

ever" their honors should "be pleased to adjudge against him." Unfortunately for him, his misdemeanors were considered by the provincial authorities too criminal to permit them to sanction his immediate release from prison.

Following the instructions contained in one of the dispatches received from England, Captain Leisler, as acting lieutenant-governor, sent orders, on December 19, to the chief magistrates of the different counties to proclaim "William and Mary, prince and princess of Orange, king and queen of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, if not already done."

Among the persons appointed by him to offices of trust and honor in the province was Roeleff Swartwout, whom he, on December 24, constituted a justice of the peace and a collector of the king's revenue in Ulster County.¹

Comte de Frontenac was at that time collecting at Montreal a force of French soldiers and Canadian Indians to invade the province of New York and attack Albany. About the middle of January, 1690, one hundred soldiers and a like number of Indians, under the command of Sieur Le Moyne de Sainte Helene, began an arduous and perilous march through a heavy depth of snow to accomplish their hostile purpose. When the invaders reached a point where a trail diverged toward Schenectady, the French officer determined to surprise that place. On the night of February 8, about eleven o'clock, the undetected enemy arrived at the palisaded settlement. "The village had given itself," says Bancroft, "calmly to slumber. Through open and unguarded gates the invaders entered silently, and having, just before midnight, reached its heart, the war-whoop was raised (dreadful sound to the mothers of that place and their children!) and the dwellings set on fire. Of the inhabitants, some, half clad, fled through the snows to Albany; sixty were massacred, of whom seventeen were children."²

The horror of this startling event greatly alarmed the people of Albany. Regarding themselves as the intended victims of the enemy's violence and ill-will, they immediately began to concert plans for the defence of the city and the discomfiture of the foe. At a meeting held there, on February 27, Reynier Barents, one of the assistant aldermen, was elected to go to the city of New York and wait on the authorities, and solicit aid in men, munitions, provisions, and money. Aware of their past discourteous conduct toward Captain Leisler and his counsellors, they apprehensively instructed their commissioner to set before him and them their perilous situation, and to beseech him and them "to lay aside all animosities" and exert their "power to crush the common enemy."³

¹ Documentary history of the state of New York. 8vo ed., vol. ii., pp. 50, 63, 350.

² History of the United States. 14th ed., vol. iii., p. 132.

³ Documentary history of the state of New York. 8vo ed., vol. ii., pp. 171-174.