

had been transmitted to his Excellency from Halifax, by Mr. Fester, the late Minister in America. A proposition accompanying these as to the propriety of suspending hostilities, until the pleasure of the President of the United States should be known, was submitted to the American General, in the hope that this conciliatory measure, removing the alleged principal ground of difference between the two nations, would be met by a corresponding disposition on the part of the American Government. General Dearborn readily consented to an armistice (except as to General Hull, who, he said, acted under the immediate commands of the secretary-at-war), and forwarded the despatches to his Government, which, misconstruing this friendly proffer into a sense of weakness and of danger on the part of the British commander, and probably flushed with the prospect of subjugating Upper Canada, refused to ratify the armistice.

We have already stated that the transport of American stores was much furthered by the operations of the armistice; but it should be remembered that it was equally in the power of the British to avail themselves of the time thus afforded them for preparation. Still it was clearly Sir George Prevost's duty to carry out by every means in his power the instructions he had received from the British Government, and we do not see what other course he could have adopted.

He availed himself of the very first opportunity that offered to re-establish amicable relations between the two countries. In short, he advised the American Government that they had now no cause to allege for a continuance of hostilities, inasmuch as all the grievances of which they complained had been removed. He, therefore, in furtherance of his instructions, proposed a temporary cessation of hostilities, in hopes of averting the miseries of a war between two kindred nations, and of affording time for the establishment of a permanent peace. As far as this proposal is in question, no other course was open to Sir George; he had not the power of choice. When, too, we consider the matter still further, it should be remembered that the armistice only lasted one month, although in force for a longer period on the western frontier, and on the 31st August Sir George dispatched his instructions to the west, advising Gen. Brock

of the disallowance of the temporary truce. Besides if the Americans had availed themselves of it for one purpose, so also had the British for another. "A cordon was formed along the frontiers of Lower Canada, from Yamaska to St. Régis, where the line of separation between the United States and Lower Canada touches the St. Lawrence, consisting of Canadian voltigeurs and part of the embodied militia. A light brigade of the elite of the forces regular and militia, was formed at Blairfindie, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Young, of the 8th regiment, consisting of the flank companies of the 8th, 100th, and 103d regiments, with the Canadian Fencibles, the flank companies of the first battalion of embodied militia, and a small brigade of the royal artillery, with six field pieces.

"The road to the United States, from the camp at Blairfindie (or L'Acadie) through Burtonville and Odelltown, was cut up and rendered impracticable by abatis, and every precaution taken to prevent a sudden irruption from that quarter. The voltigeurs, with extraordinary perseverance, effected this fatiguing duty in the course of a very short time, under the superintendence of their commanding officer, Major de Salaberry."

The enumeration of these various operations is a fair proof that, as the armistice benefited the Americans, so did it, in like manner, operate beneficially on British interests. We will, however, to enable the reader to arrive at a just conclusion, make a few extracts from the narrative of S. Van Ranselaer, who acted as aide-de-camp to his relative, General Van Ranselaer, at that time commanding the troops on the Niagara frontier:—

"In this state of things, the armistice which had been concluded between General Dearborn and the Governor General of Canada, was announced to General Van Ranselaer, and it became necessary to settle with the commander of the British forces opposite to us, terms of an arrangement for the government of the armies on the Niagara, during the continuance of the armistice. The performance of this duty was assigned to me, and a suggestion having been made by me to that effect, I had the authority of General Van Ranselaer to attempt such an arrangement, as, besides securing the objects contemplated by General Dearborn, might enable us, pending the