

CAPTAIN HALE.

BY H. V. C.

AMONG the many monuments which attract a stranger's attention when wandering through the vast aisles of Westminster Abbey, few will be regarded with more painful interest than that erected to the memory of the unfortunate André. The chaste tablet, with its affecting inscription,—and below it a *couchant* lion with upturned face, wearing an expression of almost human sorrow,—as if in that mute symbol of England's glory, was represented her grief for the untimely fate of a most brave and gifted son.

And truly there was no scene enacted in the drama of the American Revolution which excited more universal sympathy than the tragic death of Major André. Throughout the two hostile armies, a feeling of profound sorrow was deeply expressed, and there was not one,—friend or enemy,—who would not have sacrificed much, to have averted the fate of that amiable and gallant officer. History has given a faithful and impartial account of that painful transaction; and while all who have a spark of generous feeling must regret that the stern laws of war demanded so great a sacrifice, the universal voice has long since exonerated Washington from any charge which a brave and humane man might not be proud to accept, and in that, as in every other act of his life, placed him far above the mean attacks of party spirit, or the contemptible cavils of national prejudice.

Major André, in the unfortunate negotiation with a traitor, which led to so fatal a result, undoubtedly acted from a conscientious sense of duty, and a chivalrous desire to serve the interests of his country. But it must be a most subtle casuist who can draw a line of distinction between the act of holding a treasonable correspondence with an officer in the enemy's service, and that of entering in disguise within the enemy's line, to espy his secret proceedings. It is in vain to argue that he was *invited* to communicate with an American officer, high in command, and holding a most important position, and that under his safe escort he went to the appointment;—for he was well aware that *that* officer was planning to betray his trust for a sordid remuneration, and with a malignant baseness which even then received the just contempt of every high-minded

British officer, and which has consigned his name to everlasting infamy.

Major André went disguised into the bounds of the American encampment, and was found with treasonable papers secreted on his person; and from his own confession he felt keenly sensible that his life was perilled by the attempt. We willingly admit that he was a generous martyr to his country's cause; but the justice of his sentence cannot be denied, and there are instances recorded, on the same page of history, where similar conduct was pursued, and with less palliating circumstances, by some in British command.

An impartial and distinguished historian,—Sparks, in his life of Arnold,—narrates a touching story, of that eventful period, and it is so similar, in many respects, to that of Major André, that we are tempted to transcribe it; trusting that, at this distance of time, when party feelings are forgotten in all generous minds, the noble self-sacrifice of a young soldier may find a response in every patriotic heart, of whatever name or country.

“The case of Captain Nathan Hale has been regarded as parallel to that of Major André. This young officer was a graduate of Yale College, and had but recently closed his academic course, when the war of the Revolution commenced. Possessing genius, taste, and ardor, he became distinguished as a scholar; and endowed in an eminent degree with those graces and gifts of nature which add a charm to youthful excellence, he gained universal esteem and confidence. To high moral worth and irreproachable habits, were joined gentleness of manners, an ingenuous disposition, and vigor of understanding. No young man of his years put forth a fairer promise of future usefulness and celebrity; the fortunes of none were fostered more sincerely by the generous good wishes of his associates, or the hopes and encouraging presages of his superiors.

“Being a patriot upon principle, and an enthusiast in a cause which appealed equally to his sense of justice and love of liberty, he was among the first to take up arms in his country's defence. The news of the battle of Lexington