

was marching, to reinforce Gen. Schuyler, and defeated the British troops with considerable loss on the 15th of August. Colonel Broyman had been detached to reinforce Baume, spent twenty-four hours in marching sixteen miles, came up at the close of the action, was attacked and defeated, the auxiliaries losing 600 men in killed and wounded.

Gen. Schuyler, commanding the American troops, had taken up a position behind the Mohawk with the design of impeding the advance of the British troops on Albany, but with small hopes indeed of preventing its fall. Burgoyne's dilatory proceedings, the time he wasted at Fort Edward, the defeat of Baume at Bennington, and St. Leger's retreat from Fort Stanwix, had given his enemies confidence. Schuyler's army was rapidly increased, while active partisans began to operate on the British line of communications with Ticonderago by Fort Anne and South Bay. A Col. Brown even surprised their posts on Lake George, captured a number of transports and a large quantity of provisions, took possession of Mount Independence at Ticonderago, which the British had neglected to secure, summoned the garrison to surrender, and after four days' bombardment decamped to work mischief in the rear of the advancing army. It appears to have been a part of Burgoyne's peculiarities to merely occupy a post as he advanced, and leave it for the first active *free lance* who choose to follow to garrison it at his leisure, so that the giving up of his communications with Canada appears to have been a matter of course, hence a defeat was destruction. Now Fort Anne might have been easily held, South Bay kept clear by a couple of armed gunboats and no attempt could have been made on Lake George, its western shores being practically uninhabited.

Gen. Schuyler's operations did not give satisfaction to Congress and he was superseded by Gen. Gates on 19th August. This officer may be remembered as the young Lieutenant noticed in the "Campaigns of 1754-64," as having been consulted by that *ape in politics*, the notorious Duke of Newcastle, as to the proper plan of an American campaign. He now took command of the American army and moved it across the Mohawk, taking up a position in advance of the village of Still Water, on Bemis' heights. Reinforcements began rapidly to arrive, stimulated in a great part by the forged story of Jane McCrea's murder, and Gates, with a cunning by no means commendable, took advantage of the lie to heighten the feeling of horror and aversion it inspired. In a letter, characterized by Sparks, the historian, as "more ornate than forcible," he dealt on the atrocity of employing savages in Christian warfare, and in the turgid eloquence of "spread-eagleism," denounced the agents and the cause, taking good care to have this production published and distributed before any answer was received.

Burgoyne appears to have been sorely perplexed, and that indecision or want of appreciative sagacity which has formed so distinguishing a trait in the character of British officers of the period, was manifested in more than ordinary degree on this occasion. Having at length collected about 30 days' provisions he advanced along the left bank of the Hudson, to the mouth of Balan-kill Creek, where he encamped preparatory to crossing the river. About half a mile above this point he threw a bridge of boats across the Hudson, and on the 13th and 14th September, 1777, passed his army to the right bank and encamped on the heights and plains of Saratoga, with a heavy train of artillery.

On the 15th he marched across the Fish Creek or Kill as far as Dovegat (now Oveville), where he halted till the 17th, and on the 18th encamped at a place now called Wilbur's basin, within two miles of the American camp. Gates had entrenched himself in an advantageous position; a succession of ravines in his front, his right resting on the Hudson, his left on a redoubt in a commanding position, while Mill Creek in his front was covered with intrenchments and a strong redoubt. The position commanded the valley of the Hudson, and was assailable only by a direct attack in front or an attempt at turning the left flank. The flats to the river being open and enfiladed the right flank could be turned. Here he was attacked on the 19th of September by Burgoyne's whole force. The plan of attack was puerile. The centre of a strong position itself the strongest point was to be assailed by the Indians and Canadians, while the left, covered by rough wooded hills and defiles, was to be attacked and turned by the British Grenadiers and light infantry, the right was to be assailed by the British left, which included the immense train of artillery. Now, if the order had been changed there can be no doubt but the Americans would have been defeated. The Canadians and Indians, supported by the light infantry, should have been detached to turn the left of the Americans, and when they had got well into the rear a determined onset should have been made on the centre and right.

The Indians and Canadians were assailed and driven back, and Gen. Arnold, who assumed command of the American left and centre, at once took the initiative, boldly advanced and compelled the British right to retire. The left fared no better, being obliged to spike several pieces of artillery to prevent their falling into the enemy's hands. Instead of being the assailants they were thrown on the defensive, and all their efforts were directed to prevent both wings of their army from being separated. Night put a stop to the action, the British rested on the field while the Americans retired within their lines. The former claimed a victory, bought with the loss of 500 men killed,

wounded and prisoners. The latter had not gained a victory but they had not been defeated, and the whole fruits of success rest ed with them; they had lost 319 men.

On the 20th September Burgoyne retired to his encampment at Wilbur's basin. A renewal of the attack on the American lines would have left him an assured victory—they were reduced to the last cartridge of ammunition and had only three days' food. But enterprise and sagacity were not necessarily quantities belonging to the witty and accomplished Burgoyne. Thus ended the disastrous battle of Stillwater—to be succeeded by a second still more unfortunate in its results.

Of General, Burgoyne's proceedings after this indecisive action very conflicting accounts exist. He occupied his troops busily in fortifying his position around Wilbur's basin, sending dispatches to inform Generals Howe and Clinton of his position, while ample time was allowed for General Gates to receive reinforcements and supplies of stores, ammunition and provisions, it enabled him take up positions on the right flank of the British and to occupy all the posts in its rear; not a man or biscuit could reach them, the American pickets were too active. But at length advices arrived that Clinton would make a movement up the Hudson on the 20th September, but nothing having been heard of it on the 1st October Burgoyne was obliged to put his troops on half allowance, and on the 7th it became a question of fighting or flying.—The latter alternative was no longer in his power, his army was reduced to a little over 5,000 men. Early in the morning of the last mentioned day Burgoyne detached 1500 men and ten pieces of artillery for the purpose of securing forage, and if possible to turn the enemy's left flank, force them to an action on equal terms, for the purpose of securing a retreat to the Lakes—all thoughts of an advance had been abandoned.

This foolish demonstration, for it was nothing else, ended in utter defeat. Too weak to make any impression on the American lines, totally unsupported and badly handled they were outflanked and driven back with the loss of six pieces of artillery, but even here they were not safe; instead of being the assailants they were assailed by the Americans, flushed with success, with such impetuosity that it was with the greatest difficulty they were repulsed on the right, but they succeeded in carrying a principal redoubt in the centre where they defeated a German brigade, captured all their equipage with nine field pieces and a large quantity of ammunition. The British loss on this disastrous day amounted to over 700 men in killed, wounded and prisoners. The situation of the British troops was now desperate. Their camp laid open at its vulnerable points, completely surrounded, no hope of retreat remained; but there were still brave men who did not despair, and