

Years passed on, and they continued to be at ease in their possessions. But the white man from the far east, with the miseries which have ever accompanied him in his march of usurpation, began to wander into the wilderness, and trouble to the poor red man was the inevitable consequence. The baneful "fire water," which was the gift of civilization, created dissensions among the savage tribes, until in process of time, and on account of purely imaginary evils, the Pottowattomies from Michigan determined to make war upon the Indians of Illinois. Fortune, or rather destiny, smiled upon the oppressors, and the identical rock in question was the spot that witnessed the extinction of an aboriginal race.

It was the close of a long siege of cruel warfare, and the afternoon of a day in the delightful Indian summer. The sunshine threw a mellow haze upon the prairies, and tinged the multitudinous flowers with the deepest gold; while, in the shadow of the forest islands, the doe and her fawn reposed in quietness, lulled into a temporary slumber by the hum of the grasshopper and wild bee. The wilderness world wore the aspect of a perfect Sabbath. But now, in the twinkling of an eye, the delightful solitude was broken by the shrill whoop and dreadful struggle of bloody conflict upon the prairies and in the woods. All over the country was seen the dead bodies of the ill-fated Illinois, when it was ordered by Providence that the concluding skirmish between the hostile parties should take place in the vicinity of Starved Rock.

The Pottowattomies numbered near three hundred warriors, while the Illinois tribe was reduced to about one hundred, who were mostly aged chiefs and youthful heroes — the more desperate fighters having already perished, and the women and children of the tribe having already been massacred and consumed in their wigwams. The battle was most desperate between the unequal parties.

The Illinois were about to give up all for lost, when, in their frenzy, they gave a defying shout, and retreated to the rocky bluff. From this, it was an easy matter to keep back their enemies, but alas! from that moment they were to endure un-