

## THE WHISKEY INSURRECTION.

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Toward the latter part of the last Century, occurred the Whiskey Insurrection—an event, for the history of which, we have but little space, but which occupied at the time a very considerable place in the public mind. In the early days of the Union, it was deemed expedient to lay a tax, per gallon, on all home-made spiritous liquors to help meet the pressing exigencies of the country. The general murmur thus occasioned, gradually subsided, except in the western part of Pennsylvania; and the region generally, of which we have been treating. The Scotch Irish element, was lashed into rebellion by the attempt to interfere with their cherished beverage and at the same time their main article of trade.

The country at that time had no reliable market nearer than New Orleans; and whiskey was the most economical commodity by the sale of which the settlers could realize money for their surplus grain. It was always saleable, not very bulky, and brought the ready cash.—Almost every spring and clear running stream had a still by its side, and scarcely a farmer, but was also a distiller. Grain, for the ordinary purposes for which it is used, was a drug; hard money was very scarce—12½ cts. being often the extreme price for a bushel of wheat. The tax under these circumstances operated upon them with peculiar hardship, and, accordingly, when the collectors came round, their demands were refused. Matters progressed, until they ended in open mutiny.—July 14th, 1794, the insurgents, to the number of several hundred, surrounded the dwelling of John Neville, Inspector of Revenues for the Fourth Pennsylvania district, seized upon his papers, destroyed his private property, and maltreated and wounded him and his servants. The consequence was, a complaint to the county authorities, but they being unable to protect him, he fled the vicinity. David Lenox, the U. S. Marshal, was similarly served. A proclamation soon appeared from the President of the U. S., cautioning the malcontents against the consequences of their treasonable acts,