

ance, took Buffalo, which, with Black Rock, was given to the flames, captured three vessels of Perry's squadron, and retired, leaving the American frontier from Ontario to Erie one desolate scene of ruin—a terrible retribution for the smoking ashes of Newark. These reprisals, terrible as they were, were considered justifiable by the sufferers themselves, who blamed their own Government for having initiated such a system of border warfare. But it is one of the most terrible evils of war that it so upsets the ordinary rules of justice and humanity as to make justifiable, in the eyes of brave men, retributive measures which fall not upon the original offenders, but upon sufferers individually innocent.

Amid these scenes of devastation closed the campaign of 1813,—the conquest of Canada, so sanguinely anticipated, seeming at the end of the second year of the war as remote as ever, since the invaders had not yet gained a single position on Canadian soil, with the exception of the one point of Amherstburg in the far west, for the loss of which more than an equivalent had been gained in the British possession of Fort Niagara. On the other hand, the Americans,—in their blockaded seaboard, their paralyzed commerce, and their terribly heavy taxation,—felt the war they had evoked press severely on themselves, and the peace party in the Union found in this pressure a powerful argument to induce their people to consider the desirableness of overtures of pacification.

During the winter the militia of the far west, notwithstanding Proctor's disastrous defeat, were, with some assistance from General Drummond, more or less successfully resisting the progress and occupation of the invaders. The latter seemed determined to retrieve the failures of the preceding year by dint of better drilled troops and more efficient officers, among whom Scott now figured as a brigadier-general. Hostilities commenced on the Champlain frontier, by

Wilkinson's force taking possession of the village of Phillipsburg on Lake Champlain, and proceeding thence, on the 26th March, with a force of 5,000 infantry, 100 cavalry, and 11 guns, against Lacolle Mill, ten miles from Rouse's Point, defended by a slender force of 500 men, composed of regular troops and Canadian Fencibles and Volunteers. It might have seemed that an ordinary mill, with a common shingle roof, would have fallen an easy prey to a force numbering ten times its defence. But the brave little garrison, somewhat assisted by the fire of two sloops and two gunboats at a distance, not only held its assailants at bay, but even made two gallant charges with intent to capture the enemy's guns—a feat hardly possible against such overwhelming numbers. For four hours the unequal combat went on, and though the ammunition of the besieged ran short, not a word was uttered of surrender. At six, p.m., hopeless of overcoming such obstinate defenders, the besiegers retired, ingloriously defeated, without attempting to carry the poor little fortress by storm.

This gallantly given check put a stop to further operations on Lake Champlain, and Wilkinson's army was transferred to the shores of Lake Ontario, where occurred the next military event of the year—another British success. The British inland squadron, which, by the addition of two new ships, had gained the ascendancy of the lake, was now at Kingston. Under the command of Commodore Yeo and General Drummond, the fleet made a descent upon Oswego with 1080 troops, put the American force to flight after a sharp action, dismantled the fort, burned barracks and bridges, removed several guns and schooners and a large quantity of provisions, and retired with small loss. Chauncey was next blockaded in Sackett's Harbour, and part of his expected supplies intercepted.

While these events were transpiring, a large American force, under General Brown,