

CHAPTER II.

Having located the pioneers of Schoharie according to their several inclinations, let us see how they were to live. More or less land was found at each settlement cleared, and with little pains, it was fitted for cultivation. It has been already shown that their effects were conveyed in such a manner, that we must presume they possessed very little of this world's gear. Their all, no doubt, consisted in a few rude tools, a scanty supply of provisions, a meagre wardrobe, and a small number of rusty fire arms : they had to manufacture their own furniture, if the apology for it, merited such a name. Bedsteads, they for some time dispensed with. From logs they cut blocks, which answered the purposes of chairs and tables ; sideboards, sofas, piano fortes, ottomans, carpets, &c., were to them neither objects of family pride, convenience or envy. They endeavored to foster the friendship of their Indian neighbors, and from them they received corn and beans, which the latter kindly showed them how to cultivate. Within one week after their arrival, four children were born ; a fact I think very worthy of record in the annals of this people. Their names were Catharine Mattice, Elizabeth Lawyer, Wilhelmus Bouck and Johannes Earhart. In preparing ground for planting, which was done in the absence of plows, by broad hoes, they found many ground nuts, which they made use of for food, the first season. I have no account of their having been furnished with provisions by the Queen's agent, after they left Albany, and suppose they were left to live on their own resources, and what the country afforded.

The want of grist mills, for several years, they found to be a source of great inconvenience. The stump mentioned in the pre-

ceding chapter, which served as the southern bound of the first Indian purchase, not only answered the Indians, but the first Germans, the purpose of a corn mill. By the side of this hollow stump, an upright shaft and cross-bar were raised, from which was suspended a heavy wood, or stone pestle, working on the principle of a pump. Their corn for several years, they hulled with lye, or pounded preparatory to eating it.

Brown says, the first wheat was sowed in Schoharie in the fall of 1713, by Lambert Sternberg, of Garlock's dorf. As I have shown the arrival of the Germans to have been two years earlier than the time stated by him, I suppose the first wheat to have been sown in the fall of 1711.

As Schenectada was nearer the Schoharie settlements than Albany, for such necessaries as they required the first few years, they visited the former place the most frequently. Those who possessed the means, bought wheat there at two shillings a spint, (a peck,) or six shillings a skipple, had it ground and returned home with it on their backs, by a lonely Indian footh-path, through a heavy forest. It was thus, Sternberg carried the first skipple of wheat ever taken to Schoharie in the berry. He resided near the present residence of Henry Sternberg, a descendant of his. On the west side of the river, opposite Garlock's dorf, had been an Indian castle, which was abandoned about the time the Germans arrived; the occupants having removed up the river, to the Wilder Hook. On the ground within the dilapidated inclosure, the wheat was sowed, or rather planted, (as they then had no plows or horses,) over more than an acre of ground; it was planted within this yard, because it was a warm, rich piece of ground with little grass on it, and being inclosed, would remove the danger of having the crop destroyed in the fall or spring, by deer, which were numerous on the surrounding mountains. This wheat, which rooted remarkably well in the fall, stood so thin, from having been scattered over so much ground, that it was hoed in the spring like a patch of corn; and well was the husbandman rewarded for his labor. Every berry sent forth several stalks, every stalk sustained a drooping head, and

every head teemed with numerous berries. When ripe, it was gathered with the greatest care; not a single head was lost, and when threshed, the *one* yielded *eighty-three* skipples. In these days, when the weevil scarcely allows three, to say nothing of the eighty, bushels to one; this statement would perhaps be looked upon as incredible, were not all the circumstances known. Many procured seed from Sternberg, and it was not long before the settlers raised wheat enough for their own consumption.

For several years, they had most of their grain floured at Schenectada. They usually went there in parties of fifteen or twenty at a time, to be better able to defend themselves against wild beasts, which then were numerous between the two places. Often, there were as many women as men in those journeys, and as they had to encamp in the woods at least one night, the women frequently displayed when in danger, as much coolness and bravery as their liege lords. A skipple was the quantity usually borne by each individual, but the stronger often carried more. Not unfrequently, they left Schoharie to go to mill, on the morning of one day, and were at home on the morning of the next; performing a journey of between forty and fifty miles, in twenty-four hours or less, bearing the ordinary burden; but at such times, they traveled most of the night without encamping. It is said, that women were not unfrequently among those who performed the journey in the shortest time—preparing a breakfast for their families, from the flour they had brought, on the morning after they left home. Where is the matron now to be found, in the whole valley of the Schoharie, who would perform such a journey, in such a plight?

As may be supposed, many of the first settlers in Schoharie were related. Hence has arisen that weighty political argument sometimes heard, "he belongs to the cousin family."

Owing to the industry and economy of the colonists, and the richness of the soil, want soon began to flee their dwellings, and plenty to enter; and as their clothes began to wax old, they manufactured others from dressed buck-skins, which they obtained from the Indians. A file of those men, clad in buck-skin,

with caps of fox or wolf-skin, all of their own manufacture, must have presented a formidable appearance. It is not certain but the domestic economy of the male, was carried into the female department; and that here and there a ruddy maiden, concealed her charming proportions beneath a habit of deer-skin.

It is said that physicians accompanied the first Germans to Schoharie; and that for many years, ministers, or missionaries, under pay from the British government, labored in the different German settlements in the country. They visited the people; married those whose peace of mind Cupid had destroyed; preached to, and exhorted all. Their audiences usually occupied some convenient barn in the summer season, and the larger dwellings in the winter.

The want of horses and cattle at first, was much felt by the settlements. By whom cattle, swine and sheep were first introduced, I have been unable to learn. The first of the horse kind they possessed, was an old gray mare. She was purchased at Schenectada for a small sum, by *nine* individuals of Weiser's dorf; and it is said they kept her moving. Who the nine were, who gloried in owning this old *Rosinante*, is unknown; but there can be little doubt that Weiser, the patroon, owned an important share. It may be asked, whether the people of those settlements, who resided too close together, to admit of lands for cultivation lying between them, did not live as do the shakers; who make all their earnings common stock. With a mutual understanding, each labored for his own benefit, and in order to prevent difficulty, lands were marked out and bounds placed, so that every one knew and cultivated his own parcel.

Not long after the Germans settled in Schoharie, the Dutch began a settlement in Vrooman's Land, on the west side of the river, two or three miles above Weiser's dorf. Adam Vrooman, a citizen of Schenectada—a farmer of considerable wealth, and somewhat advanced in life, took a royal patent for this land, from which circumstance, it was called Vrooman's Land: by which name it is still distinguished. This patent was executed August 26, 1714. Previous to obtaining the royal title, Vrooman had received Indian

conveyances for portions of the land as *gifts*. One of two deeds, which have escaped the fate of most of Col. Peter Vrooman's papers, contains the names of eighteen Indians, inserted in the following order: "Pennonequieeson, Canquothoo, Hendrick the Indian, [probably King Hendrick of the French war,] Kawna-wahdeakeoe, Turthyowriss, Sagonadietah, Tucktaharessoo, Onnadahsea, Kahenterunkqua, Amos the Indian, Jacob the Indian, Cornelius the Indian, Gonhe Wannah, Oneedyea, Leweas the Indian, Johanis the Indian, Tuquaw-in-hunt, and Esras the Indian, all owners and proprietors of a certain piece of land, situate, lying and being in the bounds of the land called Skohere." The title is for two hundred and sixty acres of land near the hill "called Onitstagrawa;" two hundred of which were flats, and sixty acres wood-land. The instrument closed as follows: "*In testimony whereof, we, the three races or tribes of the Maquase, the Turtle, Wolf and Bear, being present, have hereunto set our marks and seals, in the town of Schenectady, this two and twentieth day of August, and in the tenth year of her Majesty's [Queen Anne's] reign. Annoque Domini, 1711.*" Eighteen wax seals are attached to the conveyance, in front of which are arranged, in the order named, the devices of a *turtle*, a *wolf* and a *bear*, the former holding a tomahawk in one of its claws.

The other deed alluded to, is dated April 30, 1714, and contains the eight following names: "Siunnequerison, Tanuryso, Nisawgoreeatah, Turgourus, Honodaw, Kannakquawes, Tigreedontee, Onnodeegondee, all of the Maquaes country, native Indians, owners and proprietors, &c." The deed was given for three hundred and forty acres of woodland, lying eastward of the sixty acres previously conveyed, "bounded northward by the Onitstagrawa, to the southward by a hill called Kan-je-a-ra-go-re, to the westward by a ridge of hills that join to Onitstagrawa, extending southerly much like unto a half moon, till it joins the aforesaid hill Kanjeearagore." This instrument closes in the manner of the one before noticed, except that each Indian's name is placed before a seal to which he had made his mark. The ensigns of the three Mohawk tribes, are conspicuously traced in the midst of the

signatures. One of the two witnesses to both deeds was **Leo Stevens**, a woman who acted as interpreter on the occasion of granting each conveyance. Both deeds were duly recorded in the secretary's office of the province.

March 30th, 1726, Adam Vrooman obtained a new Indian title to the flats known as Vrooman's Land, executed by nine individuals of the nation, "in behalf of all the Mohaug's Indians." Some difficulty had probably arisen, in consequence of his holding more land than the first deeds specified. The new title gave the land previously conveyed with the sentence, "let there be as much as there will, more or less, for we are no surveyors;" and was executed with the ensigns of the Mohawk nation—the *turtle*, *wolf* and *bear*.

Vrooman's patent was bounded on the north by a point of the Onitstagrawa and the Line kill, and on the south by the white pine swamp, (as a little swamp near the present residence of Samuel Lawyer was then called) and a brook running from it, and embraced a good part of the flats between those two bounds from the hill to the river, excepting the Wilder Hook: where dwelt many of the natives, and where, as before stated, was their strongest castle. This patent was given for eleven hundred acres, more or less. It is said to have contained about fourteen hundred acres: than which very little better land ever was tilled. He had not designed to settle on this land himself, but made the purchase for a son. Peter Vrooman, for whom it was bought, settled on it soon after the purchase. He had quite a family, his oldest son, Bartholomew, being at that time fourteen or fifteen years old. He had a house erected previous to his moving there, and other conveniences for living. The first summer, he employed several hands, planted considerable corn, and fenced in some of his land. In the following autumn, he returned with his wife and children to Schenectada to spend the winter; leaving a hired man by the name of Truax, and two blacks, Morter, and Mary his wife, to take care of the property; of which he left considerable. Not long after Vrooman returned to Schenectada, Truax was most cruelly murdered. The circumstances attending this murder, are

substantially as follows. The evening before his death, Truax returned from the pleasing recreation of gunning, with a mess of pigeons, which he told Mary to dress and prepare for breakfast. Being fatigued, he retired to rest earlier than usual, and soon forgot his cares and dangers, in a grateful slumber familiar to the sportsman. Mary cleansed the pigeons, and after having done so, she unconsciously put the knife into a side pocket still bloody, intending, but forgetting to wash it. Morter was absent from home during that evening and most of the night. Mary arose betimes in the morning, with no small pains prepared the savory dish, and waited sometime for Truax to rise. Observing that he kept his room unusually late, she went to his door and called to him, but received no answer. She tried to open the door and found it locked on the inside. As may be supposed, she felt the most lively apprehensions that all was not right. She could, from some position outside the house, look into his window. Thither she with trepidation went, when her suspicions were more than realized, and she learned too well the reason he had not risen at his usual hour. She quickly communicated intelligence of her discovery to the Indians, her nearest neighbors: who, on their arrival at the house, burst open the door of his room. Horrible indeed was the sight then disclosed. Poor Truax lay in his bed, which he had sought without the least suspicion of danger, cold and stiff in his own gore; with his throat cut from ear to ear. Indian messengers were immediately dispatched to Schenectada, to communicate the tragic affair to Peter Vrooman. About the same time, the bloody knife was discovered in the pocket of the weeping Mary. On the evening of the same, or early the following day, the messengers returned with Vrooman, and proper officers to arrest the murderer, or whoever might be suspected. Suspicions were fixed upon the two blacks; and when the fact of finding the bloody knife in the pocket of Mary, and the circumstance of Morter's being absent from home were known, both were arrested, and hurried off to Albany for trial.

The day of examination soon arrived, and the prisoners were

brought to the bar. The trial proceeded, and the testimony of the Indians, to whom Mary had first communicated her suspicions of the murder, was heard. No unsettled difficulty was shown to have existed between the murdered and the accused: indeed, little appeared at the trial to criminate the blacks, more than is already known to the reader. When the facts, that the throat of Truax had been cut, that a bloody knife was found on the person of Mary, and that Morter had sullenly refused to answer questions during his arrest and confinement, were known to the court, circumstantial evidence was deemed sufficiently strong and lucid to fix guilt upon them: and as the murder had been an aggravated one, the prisoners were sentenced, as tradition says, to be burned alive. When interrogated by the Judge, before passing his sentence, whether they had aught to say why sentence of death should not pass upon them, Mary boldly and firmly declared her innocence, and her ignorance of the real murderer: stating, in a feeling manner, all she knew of the affair; how the knife had been heedlessly put into her pocket after cleansing the pigeons, and forgotten; how much she respected the deceased, and how much she lamented his untimely death; and ended by an appeal to the great Judge of the universe of her innocence of the crime, for which she stood accused. Morter, on being interrogated, remained sullenly silent; and after receiving the sentence, both were remanded to prison. On the day of their execution, which had not been long delayed, the condemned were taken west of the city a little distance, where had been previously prepared, a circular pile of pine faggots of a conical form. In the centre of the pile the victims were placed, and the fatal torch applied. Mary, still protesting her innocence, called on the Lord, whom she trusted would save her; and prayed that he would, in the heavens, show to the spectators some token of her innocence. But alas! the day of miracles had passed; and as the flame surrounded her, she gave herself up to despair. She expired, endeavoring to convince the multitude of her innocence. Her companion met his fate, with the same stoic indifference he had manifested from the hour of his arrest.

After the execution of this unhappy couple, one of whom, as will be seen hereafter, expired innocent of the crime for which she suffered, the affair died away, and nothing further was disclosed for several years. Facts then came to light revealing the whole transaction. At the time the murder was committed, a man by the name of Moore resided at Weiser's dorf. The Germans at that settlement, which was distant from the dwelling of Vrooman about two miles, it was supposed, envied Vrooman the possession of the fine tract of land he had secured; and by compelling him to abandon, hoped to possess it. It is not probable, however, that any one of them, except Moore, thought of getting it by the crime of murder. He conceived such a plan, and conspired with Morter to carry it into execution. Moore thought if Truax was murdered, Vrooman would be afraid to return for fear of sharing a like fate, and would then dispose of the land on reasonable terms; when he might secure to himself a choice parcel. Morter was promised, as a reward for participating in the crime, the hand of Moore's sister in marriage. It is not likely the girl herself, had the most distant idea of the *happiness* her brother had in store for her. Amalgamation to Morter appeared in enticing garments. To pillow his head on a white bosom, and bask in amalgamated pleasure, would, he thought, amply compensate for becoming the tool of Moore. He therefore resolved to aid him, and it was agreed the deed should be executed in such a manner as to throw suspicion on Mary his wife: who, he intended, should prove no obstacle in the way of realizing his sensual desires. The circumstance of his wife's having pigeons to dress, seemed to favor the design. Perhaps he had seen her put the bloody knife into her pocket: at all events, the present seemed to them a favorable opportunity, and they resolved to accomplish the foul deed that night. Accordingly, at midnight, the murderers approached the house in which slumbered their innocent victim. Finding his door locked, they found it necessary to devise some plan to gain admission to his room without breaking the lock, and, if possible, without alarming Mary, a victim they intended the law should claim. By some means they gained the

top of the chimney, which was not very difficult, as the dwelling was but one story, and sliding carefully down that, they soon found themselves in the presence of their still slumbering victim. Which of the two drew the fatal knife is unknown; it is supposed one held him, while the other, at a single stroke, severed the jugular vein. The nefarious deed accomplished, the assassins left the room, and away they sped from the dwelling, fearful alike of their own shadows.

The light of the morrow's sun disclosed this damnable deed. When the commotion and anxiety of the next day followed discovery, Moore feigned business from home, and kept out of the way until after the arrest of his hardened accomplice. Not long after this murder was committed, a disturbance arose among the Germans, through ignorance, as will be seen, and many of them left the Schoharie valley and sought a residence elsewhere. Moore was among those who went to Pennsylvania. He lived a life of fear for some years in that state, but at length a summons from on high laid him upon a bed of languishing. As disease preyed upon his vitals, the worm of torment gnawed his conscience. Sometimes in his broken slumbers, he was visited (in fancy,) by the ghost of a man struggling upon a bed; and as he heard the rattle of his throat as the breath left his body, he saw the fearful gash and the flowing blood. At other times he saw two persons, whom the crackling flames were devouring; and, as the appeal to heaven for a token of the innocence of one of them rang in his ears, he often awoke with exclamations of horror. Being past the hope of recovery, and so grievously tormented, in order to relieve in some measure his guilty conscience, he disclosed the facts above related. Truax was the first white man murdered in Schoharie county; and may be said to have fallen a victim to the unholy cause of *amalgamation*.

The Germans had not been long in possession of the Schoharie flats, and were just beginning to live comfortably, when Nicholas Bayard, an agent from the British crown, appeared in their midst. He put up in Smith's dorf, at the house of Han-Yerry (John George) Smith, already noted as being the best domicil in the

settlement. From this house, (which was in fact the first hotel in Schoharie, and might have been called the half-way house, as Smith's was the central of the seven dorfs,) Bayard issued a notice, that to every house-holder, who would make known to him the boundaries of the land he had taken; he would give a deed in the name of his sovereign. The Germans, ignorant though honest, mistook altogether the object of the generous offer, and supposing it designed to bring them again under tyrannic landholders, and within the pale of royal oppression, resolved at once to kill Bayard, whom they looked upon as a foe to their future peace; and by so doing, establish more firmly the independence they had for several years enjoyed. Consequently, early the next morning, the nature of the resolve having been made known the evening before, the honest burghers of Schoharie, armed with guns and pitch-forks; with many of the softer sex, in whom dwelt the love of liberty, armed with broad hoes, clubs and other missiles; surrounded the hotel of Smith, and demanded the person of Bayard, dead or alive. Mine host, who knew at that early day that a well managed hotel was the traveler's home, positively refused to surrender to his enraged countrymen, his guest. The house was besieged throughout the day. Sixty balls were fired by the assailants through the roof, which was the most vulnerable part, as that was straw: and as Bayard had, previous to his arrival, been by accident despoiled of an eye, he ran no little risk of returning to the bosom of his family, if fortunate enough to return, totally blind. Bayard was armed with pistols, and occasionally returned the fire of his assailants, more, no doubt, with the design of frightening, than of killing them. Having spent the last round of their ammunition, hunger beginning to gnaw, and the sable shades of evening to conceal the surrounding hills, the siege was raised, and the heroes of the bloodless day dispersed to their homes, to eat their fill and dream on their personal exploits—the invulnerability of their foe, and the mutability of princely promises. The coast again clear, Bayard left Schoharie, and under the cover of night, traveled to Schenectada. From there he sent a message to Schoharie, offering to give, to such as

should appear there with a single ear of corn—acknowledge him the regal agent—and name the bounds of it, a free deed and lasting title to their lands. No one felt inclined to call on the agent, whose life they had attempted to take, and after waiting some time, he went to Albany and disposed of the lands they occupied, to five individuals. The patent was granted to Myndert Schuyler, Peter Van Brugh, Robert Livingston, jr., John Schuyler and Henry Wileman, the purchasers, and was executed at Fort George, in New York, on the third day of November, 1714, in the first year of the reign of George I., by Robert Hunter, then Governor of the province, in behalf of the King. The date of this conveyance, I think, goes far to prove the settlement of Schoharie to have been as early as the time previously given; as the settlers had been upon their lands several years, and were beginning to live comfortably, previous to the arrival of the royal agent.

This patent began at the northern limits of the Vrooman patent, on the west side of the river, and the little Schoharie kill on the opposite side, and ran from thence north; taking in a strip on both sides of the river: at times mounting the hills, and at others leaving a piece of flats, until it nearly reached the present Montgomery county line. It curved some, and the intention was, to embrace all the flats in that distance. Patent was taken for ten thousand acres. Lewis Morris, jr., and Andrus Coeman, who were employed by the purchasers to survey and divide the land; finding the flats along Fox's creek, and a large piece at Kneiskern's dorf, near the mouth of Cobel's kill, were not included in that patent; lost no time in securing them. Those several patents often ran into each other, and in some instances were so far apart, as to leave a gore between them. The patent taken to secure the remainder of the flats at Kneiskern's dorf, began at a spring on the west side of the river, near the bridge which now crosses that stream above Schoharie Court House, and also ran to, or near the Montgomery county line. Between that and the first patent secured, which were intended to embrace all the flats, was left a very valuable gore, which Augustus Van Cortlandt afterwards secured. Finding much difficulty in dividing their lands,

they so often intersected, the first five purchasers and their surveyors, Morris and Coeman, whose right in the Schoharie soil was proportionably valuable, agreed to make joint stock of the three patents. Since that time they have been distinguished as the lands of the *seven partners*. Patents and deeds granted at subsequent dates, for lands adjoining those of the seven partners, were, in some instances, bounded in such a manner as to infringe on those of the latter, or leave gores between them. As may be supposed, evils were thus originated, which proved a source of bickering and litigation for many years. Suits for partition, were brought successively in Schoharie county in 1819—25—26—28 and 29: at which time they were finally adjusted. The latest difficulties are said to have existed between the people of Duanesburg and Schoharie.

After the seven partners secured their title to the Schoharie flats, they called on the Germans who dwelt upon them, either to take leases of, to purchase, or to quit them altogether. To neither of these terms would they accede, declaring that Queen Anne had given them the lands, and they desired no better title. The reader will bear in mind the fact, that those people had no lawyers among them, except by name, on their arrival—that they lived in a measure isolated from those who could instruct them—that they spoke a language different from that in which the laws of the country were written, which laws they were strangers to; and that they placed implicit confidence in the promises of the *good Queen*, that they should have the lands free; and he will be less surprised at their stubbornness. Their faith in the promises of the Queen, had not been misplaced, as the intention of the crown to give them free titles by Bayard clearly proves. The great difficulty proceeded from their ignorance of the utility, and manner of granting deeds. The patent taken by the five partners was dated in November, 1714; and it was not until the first of August of that year, that Queen Anne died. It is therefore very probable, Bayard was an agent commissioned by her; if not, by George I., who intended in good faith to carry into effect the design of his predecessor. Whether royal agents were sent to the other Ger-

man settlements in the United States for the same charitable purpose or not, I am unable to say.

At this period of the history, several incidents transpired worthy of notice. I have already remarked that the Germans were fond of athletic exercises. After their location, such sports as were calculated to try their speed and strength, were not unfrequently indulged in.

In the summer of 1713 or '14, a *stump* was given by the Indians to their German neighbors at Weiser's dorf, to run a foot race, offering to stake on the issue, a lot of dressed deer-skins against some article the Germans possessed; possibly, their old mare. The challenge was accepted, and a son of Conrad Weiser was selected, to run against a little dark Indian, called the most agile on foot of all the tribe. On a beautiful day the parties assembled at Weiser's dorf to witness the race. The race-course was above the village, and on either side the Germans and Indians took stations to encourage their favorites. About individual bets on the occasion, I have nothing to say. The couple started, a distance of half a mile or more from the goal, at a given signal, and onward they dashed with the fleetness of antelopes, amid the shouts and huzzas of the spectators. The race was to terminate just beyond the most southern dwelling of Weiser's dorf. They ran with nearly equal speed until their arrival at the dwelling mentioned, sometimes fortune inclining to the white, and sometimes to the red skin; when an unexpected event decided the contest in favor of the German. They had to run very close to the house, and Weiser, being on the outside as they approached it side by side, sprang with all his might against his competitor. The sudden impetus forced the Indian against the building, and he rebounded and fell half dead upon the ground. Weiser then easily won the race, amid the loud, triumphant shouts of his countrymen. Whether the victor found his strength failing him, and adopted the expedient of disabling the Indian from fear of losing the wager, or whether, confident of superior pedestrian powers, he gave the Indian a jog with malicious intent, is unknown to the writer. The Indians, and their defeated champion, were terribly

enraged at first, and positively refused to give up the forfeit : but Weiser, who had already learned much of the Indian character, and knew the danger of trifling with their misfortunes, with a grave-yard countenance, appeased their wrath, by satisfying them that the whole difficulty proceeded from accident—that he stumbled upon some obstacle which rendered it unavoidable, and was *very* sorry it had happened. With this explanation their anger was appeased, and they delivered up the skins ; from which it is but fair to conclude, the whole Weiser family were clothed. This is the only dishonest trick I have heard related of the first Germans, and with the exception of Moore, they seem to have been strangers to crime. Foot races were often run by those people : at times, fifteen or twenty entering the course together.

It has been already remarked, that the Germans settled in clusters or dorfs, to be the better able to repel Indian invasion, and it now remains to be shown that such caution was rewarded, if *tradition* speaks the truth. The privilege the writer claims, he allows to the reader, to wit : that of believing as much of the following story as he pleases. When related to him, the author thought it too good to be lost.

At the foot of the hill south of where stood Hartman's dorf, which is the descent from a table land to the river flats, as the road now lies, may be observed on one side a kind of marsh, through which runs a brook, receiving in its course the waters of several springs. At the period to which I allude, this marsh was thickly covered with alders and other swamp timber, and afforded a safe covert for no inconsiderable force. Early upon a certain day, in a certain year, Karighondontee and many of his warriors were assembled at this swamp, to give battle to the good people of Hartman's dorf, distant half a mile from the encampment. If the reader desired to know the cause of difficulty, or in what precise year it arose, I should be unable to inform him ; it must have been previous to the arrival of Bayard. It being rumored through the place that it was besieged, great was the commotion through its one important street. By times, the brave Captain Hartman had taken a public station, and around him a mul-

titude were soon gathered. The tactic skill of the Captain required little time in marshaling his brave followers—his tender care about their temporal affairs at the Camps being still remembered—who waited with impatience the march to *glory*. What other officers assisted Captain Hartman on this momentous occasion, is of no consequence at this late period. Various were the weapons with which the dangerous looking corps were armed. Few fire-arms might have been seen, but forks, shovels, broad hoes, axes, poles, clubs, hand-saws, and the Lord knows what other missiles, gleamed threateningly in the sun. Indeed, the care-worn and trusty sword of the Captain, when drawn, added not a little to the warlike appearance of the troop, to say nothing of its multiform, military garb. “What a fine martial array;” thought he, as his eye ran along the ranks, and he gave the command to “face towards the river and march!” Each individual of the brave band cast a furtive, speaking glance at the front stoop of his own dwelling, where stood the domestic circle weeping or encouraging, or that of his lover, who was leaning upon the half opened door, with an arm across her face to conceal the gushing tear, or her pouting, nectareal lip; and to the enlivening sound of the violin, their favorite and only music, set forward with a firm step, determined to conquer or die. Two-thirds of the distance from the village to the rendezvous of the enemy already in his rear, the Captain ordered a halt, to communicate to his troops some necessary instructions about the plan and manner of prosecuting the attack. Some of his men now hesitated about assaulting the enemy, as they were mostly armed with unerring rifles. The misgivings on this score soon became general, and then was called forth all the *dormant* eloquence their brave leader was so noted for possessing. Stepping upon a stump, from which position his commanding person and cheerful countenance were truly conspicuous, he addressed his followers. He directed their attention to the time when they were persecuted in Germany—to the perils they had overcome by sea and land. He assured them that although the enemy had rifles, yet *not one of them should discharge*. He conjured them not to sully, by cow-

ardice, their national character. He reminded them of their social relations which were jeopardized—of the love of their wives, their parents, their children, and lastly of their plighted. He accompanied the latter part of his pathetic speech, with a significant flourish of his sword towards their village, a part of which was still in view. The appeal was *irresistable*, and with one voice the whole corps, in true German, responded—“Fuehret an!” Lead on! Fearlessly he did lead on, and thus was he followed. Faith is the vital principle by which every successful effort of man is put forth, and without it, the sinews of war are powerless. Indeed, faith is no less requisite in war than religion, and no battle ever was won without it. So thought the daring Hartman, and so had he instructed his followers to think. When they came to the wood in which the enemy had taken a position, the Germans, following the example of their Captain, rushed furiously upon the wary foe. They met, as had been anticipated, his leveled guns, but no sound, save their repeated clicks, was heard: no death-telling report rang through the valley, and the whoops of the savages, as they noted the failure of their rifles, gradually died away on the morning air. The confidence of the colonists was increased, on beholding the prophecy of their Captain verified, in the click of non-discharging fire-arms, and true to their leader, they seconded all his movements. The red man fell back abashed, and ere he could discover the cause of his ill luck, the sturdy German was upon him, the sight of whose weapon was enough to carry terror to his heart’s warmest blood, and he was compelled again to flee. “An!” shouted the immortal Captain, “An!” The charge was too impetuous to be withstood, and the Indians fled in terror, uttering, as they left the swamp in possession of their enemy, the death yell. Well might they have supposed, from the clashing of missiles coming accidentally in contact with their fellows, or with obtruding trees, and now and then with the head or shoulders of their comrades, that the carnage was terrible, and the reason for the death yell obviously augmented. What a cruel, bloody art, is war. The troops of Captain Hartman belabored the natives lustily with fork and hoe, as may

be supposed, in their retreat. Here, some were seen hobbling off from the field of battle with bruised shins ; there, others with elbows or fingers disjoined—all amazed at the manifest prowess of their German enemies, and still more dismayed that their rifles gave no report. If any there were among them who fought on that memorable occasion with bows and arrows, and doubtless there were some, it is highly probable the thick buck-skin garments of the colonists arrested the further progress of their arrows ; else the fate of the day might still have been different, and I now had to record the *success*, instead of the *defeat*, of the stout Canadian Chief, Karighondontee. The little army of Hartman were soon left complete masters of the bloodless field, (as it would have been, had not the careless wielding of the missiles brought them occasionally in contact with a nasal organ ;) and the repeated German huzzas of the conquerors, reverberated along the *Oucongona*.

The enemy fairly ousted and the field gloriously won, the victors returned again to their homes to a still more enlivening air than the one with which they had left them, the whole length of the bow being given it ; where awaited them the cheers and smiles of their fair ones. It is but reasonable to suppose, that a messenger had been sent forward to apprise the villagers of the great success and triumph of the German arms, without loss of life or limb, since I must believe, that had the good matrons been expecting to see any of the corps borne home on a litter, they would not have made the welkin ring with their shouts. Thus ended the first regular battle of the Germans in the valley of Schoharie, no less gloriously than did the siege of Smith's hotel, already before the reader, on which occasion they compelled their supposed enemy to flee by night. One thing, however, remained to be done, the pipe of peace was yet to be smoked. Accordingly, on an appointed day, soon after the battle, the parties met in the shade of a majestic oak, not a mile from the battle field, which had buffeted the storms of several centuries, and may be still standing, and well and faithfully did the Germans smoke the calumet. They are a people extremely fond

of fumigating, and the opportunity to show their Indian neighbors their patience and skill in the art, as may be supposed, was heartily embraced. Nor is it improbable, that their countrymen at Weiser's dorf were guests on so important an occasion. The Indians were again compelled to accord to their (now) friends of the pipe, superior skill. The Virginia weed all burned, the parties dispersed. Well would it be if all battles ended, like the battle of Hartman's dorf, in nothing worse than *smoke*.

Perhaps thou art amazed, kind reader, while perusing the simple narrative of this battle, to find that the fire-arms of the Indians did not discharge. The days of witchcraft are now happily passed forever; but the time has been, when it was no uncommon thing for a *spell or enchantment to extend to the lock of a rifle*: so says tradition.—George Warner.

We have seen how Bayard, the royal agent, was treated, when he visited Schoharie to execute deeds to the German land-holders; that in consequence, the land was disposed of, and it now remains to be shown what effect that sale had on the tenant. Being called upon by the partners to lease or purchase, they declared they would do neither. Finding lenient measures of no avail, they resolved to obtain justice by the strong arm of the law. Accordingly, a sheriff from Albany, by the name of Adams, was sent to apprehend some of the boldest of the trespassers, as they had now become, and frighten others into proper terms. The Albanians greatly underrated the character and bravery of those people, who had not only compelled an agent of the crown to flee, but had, in fair fight, victoriously battled their Indian neighbors. It is *possible* they had never heard of that terrible conflict. Adams, conscious of his own honorable intentions, passing through a part of the valley, made a halt at Weiser's dorf. He had no sooner discovered his business and attempted the arrest of an individual, than a mob was collected, and at that early day the *lynch law* was enforced. The women of that generation, as has been shown by their journeys to Schenectada, possessed Amazonian strength and constitutions, if not proportions; nor, indeed, were they lacking in Spartan bravery. A part of those well-meaning dames,

remembering the promises of Queen Anne, and sharing with their husbands the belief that they were objects of oppression,—that the intention was to compel them to pay for lands they already considered their own; under the direction of Magdalene Zeh, a self appointed captain, took the sheriff into their own hands and dealt with him according to his deserts, of which the captain was judge. He was knocked down by a blow from the magistrate, and inducted into various places in that young village where the sow delighted to wallow. After receiving many indignities in the neighborhood of Weiser's dorf, some of which he was conscious of receiving and some not, he was placed upon a rail, and rode skimmington through most of the settlements. He was exhibited at Hartman's, Bruna, Smith's and Fox's dorfs to his discomfiture; and finally deposited on a small bridge, made of logs, that had been placed across a stream on the old Albany road, a distance from the starting point of between six and seven miles; no ordinary journey for such a conveyance. This stream was formerly called Mill brook,—why, remains to be seen,—and crosses the road a short distance west of the residence of Peter Mann, in Fox's creek valley. The captain then seized a stake, which she carelessly laid over his person, until two of his ribs made four, and his organs of vision were diminished one half. She then, with little ceremony and less modesty, bathed his temples in a very unusual, though simple manner, to the great annoyance of the uninjured eye—poor fellow, he could not resist the kindness—and called off her compatriots, leaving him for dead; or rather to die if he chose. He saw fit to do no such act, in such a plight, and after such a *nursing*; and as soon as consciousness returned, how long after Mistress Lynch had left him is unknown, he gathered himself together and departed for Albany. What strange thoughts must have occupied his mind, while *homeward bound*. He must have been conscious, when the faculties of his mind renewed their action, that whether his knowledge had increased or not, his *bumps* assuredly had. His progress must necessarily have been very slow, thus bruised and maimed, and it was not until the third day after he had been on the rail-*rode*, that he reached Ver-

re-berg, a hill seven miles west of Albany, from whence he was taken to the city in a wagon. As there were no public houses, and few Samaritans on the road at that time, he was exposed nights to the carnival of wild beasts, and by day, to danger of perishing with hunger. His arrival at Albany, wounded and *half* blind as he was, and *maul-treated* as he had been, prognosticated no good for the people of Schoharie. The leading facts in the foregoing statement, were published by Judge Brown, who assured the author that he received them from Sheriff Adams, *vi-va-voce*—from his own lips.

The word *berg*, as we have shown, signifies a hill or mountain. At the period of which I write, before public houses were established between the two places, the people of Schoharie, who had occasion to go to Albany to make disposals and purchases, went in squads and encamped out over night. The most important *bergs* and creeks on the road, were then the guides by which they knew the route, distance, &c., and served the traveler in lieu of mile-stones. The first important stopping place, after leaving Schoharie, was at the Long-berg, east of Gallupville. There, if the wayfarer left the valley late, he tarried over night: to it was therefore called the first day's journey. The Beaverkill, which is a branch of Fox's creek, was also a guide: then came the Feght-berg, Supawn-berg, Lice-berg, Helle-berg, Botte-Mentis-berg, and lastly Verre-berg. All these names had some significant meaning, which continued to remind the traveler of their origin, long after the road, which was then little more than a rough foot path, and hardly admissible for any kind of wagons, became a public one, properly laid out. Long-berg signified the long hill. Feght-berg, the fighting hill, the origin of which has previously been given. Supaan is the name among the Germans and Dutch, by which Indian pudding, usually called mush or hasty pudding among the English, is known. Why that name attaches to a hill, the writer has not been informed. The origin of Lice-berg and Verre-berg are also among the mysteries. A hill was called Botte-Mentis-berg from the following circumstance. A man, whose given name was Botte Mace,—or Bartholomew in English—was

passing along in the evening and fell into a pit, where he was obliged to remain until morning : to the nearest hill was given his name, by which it was long after known.

As may be supposed, the people of Schoharie, after dealing with poor Adams in the manner they had, became cautious about visiting Albany, where several of the partners resided. There was, in fact, little intercourse between Schoharie and Albany for some time : the people of the former viewing those of the latter place, in a light of lively apprehension. In civilized life, it is happily ordered that one community shall not live entirely independent of all others. There were some necessaries which they must have, and which they could not well procure without going there. The men, therefore, sent their wives after salt ; which was one of the indispensables ; saying, in effect, *they will reverence them* : and if they did venture to Albany themselves, they were sure to do so on the Sabbath, and equally mindful of leaving the same evening. What a profanation of the Lord's day !—but let us not anticipate a judgment. By remaining silent in the mean time, and not appearing to heed their coming or going, the real owners of the Schoharie soil, lured the occupants into a belief, that all the malicious acts extended to Sheriff Adams, not forgetting the last act of *Magdalene*, were entirely forgotten : and that there was no longer any need of caution about entering that good city. It was indeed presuming much on the charity of the partners, whose agent had been so harshly treated : but no matter, such was the fact. With the vigilance of the sentinel crow, were the people of Schoharie watched, who began to be looked upon as being no better than they should be,—as women are wont to say of frail sisters,—and preparations were matured for seizing some of them. It was not long after suspicion was lulled, before quite a number of them entered the city for salt, when the partners, with Sheriff Adams and posse, arrested and committed them to jail. The most notorious of the party were placed in the dungeon, among whom was Conrad Weiser, jr., of running memory. As soon as news of this arrest and imprisonment reached Schoharie, her citizens were horror stricken ?

"*What shall we do?*"—was the interrogatory on the lips of one and all. How sadly, thought they, have we realized our European dreams of American happiness. Desirous of remedying in future the evils to which they were subjected, it was, at a meeting of the citizens, resolved to get up a petition setting forth their grievances, persecutions, &c.; and delegate three of their number to lay it, with all due humility, at the feet of King George; praying, at the time, for his future protection against their enemies, the Albanians. This petition, which is said to have been drawn by John Newkirk, was entrusted to the elder Conrad Weiser, one Cassleman, and a third person, name not known, for presentation.

Looking through grates and living on bread and water, had a wonderful effect on the spirits and temper of the incarcerated citizens of Schoharie. They therefore made a virtue of necessity, and resolved to comply with the requisitions of the law, by taking leases and agreeing to pay rent for, or to purchase the land. Before releasing the prisoners, the partners drew up a statement of the abuses to Bayard and Adams, when in the discharge of their official duties at Schoharie, and required them to be witnessed under hand and seal. This last requisition complied with, they were allowed to depart for their own homes.

The importance with which the colonists viewed this matter may be conceived by the delegation to England: for, surely, no trifling consideration would induce three men, who loved retirement, to make such a journey at such a time. We should look upon it at the present day, as being a great undertaking—saying nothing of locomotives, rail-roads and steam-packets, which were then unknown. No delay was allowed after procuring the duly attested evidence of the proceedings of Judge Lynch: it was forwarded immediately to the King. It is highly probable, that the same ship bore the Schoharie ambassadors and the swift witness against them, to the British throne. The petition was presented about the year 1714 or '15. The ship in due time arrived in England, and the Schoharie delegation, wishing to make a respectable appearance among the *foreign ambassadors*, were subjected to

some little delay, in arranging their wardrobe, exchanging their buck-skin garments for cloth, &c.: in the mean time, the message of the partners was under the consideration of the King. On presenting their petition, how were Weiser and his friends astounded, to find the King and his ministry in possession of all the late transactions at Schoharie. Had the ghosts of Bayard and Adams appeared before them, they would hardly have been more horror-stricken, than they were to hear their own misdemeanors told them from such a source. Their confusion betrayed their guilt, and established, beyond a doubt, the truth of the charges preferred against them and their neighbors. The King and his advisers, supposing the evil deeds of the Schoharie people resulted from *bad hearts* instead of ignorance, the real parent of all their difficulties, without listening to what they might say for themselves, ordered them to close confinement in the tower.

How much the present difficulty of these well meaning people argues in favor of an *education*, and a knowledge of the world and its transactions. Had they been better informed, they would have been less suspicious; for suspicion and distrust are the handmaids of ignorance. The *liberal minded*, is generally the *well informed* man. But, as already remarked, there were some good reasons for their not advancing rapidly in their knowledge of men and things. They spoke not the general language of the country: which circumstance prevented, in a measure, that intercourse with the world, so necessary to the expansion of the human understanding, and the removal of national or local prejudices. They were accustomed to transact most of their own business without pen, ink or paper; and, agreeable to the knowledge they had, and their own method of doing business, they considered a promise made in good faith, as valid as a bond, for such in fact it was with them, and never dreamed of the possibility of their being mistaken about the object of Bayard's mission; or that any thing farther was necessary from the British crown to establish their legal title to the lands, than the mere promise of the Queen that they should, without money or price, possess them.

During the confinement of the disappointed trio, many of the

people of Schoharie, convinced that they stood in their own light, and that they had wholly mistaken the intention of Bayard, too late indeed to obtain a legal title to their lands free of charge, began to purchase of the partners, who granted them liberal terms. At length, Weiser and his comrades were discharged from the tower, and proceeded home with all possible haste: and had the former only been by name in the positive degree on his arrival in England, he assuredly would have been by nature in the comparative on his return to Schoharie; as he had become in fact much wiser. The return of the embassy, whose mission had resulted in effecting nothing but disgrace for themselves; and tended only to disclose the general ignorance of their constituents, created no little excitement in the valley. Conrad Weiser was, by nature, a proud, high-spirited man, and could not brook the mortification his own ignorance had originated. Soon after his return, he resolved to leave Schoharie forever, and had little difficulty in persuading many of his countrymen to join him. Accordingly, with as little delay as possible, about sixty families packed up and set forward with all they possessed for Pennsylvania. The want of horses and cows, which was so seriously felt by the Germans when they first located at Schoharie, was, at the time I now speak of, a source of little inconvenience, as they then owned a goodly number. The disaffected party passed up the Schoharie river, piloted by an Indian. Brown says, they arrived, after a journey of five days, at the Cook-house,* where they made canoes, in which they went down the Susquehanna. Here is a trifling error in his

* I make the following extract from a letter from the Hon. Erastus Root, of the New York Senate, in answer to several inquiries, dated Albany, April 11th, 1843. "You ask whence originated the name of Cook House. Various derivations have been given, but the most natural and probable one is this—That on the large flat bearing the name, being on the way from Cohecton, by the Susquehanna and Chemung to Niagara, there was a hut erected, where some cooking utensils were found. It had probably been erected by some traveler who had made it his stopping place and had cooked his provisions there. It has been stated to me as a part of the tradition, that the hut remained many years as a resting place to the weary traveler, and that the rude cooking utensils were permitted to remain as consecrated to the use of succeeding sojourners." General Root went to reside in Delaware county in 1796.

pamphlet, as the Cook-house is on the Delaware river. As he says, they passed down the Susquehanna, preparing their canoes for that purpose, near the mouth of the Charlotte river. Nicholas Warner, one of the oldest citizens of Schoharie county, in the fall of 1837, assured the author that he had seen the stumps of the trees on the Charlotte branch of the Susquehanna, which Weiser and his friends felled to make the canoes from, in which they floated down the river. Their cattle and horses were driven along the shore, and were frequently in sight of the water party, until the latter left their canoes. Weiser and his followers settled at a place called Tulpehocken, in Berks county, Pennsylvania, on the north side of a creek of that name; where, it is said, he became a distinguished and useful citizen.* The party probably settled near their countrymen who emigrated from Germany at the time they did, and located in that State. Most of the families which followed the fortunes of Weiser, were from Weiser's and Hartman's dorfs. Hartman Winteker removed at the same time to Pennsylvania. Whether they had to purchase lands in Tulpehocken, I cannot say. Few of Weiser's party ever revisited Schoharie: several old men did, however, nearly fifty years after. A singular circumstance is said to have transpired, showing the instinct of the horses which accompanied the emigration to Pennsylvania. Twelve of those noble animals left their master's cribs, and after an absence from them of a year and a half, ten of them, in good condition, arrived at Schoharie: a distance through the wilderness of over three hundred miles. It is possible they remembered the sweet clover† of Weiser's dorf, and longed again to munch it.

Two instances of brute instinct, not dissimilar to the one rela-

* In 1744, one Conrad Weiser was Indian interpreter for the colony of Pennsylvania, who was, doubtless, the swift-footed son of the one named in the context.

† The laud through which the little Schoharie kill, in Middleburgh, runs to the river, is to this day called the *clauver wy*, which signifies the clover pasture. When the Schoharie valley was first settled, the land along that stream was thickly covered with clover, which was seen in few other places about the Schoharie: hence the appropriate name.

ted, were told the author by Mrs. Van Slyck. About the year 1770, the Bartholomews removed from New Jersey to the Charlotte river. Soon after their arrival there, three of their horses disappeared, and after much unsuccessful searching for them, it was concluded they had strayed away and become a prey to wild beasts. Judge the surprise of the owners to learn after some time, that one of them had been taken up within two, and another within five miles of their former residence. The third was found by them near Catskill.

The other story is perhaps the most singular of the two, as the horse has given numberless instances of remarkable sagacity. Not many years from the period above cited, Ephraim Morehouse removed in the spring from Dutchess county to the vicinity of the Charlotte river. He passed through the Schoharie valley on his way, and tarried over night with Samuel Vrooman, father of my informant, with whom he was acquainted. He drove with his cattle a large sow with a bell on. As Morehouse approached the end of his journey, the sow disappeared. After considerable delay in a fruitless search for her, he proceeded on his way. In the following autumn he revisited the place of his former residence, and on his return again tarried over night with Vrooman. He then related the circumstance of losing his sow, and again finding her. She had returned to the old sty in due time, to the great surprise of the neighborhood. Whether she retraced her way by the same path or not is unknown; but to reach her former place, had been compelled to swim the Hudson, and perform a solitary journey of one hundred miles.

About the time Weiser and his friends left Schoharie, there were others among the dissatisfied, who, not choosing to follow his fortunes, sought a future residence in the Mohawk valley. Elias Garlock, the founder of Garlock's dorf, removed to the Mohawk, accompanied by several of his neighbors. Some of the party had relatives or friends there who located at the time the Schoharie settlements were begun, which induced them to remove thither. They settled in and about Canajoharie, at Stone Arabia, or upon the German Flats.

Tradition has preserved but little in the life of Justice Garlock, the most noted of the Schoharie Germans, who removed to the Mohawk valley. He is said, while there, to have been the only justice of the peace in the Schoharie valley. The name of the shrewd constable who aided him in administering the few laws by which they were governed, has been lost. Only one important decision of this sage justice is known to the author. His summons was usually delivered to the constable *viva voce*, and thus by him to the transgressor of the law. If the justice wished to bring a culprit before him, he gave his jack-knife to the constable, who carried it to the accused, and required him at the appointed time to appear with it before the justice. What it meant he well understood. If two were to be summoned at the same time, to the second he gave the tobacco-box of the justice, and as that usually contained a liberal supply of the delectable narcotic, the consequences of a failure to return it in person to the justice, in due time, were dangerous in the extreme. The decision of Justice Garlock alluded to, terminated so happily for those most interested, that I cannot withhold it from the reader. A complaint having been entered before him, the knife was issued, and the parties assembled forthwith. The plaintiff told his story, which appeared simple and true. The defendant, with more zeal and eloquence, plead his cause—quoting, if I mistake not, some previous decisions of his honor—and made out, as he thought, an equally good case. After giving the parties a patient hearing, the justice gave the following very important decision. “Der blandif an derfendur bote hash reht; zo I dezides, an pe dunder, der knonshtopple moosh bay de kosht.”