

the tortuous course of the river—by mud banks,"and all the obstructions which accident heaps upon ill-fortune. The rains, though sufficient to destroy the roads, were insufficient to swell the river.

Harrison followed by the same route, supported by Commodore Perry, with three gun-boats, and a flotilla of smaller craft—manned from the American fleet, buoyant with success. The retiring army, laden with an unnecessary amount of baggage, and weighed down by moral depression, was pursued by lusty arms and light hearts, in boats lighter and more swift, from the smaller requirements of an army in pursuit.

It is embarrassing to encounter, at this point, the conflicting and angry statements, and harsh comments on the ensuing events.— Happily, however, at this moment of deep and painful embarrassment, there has come to our aid a living eye-witness of these events, whose opportunities and whose fidelity are beyond cavil.

In the township of Scarborough, and within a few miles of Toronto, still lives Colonel Maclean, who was a lieutenant in the 41st, at the battle of the Thames. He was on the staff of General Proctor. He is a son of the brave Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, who, as a volunteer in the ranks, had fallen by the side of McNeil, at York. He had obtained a commission in the 41st, and had seen service in all the varied affairs in Michigan, and on the river Detroit. He was present at the battle of the Thames. After the war of 1812, he served his Sovereign with his old regiment in India—before the stockades of Rangoon and Prome ;. had occupied the temples of Ava, and had witnessed the subjection of the Court of Ummerapoor. At mature age, he returned to his paternal farm ; and under the lowly roof of one of those old-fashioned, wide-spread Canadian dwellings, which looks like a gigantic mushroom, or the wide and black expansion of an Arab tent, he dispenses a homely, yet frank and soldierly, hospitality, which an Arab might envy. Here, on the advanced side of 70,

he presents the remains of a giant form, and an intellect which compels us to own, that the men of 1812 were the mastodons of our formation. It may seem hypercritical, but it is not less observable, that the exuvim of a race fast passing away indicate that the natural development of the present generation does not equal that of their grandsires.

Maclean was on Proctor's staff, saw all that one man could see, and knew more than most around him. The story of the fight is given almost in his own words. Proctor, on the afternoon of the 4th Oct., had taken up a good defensible position at Dalson's Farm, and had left his force under his second in command, Major Warburton. Proctor did not anticipate an immediate advance of the enemy. He knew that the difficulties of his own movements must still more embarrass theirs, and it was believed that the American commander would prefer rather to bridge the quagmires with gold, than plunge into them to provoke an encounter with such a foe, desperately at bay.

With the heavy baggage in advance was the wife and family of the General. They had shared with him, for many months, in the hardships of a frontier campaign, and had been despatched some days before, with other helpless impediments to the march, in the direction of the retreat. They had reached the Indian village known as Moravian Town, from certain missionaries of that persuasion who had devoted themselves to holy labors among the savages in that part of Canada. This mission was about 16 miles from Dalson's Farm. The General, having made his arrangements, proceeded with his staff to Moravian Town to meet his family. Maclean offered to remain and watch events ; but the General, confident in the security of the position, smiled at the proposal, and directed his young Aid to accompany him.

Before daylight they were aroused from their sleep by hurried intelligence from the front, that the enemy had reached and attacked

the position at Dalson's Farm, and that the troops were falling back. The rapid strides of exultant pursuit had overreached the leaden footsteps of unwilling retreat. An early frost had suddenly set in, hardening the roads and bridging the morasses, and offering one of those chance combinations of ill-luck which persecutes the unfortunate. Thus favoured, the American Mounted Rifles had pushed on, and, about an hour after midnight, were in the British bivouac.

Warburton retired at once, and was perseveringly followed by Harrison and his men. These men, styled by Harrison "mounted infantry," were for the most part Kentucky trappers and hunters—men like the leather-stocking of Cooper, inured to the wilderness, and between whom and the Indians there existed a constant warfare and chronic hatred. Hardy, daring, keen, ruthless, admirably clad in a leathern hunting-frock and trowsers, decorated with tasselled fringes, a handkerchief of red, or blue, or yellow, wrapped tightly around the head, with tomahawk and scalping-knife in his belt, and his trusty rifle in his hand, the Kentucky pioneer presented an appearance as redoubtable as it was picturesque. As a cavalry soldier, in the European acceptation of the term, he was useless; not a man among them bore a sabre; but as scouts or videttes, and for the purpose of rapid advance or retreat, they were invaluable. The usual tactics of these horsemen, however, were to follow up and harass the retreating foe, and, dismounting from their docile steeds, plunge among the trees, and ply the fatal rifle. Upon this occasion, profiting by the unexpected improvement in the roads, they had recourse to a further expedient. Every man, like the Templars of old, brought on a foot-soldier behind him, so that in actual conflict a line of skirmishers, thrown to the front, covered and concealed by their smoke, the approaching cavaliers. This dangerous force was under the immediate command of an ex-governor of Kentucky—Shelby—a veteran of the revolutionary war, who, at the age of 66, still showed all the fire and vigour and energy of youth.

Such were the men who now tracked down the retiring British soldiers. Proctor, roused from his sleep, took to horse, and with his staff rode to the front. He encountered the retreating force about three miles to the west of Moravian Town. Day was breaking. He instantly ordered the whole force to halt, and face right about. The order was most gladly met. The men, after a wearisome night's march, seemed to be reinvigorated by the prospect of a fight. The position thus accidentally taken up was very favourable. The Thames, not wide, but deep, covered the left flank; the road cut the line perpendicularly at about 200 yards from the river; from the road the line of front continued for about 300 yards, until it struck an impassable cedar swamp, which effectually covered the right flank. Upon this narrow front Proctor disposed his small force. They had contrived to bring up with them a single *gun*, a six-pounder, on a travelling-carriage. This piece of artillery was planted on the road, in what may be termed the centre of the position. The men were deployed to the right and left from the river to the swamp, their formation being dislocated and broken by the intervening trees. In front of the position was a continuous, but open, forest. The swamp on the right was occupied by the Indians. This disposition was excellent. The left flank was secure, the centre strong. The right flank, more extended, was covered by the swamp, which, extending lengthwise in the direction of the road, flanked the American attack on the main position. Here Tecumseh, in a morass, of which the mere name alone can convey no idea to the uninitiated—amid moss-hung trees and twisted trunks, and trees fallen and rotten, overgrown with a vegetation tangled and thick, smothered by too much moisture and too little air, knee-deep at the best, and often deeper—was unassailable by the Kentucky horsemen, while he could sally out upon their flank, and wage a hand to hand conflict, in which the lithe Indian on foot, with rifle and tomahawk, was more than a match for the individual horseman.

These dispositions were made at about six o'clock in the morning. Two hours elapsed before the enemy appeared. In that interval, Tecumseh had conference with Proctor. On parting, he shook hands with his chief, with a fearless look. His last words were, "Father ! have a big heart !" It was believed that Tecumseh had retired to his people in the swamp with the understanding that he was to await the discharge of the gun as a signal for his onset. The gun was never fired.

Two hours elapsed. **In** that interval the men sdt down and rested, and partook of such scraps of food as remained in their haversacks. But no precaution was made against surprise, or to notify an advance. No pickets were thrown out, nor videttes to the front, though a small force of militia cavalry was at the General's disposal. MacLean rode down the front track for about a mile, and saw nothing, but heard the American bugles ringing in the woods around him.

Another precaution—the one most naturally suggested and easily executed—was incomprehensibly omitted. A dozen axes—and with the force, there must have been one hundred—would, in an hour, have cut down an *abattis* impassable to men on horseback, clearing also the front to musketry fire. This simple expedient never occurred to Proctor ; at all events, it was never put in practice.

The enemy, by their scouts, had reconnoitered and saw clearly the British position. About 8 A. M. they first showed the head of their advance. They came on slowly, carefully covering themselves with the trees. The riflemen on foot crept on stealthily in front, and soon troubled the British line. The horsemen followed, dodging behind trees, but still maintaining a disconnected formation. They approached nearer and nearer. On a sudden, they clustered together, and made a rush forward. They were met by a volley, which daunted them for a moment. In another, they again ans-

tered together, and, before the men could reload, charged again. The men broke, and in one moment more, all was over.

The chief attack was on the right of the road and line. The men here threw down their firelocks. The gun and the left flank, taken **in** reverse, broke and surrendered in detail. Proctor and his staff, stunned by the sudden disaster, and overborne by the irresistible tide of fugitives, retired upon Moravian Town, and found their way ultimately, in wretched plight, to Burlington Heights. One officer and twenty or thirty men, who were on the extreme right of the line, next to the Indian ambuscade, withdrew unobserved, and joined the other fugitives at Ancaster.

The whole effective British force engaged on that 5th of October, was 476 men, of whom 12 were killed and 22 wounded. The American army on the field amounted to above 3,000 men.

This great catastrophe, unparalleled in the annals of the British army, requires some further investigation. It may be said, in extenuation, that the men were worn out, and borne down by harassing and irritating service, and that, from the nature of this service, all regimental pride, all *esprit de corps*, had been lost. They had been detached on outpost duty for months, in the most exposed places. Fever and ague, and the depressing symptoms of this disease, were rife among them ; 170 men were then in hospital. They had not received pay for months ; they had no great-coats; their food had failed. They knew that on the preceding day their supply-boats, fallen to the rear, had been taken by the enemy. They had 180 miles of wilderness behind them ; they were exhausted by the night's march. They knew that there was no hope of successful retreat. The expressions used by them, when faced about in the morning, showed that they were ready to strike a last blow ; but they felt that it was the last.

But there was another element of disintegration at work. Proctor was on bad terms with his regiment. He was the General com-

manding on the frontier. He was also Lieut.-Colonel of H. M. 41st Infantry. There is not in the whole social fabric a more beautiful or more delicate piece of machinery than the internal structure and economy of a British regiment. What a main-spring is to a watch, such is harmony among the officers. While they pull well together with the good taste and good feeling which characterize the service, the same manly, cheery, cordial spirit prevails in every barrack-room. The men, with intuitive tact and feeling, without knowing how, nor caring how, imitate that which recommends itself to their best instincts. Discord among the officers disconcerts good men, and makes bad men licentious. Discontent and dissatisfaction corrode discipline. It did so in the present instance. The fact and the effect were both known. The bands of discipline were relaxed, and broke at the first strain, and the result was ruin.

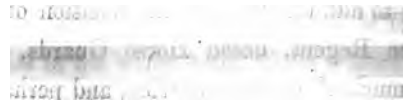
To this unhappy combination of causes must be ascribed the want of energetic unanimity, and the absence of that mutual confidence, which begets self-reliance, and is the foundation of all military coherence in the hour of trial. The men had ceased to rely on one another—to regard "shoulder to shoulder," as the bulwark of strength and maxim of salvation. To these causes must be ascribed the fall of a corps, to that hour distinguished for martial conduct, and which, on fifty stricken fields since, has washed out, with the best blood of its bravest, that one, solitary, spot on an honoured escutcheon.*

Proctor was tried by a court-martial. It is not for the Canadian

* To this holocaust of expiation Canada has contributed its Attims. Montizambert, Major, a member of one of the oldest and most respected families in Quebec, served in this regiment in India—at Candahar, at Cabool, in the Kyber Pass—and was slain while gallantly leading his men on the 12th Sept., 1848, in Mooltan. Lieut. Evans of the 41st, son of Gen. Evans, was killed while storming a hill fort in Affghanistan, subsequent to the 'fall of Cabul in 1846.

chronicler to add one word to the decision of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, dated Horse Guards, 9th Sept., 1815, by which so much of previous service, and perhaps of future promise, were extinguished for ever.

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CHAPTER XXII

Tecumseh—His character—Origin—Tribe of the Shawanese—From Virginia—Driven into Ohio—Thence into Michigan—The Brothers Elksottawa and Tecumseh—Influence of Tecumseh over Indian tribes, due to his personal qualities—Anecdotes—Haughty conduct towards the " Long Knives"—His disinterestedness—Indian skill as draftsman—His personal appearance and costume—Stern adherence to England—Last words to Proctor—Attack of the American riflemen—Tecumseh slain by the hand of Col. James Johnston—The four heraldic supporters of Canada—Outrage offered to his remains.

But the great episode of this fatal field has yet to be related. Here fell Tecumseh. Here fell the untaught Shawanese, the friend and comrade of Brock. It is difficult to do justice to the memory of this worthy compeer of Spartacus, of our own Caractacus, and of that noble Ethiop, Toussaint L'Ouverture. No braver barbarian ever graced Roman triumph. Here he fell—

Butchered, to make a Roman holiday!

We have but few of the *notabilia* of his early career. He was chief, or chief-conjoint, of the Shawanese, a tribe originally of Virginian stock, but which, in the slow but sure progress of European cupidity and aggression, had been driven back from the sea-coast, and had established their hunting-lodges in the Scioto country, in what is now the State of Ohio. This was in 1730. In 1812 they were estimated to number about three hundred warriors.* They were designated the " fierce Shawanese," and have been denounced for their ferocity ; but men and the descendants of men familiar

* Schoolcraft. Indian Tribes. Vol. I, p. 301.

with the Inquisition, the *auto-dafe*, the fires of Smithfield and of the Grenelle,—with the rack, the wheel, the red-hot pincers, and the boiling pitch,—with

Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel—

have no pretence for fastidiousness on this score ; nor should they use hard words towards their fellow-men, frenzied by acts of cruel and often wanton wrong. Their contact with the whites had not tended to abate this fierce characteristic. Year by year, and inch by inch, had they been forced back, from camp-fire to camp-fire, from the Atlantic to the Wabash, appealing in vain to a Christian doctrine since known as the " Monroe," and which, being done into plain English, apparently means—

That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

Hunted and harried, in course of time they receded until they found themselves in the territory of Michigan, under British protection. In 1812 they obeyed the counsels of the Prophet Elksottawa, and followed to the field his more warlike brother Tecumseh. From his youth up he had shown himself to be a remarkable man. Devoid of education, in the European acceptation of the term, he had yet learned to control himself. Instinctively he had risen above the instincts and passions of his race. He despised plunder; he abjured the use of spirits ; he had overcome a propensity strong within him, and had, for years, renounced " fire-water." His conduct in the field was only exceeded by his eloquence in council. This combination of head and hand won the hearts of his tribe and of their savage allies. The influence of the chief extended over the warriors of many other Indian nations. With the skill of a statesman he appeased all dissensions, reconciled all interests, and united all minds in one common alliance against the hated Americans. This was due to his personal qualities alone.