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III.—*General Hull's Invasion of Canada in 18:*

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For a good many months previous to the declaration of war, the Government of the United States had been collecting information and considering the best routes for the invasion of Canada. Among those confidentially consulted on this subject by Dr. Eustis, the Secretary of War, was General John Armstrong, formerly an United States Senator, and lately American Minister in Paris, who was regarded as a high authority on military affairs. In his reply, which was dated 2nd January, 1812,<sup>1</sup> Armstrong advised the immediate purchase of an abundant supply of military stores, the abandonment of all outlying posts of lesser importance upon the Indian Frontier, and the withdrawal of their garrisons, the acquisition of naval ascendancy on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, and the immediate increase of the regular army to a strength sufficient for the defence of their own frontier and the successful invasion of the British Provinces.

He further recommended the concentration of a force of six battalions of mounted riflemen from the Western States at Detroit, where it would be "within striking distance of Indian villages or British settlements," but remarked at the same time that this position would be "positively bad," unless a naval supremacy was secured upon Lake Erie. The occupation of Montreal by an invading army, he argued with great force, must necessarily be followed by the conquest of the whole of Upper Canada, as that place entirely commanded the navigation of both the St. Lawrence and Ottawa. With this object, the whole disposable field force ought to be concentrated near Albany, and its movement veiled by demonstrations with "masses of militia" on the Niagara River, at Sackett's Harbour, and in Vermont on the line of the Sorel.

This promising plan of operations was approved by the Cabinet and measures were begun to carry it into effect. The design to evacuate Mackinac and Chicago, and possibly other military posts in the Indian country, became public, and soon provoked loud protests from the inhabitants of the frontier, who regarded the retention of these garrisons as essential to their own security.

About this time, William Hull, Governor of the Michigan Territory, was summoned to Washington by the Secretary of War, for consultation. His reputation for personal courage and sound judgment stood deserv-

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<sup>1</sup> *Notices of the War of 1812*, by John Armstrong, New York, 1840, Vol. 1, pp. 234-41, Appendix No. 22.