

the contract, for few of the disjointed bands of Indians would acknowledge the powers of the chiefs who signed, and then there was a complete misunderstanding. The whites pretended that certain chiefs, selected to proceed to Arkansas, were to choose a location to which all should emigrate, while the Indians insisted they were only to examine the country, and report whether it was advisable to emigrate or not.

Thus stood matters in the fall of 1835, when the whites insisted that the Indians were bound to remove, and as they generally manifested a contrary disposition, called loudly upon Government to force them; but such had been their continued docility, that the Government imagined all things would be arranged without disturbance, especially as a portion had declared their readiness to go. One border irritation bringing on another, the whites declared that if the Indians did not remove peaceably they should be driven, and commenced making preparations, of which the Indians were aware.

At this juncture of hot blood, though nothing like hostilities had commenced on either side, Major Dade having been ordered as a precautionary protection for the agency at Fort King, to proceed there from Tampa, a distance of 120 miles through the woods, with a command of 113, officers and regular soldiers, was surrounded about half-way, in the open pine wood, by a large body of Indians who massacred the whole (they being, I suppose, deficient in ammunition) except three wounded men who crept away in the night. This occurred on the 28th Dec., 1835, and on the same day Ocoola, who afterwards figured so largely in the newspapers, with a small party, surrounding the Agency, killed General Thompson the Agent, a Lieutenant of the army, and some others residing there, and finished the day by murdering Charley Amathla, a chief favorable to emigration. Three days after, General Clinch was attacked on the Withlacoochie, and, though it was called a "glorious victory," forced to retire; for his 200 regulars could not advance against the Indians, and his 600 militia, like prudent gentlemen, could not be brought within range of shot.

Such were the causes and commencement of the "Florida War," which, as a subject daily referred to in the United States, is worthy of this concise explanation.

The Indians made immediately a dash upon the settlements in all directions, breaking up plantations, large and small, and murdering all who could be overtaken, without regard to age or sex. All the settlements in East Florida, which covers 30,000 square miles, were immediately abandoned, the people flying to the two towns of St. Augustine and Jacksonville, or seeking refuge in the vicinity of military posts, in which condition they mostly remained, moving as the posts were changed, for six years, depending mainly upon Government for subsistence. In Middle Florida the larger planters, who had extensive clearings, erected stockades round their dwellings and risked the dangers.

Troops were soon thrown into the country, and maintained in force of from 5,000 to 10,000 men, from 1836 to 1842; but as the Indians were now dispersed over such an immense territory, they could seldom be overtaken, and the contest, improperly called "a war," continued to be a mere search for fugitives, who could rarely muster in sufficient force to offer battle. In occasional skirmishes between small parties, the whites always obtained the "victory," but with the loss of several men, while seldom, indeed, was a dead Indian left on the ground. The numerous swamps and thickets gave safe retreats for their families; the sky, in that beautiful climate, was usually a sufficient canopy, while fish, game, fruits, and edible roots, furnished, every where, abundant subsistence. But the warriors appeared to be any where except where sought for. White families having the temerity, from time to time, to re-establish themselves in exposed situations, were murdered in cold blood; travellers were shot down on the roads; empty waggons, returning from one post to another, with merely a corporal's guard, were intercepted; and companies of troops moving through the woods, were fired upon from convenient ambushes, by an unseen enemy, who, choosing the locality, retreated into recesses where pursuit was useless.

In this manner, from first to last, some five hundred to a thousand inhabitants were murdered, and an equal number of troops killed. Perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to estimate the whole at near two thousand, to which may be added a corresponding number of

deaths, resulting from exposures and privations; while it is doubtful whether the Indians lost much over one hundred lives during the whole contest. Such a result, where the warriors did not at the outset, all counted, exceed one thousand, is difficult of belief, but it must, nevertheless, be recorded as a historical fact. I can now remember eleven persons murdered at different times, while I was in St. Augustine, on the main road from that place to Picolata, on the St. Johns, a distance of only eighteen miles; during a truce of six weeks, I kept a list, which amounted to forty-six in that time, along a line of five hundred miles. They have been murdered before me and behind me, while on the road. I have come up with many before the warm life's-blood had ceased flowing, and seen more in their last agonies. Nothing can excite such thrills of horror, as the spectacle of these victims of savage blood-thirstiness.

Occasionally, by fortunate coincidences, considerable parties were captured, but the greater part came in and surrendered voluntarily, from time to time, saying they were "tired of the war;" for there was always a standing order at all the posts, to treat every Indian who came in with the utmost kindness and consideration, as an inducement for others to follow. In 1841, when the number remaining was reduced to about two thousand, a successful system of bribery was adopted, and by the expenditure of \$115,000, of which the principal chiefs received from \$3,000 to \$8,000 each, the whole surrendered, and were removed, with the exception of two or three hundred, who still lurk about the southern part of the Peninsula, and manifest no hostile propensities.

The American Government has been, and continues to be, terribly vilified for the conduct of this "war;" but this is one of those common historical mistakes, which, once impressed upon the public mind, is hard to be unlearned. That the Government erred, and erred greatly, is most certain; but it was entirely on the side of a mistaken humanity, and forbearance to a misguided combination of Indian hordes, too insignificant in numbers to demand that the whole energies of a nation should be directed against them, and yet so determinedly obstinate in their bandit course, that it was necessary to maintain a large force in the field, lest, after depeopling Florida, they should carry fire and murder into the scattered settlements of adjoining states.

"Wars," says an old maxim, "to be short must be terrible;" but the Indians, by making their terrible made it long; and another cause, was the error which powerful nations have often committed, of making regular war against a people, which, instead of being a "nation," is only a thousand individuals, no one of whom considers himself bound by the engagements of another, and each of whom conducts hostilities as he sees fit—either by taking his chance alone by the road side, or associating with such numbers as may join together for a particular expedition, and then disperse again. Added to these, numbers living in single families were criminals against Indian law, and outcasts from the emigrated tribes; some of the most actively bloody, being bullies, murderers, and adulterers, who frequently declared, that they had more to fear from certain retaliation, if removed too near their own countrymen in the West, than from the whites of Florida, whom they could always both harass and elude.

THE LATE CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

(From Biographical Sketch in the *Englishwoman's Magazine*.)

. . . Her husband had joined his regiment at Halifax in Nova Scotia, and thither it became the duty of Charlotte Elizabeth to follow him.

Enjoying vigorous health, and gifted with a keen perception and an enthusiastic love of the sublime and beautiful in nature, Charlotte Elizabeth Phelan might, during this her first voyage, be seen, all day long, and in every sort of weather, seated on the highest point of the ship's stern, and watching with a degree of enjoyment far beyond description, the noble vessel's "graceful course through the mighty deep." At length there came a storm; and then the young English lady, by her own desire, was lashed to the mizen-mast, in order that she might behold in safety the magnificent spectacle of the sea in "his strength." The peril, however, soon became extreme. Night closed in; the gale increased; the sails were torn to ribands; the rudder broke loose, and the spanker-boom snapped like a reed, the ship lay so low