

the Third, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, and so forth.

CADWALLADER COLDEN.

By His Honours Command, G^w BANYAR, Dep. Secy.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF LT. GOV. COLDEN.

CADWALLADER COLDEN, Lt. Governor of the Province of New York, known in the scientific and literary world as a physician, botanist, astronomer and historian, was born on the 17th February, 1688, (N. S.) in Ireland where his mother then happened to be temporarily on a visit. His father was the Rev. Alexander Colden, Minister of Dunstie in Scotland. He graduated at the University of Edinburgh in 1705, but being disinclined to the Church for which he was intended, he proceeded to London where he embraced the profession of Medicine. He immigrated to Philadelphia in 1710, "a mere scholar and stranger in the world." He returned, however, to London in 1715, where he formed an acquaintance with some of the most distinguished literary characters of the day, and in the course of the following year married Alice Christie, daughter of a Clergyman at Kelso, Scotland. The troubles prevailing at this time could not but indispose him to remain in his native land, and he came back to Philadelphia in which city he practised his profession for some time. In 1718, he visited New York, where he made the acquaintance of Governor Hunter, who was so favourably impressed by his conversation and solid acquirements that he became his patron, and invited him to settle in his government, and appointed him Surveyor general of the Colony. In 1720, he procured a grant of two thousand acres of land, in what is now the town of Montgomery, Orange Co. to which was added shortly after, another of one thousand acres. He was called to his Majesty's provincial Council in 1722, by Gov. Burnet & in this position aided most efficiently in securing the Indian trade to New York. At this period the trade with the distant Indians was carried on through Canada which obtained its supplies from Great Britain thro' certain merchants at Albany. To exclude the French from this trade was a prominent part of Burnet's policy, and with that view he obtained a law from the legislature prohibiting the circuitous trade under the severest penalties. Through the influence of London merchants and the intrigues of other interested parties this act was repealed in England. Considerable and prolonged discussion was the consequence; Dr. Colden took a prominent part in the controversy which, however, is interesting at this late day only from the fact that to it we owe the well known History of the Five Nations, "which was published in 1727, on occasion of a dispute between the government of New York & some merchants." After Mr. Burnet's administration, Mr. Colden removed to his country seat now known by the name of Coldenham, and there devoted all the leisure he could command from his official duties to his favorite studies, and in learned correspondence with the philosophers of the day, both in Europe and America. It was in the course of this correspondence that he first suggested the plan of the American Philos. Society which was established at Philadelphia on account of the central and convenient situation of that city. Yet thus early he excited much jealousy among his contemporaries and we find him embroiled with the other members of the Council during Cosby's, Clarke's and some succeeding administrations. On the death of Lt.

Gov. DeLancey in 1760, Mr. Colden being the senior member of the Council was called to administer the government, and in August 1761, was appointed Lt. Governor of the province, which office he filled until Nov. 1765, with the exception of about fifteen months that General Monckton was at the head of affairs. The government again devolved on him in 1769, but he was superseded the following year by Lord Dunmore. He was called, for the fourth and last time, in 1774 to the Executive Chair which he occupied until the 25th June 1775, but at this period his rule was not much more than nominal. One of his closing duties was to announce, that "Congress had appointed GEORGE WASHINGTON, Commander in Chief of the American Army." He now retired to his country house at Spring-hill, near Flushing L. I., after encountering with the greatest firmness all the odium attendant on the mad efforts of the British Ministry to tax through the Stamp and Tea acts, the people of the Colonies without their consent, and died on the 21 September 1776, in the 88th year of his age, having survived his wife, 14 years. Like all men in high station his administration has been rigidly canvassed by his contemporaries. The bitterness of the political strifes of those days having now passed away, posterity will not fail to accord justice to the character and memory of a man to whom this Country is most deeply indebted for much of its science and for very many of its most important institutions, and of whom the State of New-York may well be proud. "For the great variety and extent of his learning, his unwearied research, his talents and the public sphere which he filled, CADWALLADER COLDEN may justly be placed in a high rank among the distinguished men of his time," and when it

is considered how large a portion of his life was spent in the labours or the routine of public office, and that however great might have been his original stock of learning; he had in this country no reading public to excite him by their applauses, and few literary friends to assist or to stimulate his enquiries, his zeal and success in his scientific pursuits will appear (remarks Mr. Verplanck,) deserving of the highest admiration. A mind thus powerful and active, concludes the same elegant writer, could not have failed to produce great effect on the character of that society in which he moved; and we doubtless now enjoy many beneficial, although remote, effects of his labours without being always able to trace them to their true source.

The following is a list of Dr. Colden's Works and MSS :—

Observations on the trade of New York;

Account of the Climate of New York [These papers were communicated in 1723 to Gov Burnet, and by him transmitted to the government in England.

The latter paper is republished in the Amer. Med. & Phil. Register Vol. I.

The other is in the Sec. of States Off. Albany.]

Memorial concerning the Fur Trade of the province of New York presented to Gov. Burnet 1724. [This paper contains the earliest account of the water communication between the Hudson River & the Western Lakes. It is in Secy's Off.]

History of the Five Nations depending on the Province of New York; New York; Bradford. 1727. [London 1730, Watts] a 2d Ed. was published in 1747 [Watts, Bibliothec. Brit. says incorrectly that there was a 2d Edit.