BOOK NOTICE


It is natural, in the recent epidemic of Arnold biographies, that the last should be the best. In this, the fruit of seven years' researches, Mr. Decker has produced a penetrating and exhaustive study, with all the old and much valuable new material. Its five hundred pages have been composed with the purpose of omitting not one historical fact and not one emotional thrill of the dark little traitor's dramatic story. He has not only collected a wealth of material on Arnold, but has assembled it well.

His most difficult and most interesting problem lies, of course, in his treatment of the innumerable controversial points of Arnold's tumultuous career. In the Arnold genealogy, which he has traced back farther than other biographers, in the traitor's descent from the "honor" worshipping freebooters of his early family tree, he finds a thesis which can be applied with plausible results to all doubtful issues. It is infinitely more satisfying and more secure as a general solution than the old one of the patriot hero suddenly gone wrong.

To the obscure and involved problems of Arnold's governorship of Philadelphia Mr. Decker has given a thorough study and carefully balanced judgment which will bring that chapter to the attention of all who are interested in the city's history. Such a small matter, on the other hand, as to whether Arnold was drunk in battle, he blithely decides in the affirmative, a conclusion which few other biographers have been willing to make, even if they could not deny the probability. In treating the disputes between the rival generals at Saratoga, he takes a new attitude, less sympathetic to Scuyler than is customary, and overestimating, perhaps, the influence of Varick, Lewis, the aides and secretaries in general, in fomenting trouble between their masters. He makes a free use of the chatty Wilkinson memoirs, which no historian trusts, but all quote with gratitude.

In the problem of whether pretty Peggy had a part in the conspiracy Mr. Decker wisely refrains from committing himself, dismissing it with a dark suggestion.

Mr. Decker's narrative is salted with an appropriate sense of humor. He never takes his characters too seriously. In style, he assumes a quick tempo resembling the pseudo- terseness of the magazine Time, slowed occasionally by a flight or a flourish of rhetoric, which, whether designedly or not, is highly fitting to its subject.

CHARLES COLEMAN SELLERS.*

Notes and Queries


When the epochal flight of James II., the fourth Stuart King of England, took place, Louis XIV. of France, the Grand Monarque, who was "l'État", recognized the blow to the divine right of Kings administered by the Revolutionaries across the Channel, and determined to humble England. One of the methods he contemplated was to drive the Englishman out of America. The utter hatred of the Colonists of France and of England for each other is well-known; but the scheme of Le Grand Monarque was to expel finally and conclusively the sinning people from this Continent.

To conduct this task, there was chosen as the leader, the celebrated Louis de Buade Frontenac: he had been Governor of Nouvelle France for some years from 1672 on: but had gone back to France: while in Canada, he had sedulously courted the favor of the Iroquois, who had

* Author of Benedict Arnold, the Proud Warrior. Editor.
been inimical to the French since the day the French joined their Indian foes against them. An astute as well as a bold, determined soldier, recognising the very great importance of Indian assistance, he brought out with him, 1689, some thirteen Iroquois, who had survived the galleys to which they had been sentenced: among these was an Iroquois, a Cayuga Chief, Ourouhœare, to whom Frontenac paid great attention during the voyage.

Arriving in Canada, Frontenac thought that he might obtain the goodwill of these enemies: he sent a French retired officer, Chevalier d'Aux (Daux, as it is sometimes spelled), with three other Frenchmen to accompany the four Indians accredited by Ourouhœare, to go to Onondaga, to endeavor to conciliate the Iroquois, pointing out the advantages to be derived from an alliance with the French over anything that could come from the English. The embassy was a failure, two Frenchmen were burned at the stake, one died of smallpox (Jenner was far in the future), one was given to the Oneidas and d'Aux himself was tied to the stake to be burned to death, when he was rescued by some Dutch traders and taken to Orange, the present Albany.

He remained a prisoner for two-and-a-half years in New England: on his release, he made a Mémoire or Report to Frontenac, concerning the English Colonies, which is still extant and to be found copied in the Archives of Canada and the Archives of the Province of Quebec. The only mention of Philadelphia contained in this Mémoire is as to certain Indians who had been brought over to the English interests, arriving with their wives at "Philadelfe". There is, however, another Mémoire, copies of which are in these Archives, intituled "Mémoire Instructif sur la Nouvelle-Angleterre et Nouvelle-York présenté à Monsieur Le Comte de Frontenac, (1682)", which is almost certainly attributable to him.

In this Mémoire, the author suggests the method of conquering New England, "Baston", including the village called "Cambrich", where there is a College, then going west to and through "Rodeilland" to "Manath", and subduing all the country to Albany, i.e., "from Manath to Orange"—then he continued:—"Il nous ouvrirait le chemin de la Pensilvanie, grand bourg mullement fortifié, et dont tous le habitants sont croocres et meschants soldats. Il s'y recueille quantité de bled et de tabac; il y a mines de fer que Ton met en œuvre sur les lieux et dont on fournit la Nouvelle Angelterre, il y a aussi quelques verreries".

With some little, if not very profound knowledge of French, that first adjective "croocres", was too much for me: being thus "stuck", I turned to my friend, M. Pierre-Georges Roy, the learned and courteous Archivist of the Province of Quebec, for assistance—he examined the copy and while the word is plainly "croocres" in the copy, he is satisfied, and I agree with him, quantum valeat, that the original is "cancres", meaning "poor", "inefficient"; so the passage may be translated:—"This will open the way for us to Pennsylvania, a large town, not at all fortified, and all of whose inhabitants are poor and bad soldiers. There is gathered there a quantity of wheat and tobacco: there are iron mines worked on the spot, and from which New England is furnished—there are also some glass-works".

Whether he intends to characterise the inhabitants of Philadelphia only or those of Pennsylvania generally, I suppose the Quakers of Penn's settlement, at least, were not capable soldiers—a French army-officer would naturally look upon them with contempt.

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Earliest known 1789 Washington medal
(See pp. 123-124)

Second model of 1789 Washington medal