten the terrors of the scene. The republicans, however, recovered from their first surprise, and forming themselves into a solid column, attained an advantageous ground, which enabled them to maintain a spirited resistance. They would, nevertheless, have been overborne by the number and fury of the enemy, if the intelligence of the attack upon his camp by colonel Willet had not induced him to retire. Four hundred Americans were slain, and among them general Harkimer. Many of the most distinguished men of the province, and several of the most considerable magistrates, shared the same fate. The royalists looked upon this success as a sure pledge of the approaching reduction of the rebels. Their victory, however, was not bought without blood; besides a certain number of regulars, about sixty Indians were killed and wounded, among whom were several of their principal chiefs, and of their most distinguished and favorite warriors. It appears also, that in the heat and confusion of the conflict, several savages were killed by the English themselves. Thus these intractable and undisciplined barbarians, by nature ferocious, and inclined to suspicion, irritated at finding a resistance to which they had not been accustomed, became still more refractory and still more ruthless. They wreaked the first transports of their rage upon the un-