

and the Committee of Safety's declaration of retaining possession of the fort until their majesties' order should be presented, commanding its transfer to the person commissioned by them to take charge of it, refused to surrender Fort William to the peremptory English officer on his individual demand, and expressed his intention to continue in command of the fort until Governor Slough-ter's arrival.

"On the evening on which the profligate, needy, and narrow-minded ad-venturer, who held the royal commission, arrived in New York," as narrated by Bancroft, "Leisler sent messengers to receive his orders. The messen-gers were detained. Next morning he asked, by letter, to whom he should surrender the fort. The letter was unheeded; and Slough-ter, giving no notice to Leisler, commanded Ingoldsby 'to arrest Leisler and the persons called his council.'

"The prisoners, eight in number, were promptly arraigned before a special court constituted for the purpose by an ordinance, and having inveterate roy-alists as judges. Six \* \* \* \* made their defence, were convicted of high treason, and were reprieved. Leisler and Milborne denied to the gov-ernor the power to institute a tribunal for judging his predecessor, and appealed to the king. On their refusal to plead, they were condemned of high treason as mutes, and sentenced to death. \* \* \* \*

"Meantime the assembly, for which warrants had been issued on the day of Leisler's arrest, came together. \* \* \* \* It passed several resolves against Leisler, especially declaring his conduct at the fort an act of rebellion; and Slough-ter, in a time of excitement, assented to the vote of the council that Leis-ler and Milborne should be executed. \* \* \* \*

"Accordingly, on the next day [Saturday, May 16], amidst a drenching rain, Leisler, parting from his wife Alice, and his numerous family, was, with his son-in-law, Milborne led to the gallows [erected near the site of the pres-ent Hall of Records]. Both acknowledged the errors which they had com-mitted 'through ignorance and jealous fear, through rashness and passion, through misinformation and misconstruction;' in other respects, they asserted their innocence, which their blameless private lives confirmed. 'Weep not for us, who are departing to our God,' these were Leisler's words to his oppressed friends,—but weep for yourselves, that remain behind in misery and vexation;' adding as the handkerchief was bound round his face, 'I hope these eyes shall see our Lord Jesus in heaven.' Milborne exclaimed, 'I die for the king and queen, and the Protestant religion, in which I was born and bred. Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.'"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> History of the United States. 14th ed., vol. iii., pp. 53, 54, 55.