

# THE LEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. III

TORONTO, OCTOBER 6, 1863.

No. 20.

## THE STORY OF QUEENSTON HEIGHTS.

BY THE EDITOR.

THERE are some countries almost every acre of which has been fought over foot by foot, and been redened with human blood. Through the providence of God our own favoured land has been spared this dreadful fate. For well nigh seventy years we have enjoyed, with only very slight interruption, the blessing of profound peace. But not always was it so. Doctor Carroll, and a few of the venerable men yet lingering among us, can remember the time when the scourge of war swept our frontier, and the deep and deadly thunder of the cannonade was heard along our shores. In this beautiful month of October the York Pioneers celebrate at Queenston Heights the famous victory won there seventy-one years ago. From that tree-clad height one of the fairest views in our fair land is beheld—the deep gorge of the Niagara at the right, then the river winding like a silver riband to the blue Ontario; and far as the eye can reach the fertile orchards and farmsteads of a free and happy country. But far different was the sight on that eventful day which they meet to commemorate. And without cultivating a war spirit, it is well to cherish a patriotic feeling, and to remember the deeds of valour of our forefathers who preserved for the British Crown, the fair inheritance which we to-day possess. Therefore it is that we give a brief outline of the events connected with the victory of Queenston Heights.

The position of the parties to the contest of 1812-13 was very unequal. Great Britain was exhausted by a war by sea and land of nearly twenty years' duration. Canada was unprepared for the conflict. She had less than six thousand troops to defend fifteen hundred miles of frontier. Her entire population was under three hundred thousand, while that of the United States was eight millions, or in the proportions of twenty-seven to one. The

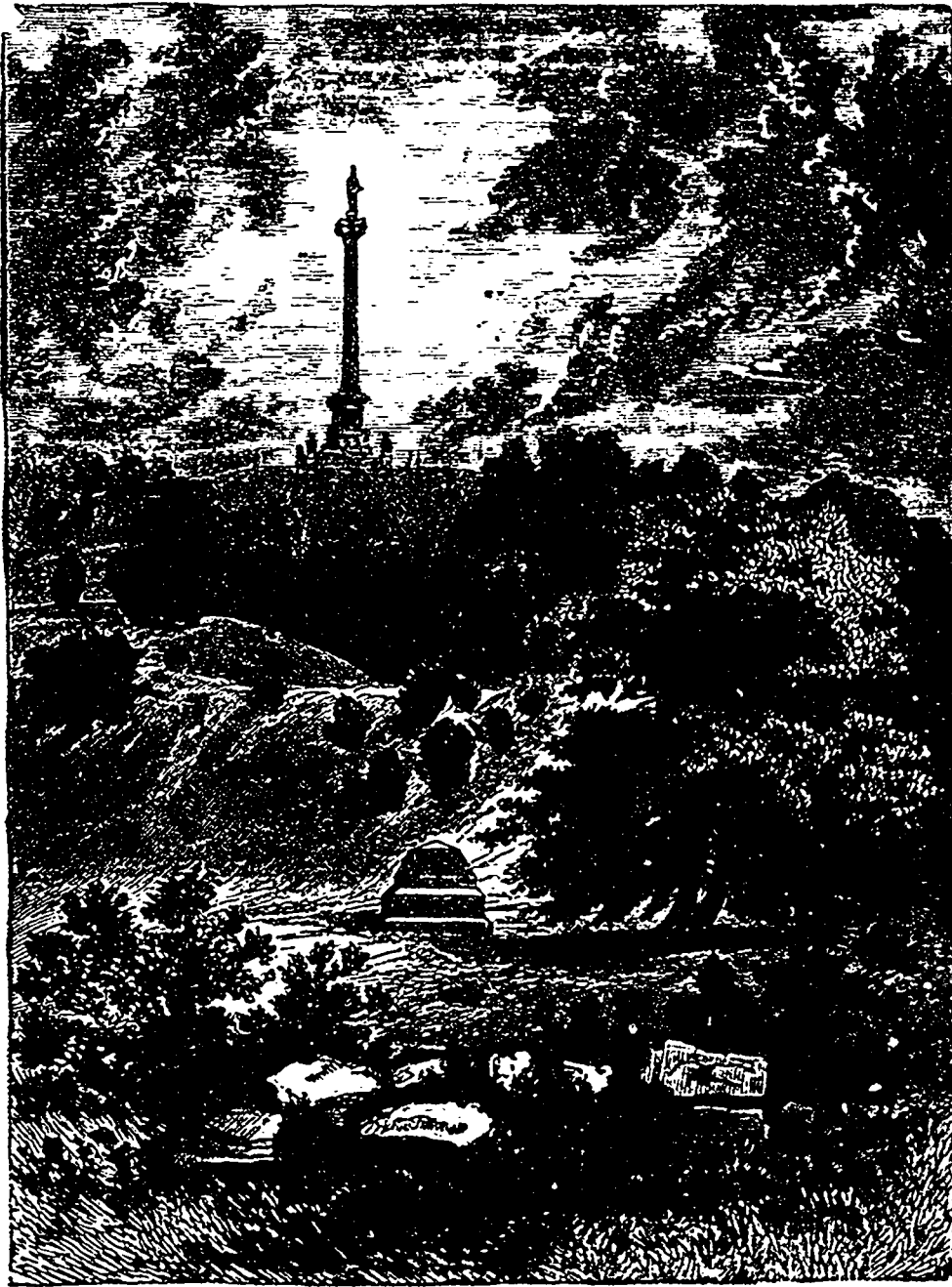
Americans relied upon the reported disaffection of the provinces with British rule. In this they were egregiously mistaken. Forgetting their political differences, the Canadians rallied with a spontaneous outburst of loyalty to

when war was raging, and their savage instincts often led to acts of cruelty which the principals in the conflict bore the blame.

The American plan of attack was to invade Canada with three armies, on

the alternatives of "peace, liberty, and security," or "war, slavery, and destruction." They spurned his offers and defied his threats. Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, a gallant officer and skilful civil ruler, who, in the absence of Mr. Gore, administered the Government of Upper Canada, issued a counter proclamation, at Fort George, Niagara, and hastened to the St. Clair by way of Niagara and Lake Erie, with all the forces he could collect on the route. A council of war was held. Tecumseh, the celebrated Indian chief, who, with his warriors, had excited great terror in the minds of the Americans, was present, at the request of Brock, who recognized his remarkable military abilities. Tecumseh sketched on a piece of birch bark a rough plan of Detroit, and of Hull's defences. The British commander, although his entire force amounted to only 700 regulars and militia, and 600 Indians, resolved to attack the enemy, numbering twice as many, and entrenched behind earthworks. The British force, under cover of armed vessels, crossed the river. Forming his little army in columns, Brock advanced to the assault. Before he reached the fort, however, a flag of truce was displayed. A capitulation was soon signed which surrendered Hull's entire force and vast military stores, a strong fort, and the whole State of Michigan, August 16.

Brock now repaired to the Niagara frontier which was threatened by an invasion of the enemy. The people of Canada were proud of the young hero, who, in ten days, had marched three hundred miles through a difficult country, compelled the surrender of an entrenched army twice as great as his own, and of a country as large as the province of which he was the Governor. The achievement at Detroit also won generous recognition from the Imperial authorities, and honours and decorations were conferred upon him. But before the intelligence of his new dignities could be received, his heroic spirit had passed away from earth. For the defence of the menaced Niagara frontier, Brock had only some fifteen hundred men, of whom at least one-half were militia-men and Indians.



BROCK'S MONUMENT, QUEENSTON HEIGHTS.

(The small cenotaph near the large tree in the foreground marks the spot where Sir Isaac Brock fell.)

\* This cut is taken, by permission of the publisher, from Mr. Dent's admirable history, entitled "The Last Forty Years, or, Canada since the Union of 1841." The engraving is a specimen of over seventy illustrations of Canadian subjects.

the support of the Government. Even the American immigrants, with scarce an exception, proved faithful to their adopted country. The employment of Indians on both sides seems to have been an unfortunate necessity. They could not be induced to remain neutral

the Detroit and Niagara frontiers, and by way of Lake Champlain. General Hull, on the 12th of July, crossed the Detroit River at Sandwich, with twenty-five hundred men. In a pompous proclamation, he summoned the Canadians to surrender, offering them

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