

"In New York, the old Dutch feudality still held sway, and the manors of the Van Rensselaers, Van Cortlandts and Livingstons, and the great estates and numerous tenantry of the Schuylers and other leading families, formed the basis of an aristocracy, some of the members of which had rendered good service to the State and were destined to render more. Pennsylvania was feudal in form but not in spirit; Virginia, in spirit but not in form, New England in neither and New York in both (1)." The existence of a powerful aristocracy in New York had a great influence on the military history of the invasions of Canada. The results were already in evidence at Albany, in 1689, at the period of the massacre of Schenectady. At that time the ancient social distinction between the *gentry* and the people which had been imported unbroken from Europe during the period of the Dutch patroonships, and was confirmed by English customs, was in full force, and the unquestioning respect shewn to persons of gentle class placed them in a position of natural leadership and gave scope to the hereditary qualities which no doubt distinguished some of them. The institution of noblesse or gentry produced some of the same characteristics as in New France;—an active, far-sighted spirit of military enterprise, and at the same time a repellent force to the progress of immigration.

Albany had received a city charter from the crown in 1686, and its first mayor was Peter Schuyler.

(1) Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. II.