

ham took up the command, seeing that the Americans, not the English, had command of the Mississippi. We may take the same good authority, too, for the view that when Keane had taken up his ground by the Mississippi and beaten off Jackson, he should without loss of time, and in spite of risks, have advanced at once before his enemies had time to develop their defences. When Pakenham came, there was no alternative but either to retreat altogether or to make the attempt which failed so disastrously. He made it with what precautions he could; those precautions miscarried, and with many of the men who followed him he met a soldier's death. But there is another point of view also to be considered, and the clue to it is given in an interview which Sir Harry Smith tells us that he had with Jackson's Adjutant-General after the battle. The American officer had a drawn sword and no scabbard, and the reason he gave was, 'Because I reckon a scabbard of no use so long as one of you Britishers is on our soil. We don't wish to shoot you, but we must if you molest our property. We have thrown away the scabbard.' The Americans had learnt in Canada what was the price of invasion, the English learnt the same lesson before New Orleans. At Bladensburg the men who fought in defence of their capital had no leader worthy the name. New Orleans was defended by a determined soldier, and under his leadership patriotism was a formidable force.

This great disaster to the British cause, great in proportion to the other encounters in this war, and very considerable in itself, was followed by a small success. Intending to operate against Mobile, Lambert and Cochrane decided, as a necessary preliminary, to take Fort Bowyer, the American post at the entrance of Mobile bay, which had, as already told, in the previous September beaten off a small naval attack. On the morning of February 8, a brigade was landed within three miles of the fort, and advancing to within nearly 300 yards of the defences, cooped up the Americans within them. A battering train was landed, lines were pushed forward close to the fort,

Lambert  
takes Fort  
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