

of these United States; and by following the course of our streams and valleys we can invade no less than twenty States and two-thirds of the territories of the union. Streams form a nation's natural defense and are her proper highways; so have believed the mighty conquerors of the past, and much later the confederates in our recent war. In no mean sense then, New York State commands the union. Nor can there be but one government on this continent so long as our rivers, valleys and mountains remain as now. The honored President of this society, Horatio Seymour, the sage of Deerfield

*Qui decori decus addit avio,*

assures us that, in company with General Winfield Scott, from an elevated point near the confluence of the Mohawk and the Hudson rivers, he overlooked the range of highlands which marked their courses; and that the hero of so many battles, stretching out his arm, remarked: "Remember this has been the strategic point in all the wars waged for the control of this continent." And this is simply one of the highlands of our State. Add to it those of which I have just spoken, those wooded summits which the sun first doth gild, and from them we can pass down not merely to our seaboard cities, but to the vast, vast acres which make our reunited and prosperous country.

The Fort that formerly occupied this site was built in 1759; more than forty years after the erection of Forts Ticonderoga and Onondaga, and some forty-seven years after Fort Hunter, the latter being the first Fort erected among the Five Nations. It was merely one in a long chain of similar structures that united the waters of the Hudson with the deeper and bluer waters of our western lakes. On the west, the nearer were Forts Bull and William, with Forts Herkimer and Hendricks at the east. It had its origin in the colonies desiring to strengthen themselves in this valley, and the necessity of supplies and ammunition being conveniently located, as well as shelter for the settlers when threatened or pursued by thirsty and bloody foes.

Under date of July 16, 1755, the lords of trade wrote to Governor Hardy for an opinion as to the best system to be laid down for the defense of the frontiers; for the management of the Indians; what Forts should be built, where located, and the number of troops required to give efficiency to the colonies. Hardy, in replying to this communication, suggested that three Forts should be erected on the northern frontiers; one on the Hudson