

held for the express purpose of manifesting the popular feeling in favor of General Harrison, then a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. Delegates from every state in the Union were to assemble on a ground which had been the theatre of the display of *no* resolution, less active than passive, on the part of "Hard Cider," as the Americans familiarly termed him, and which was not without interest to me, as having been one of those against whom he had defended himself. A very numerous body of people (Whigs) marshalled for the occasion in Detroit, and one fine yet sultry morning, under a salute of artillery, amid the waving of the handkerchiefs of the agreeable and lady-like women for whom the capital of Michigan is celebrated, and who now lined the balconies and windows overlooking the river, the steamers, five in number and literally crowded with people, unmoored from their respective wharves and glided down the river. The sky was clear and bright, although the atmosphere was insufferably warm, and as the prow of each boat, which was decked with gay flags and alive with music, rippled through the still and waveless current, it seemed as though its course were propelled through the yielding, but hitherto unbroken, surface of a mirror. Crowds of spectators collected on the populous and verdant shores, evidently wondering at the cause of the unusual display, which, albeit known to a few, was a mystery to the mass; and as we moved, in succession, past the British fort at Amherstburgh, the bright scarlet uniforms of the guard, who, in the midst of their less gaudily attired comrades off duty, lingered near the gateway, or thronged the ramparts, strongly brought to my memory the contrast of a *past* position with the *present*, and yielded abundant materials for reflections not of the most soothing or satisfactory nature. Then I had marched from the spot around which those soldiers lingered, and glided down the river on which I now found myself, for the express purpose of investing and destroying the very place to which I was now hastening as to a festival; nay more, with the object of capturing or slaying the very man whom it was intended that festival should honor. I had endured hunger, and thirst, and privation of every kind, during that close siege, and had deeply rejoiced whenever a bursting shell falling into the works threatened to spread havoc and destruction among those they sheltered, and to give promise of the extermination of their stronghold. Now I was about to visit the same spot, to be a spectator of the rejoicings at the imputed defeat of all our plans, and of the bestowal by assembled thousands of homage upon him who claimed a victory over us, and again whose claim there was no one present but myself who could, even if imprudent enough to do so, demur. The position was a curious one, and yet as we advanced there was even more cause afforded for contrast and reflection. At length, we entered the Miami River, but how different was the appearance of the country, and how dissimilar the mode of ascent, to what it had been at the period when I last visited the scene. It had been my fortune to be upon this river on three several occasions, during the last war between Great Britain and the United States, and at a time when one unvarying wilderness presented itself on either shore to the eye, as far as the commencement of the beautifully green and sloping bank which, for about twenty yards, formed the boundary between the forest and the river. We had, on the first occasion, penetrated almost to its source, and far beyond the point to which curious thousands were now repairing to celebrate what was intended to be a national jubilee; and during that expedition—some seventy or eighty miles into the interior—we had seen but one solitary cabin, which, in apprehension of the outrages of our Indian allies, had been deserted by its inhabitants,—and the ruins of an old English fort, one of those alluded to in my "Waconsta" as having fallen into the hands of the same race of people, then our fierce and uncompromising enemies, and united in exterminating confederacy under the renowned chieftain Pontiac. We had, it is true, then penetrated far beyond this ruin, but not an evidence of civilization had met our view.

On the second occasion, when our light-hearted and joyous soldiery, who ever found, in expeditions of the kind, indulgence for that wholesome spirit of adventure which is peculiar to the profession of arms, pulled, with cheerful song and jest, the batteaux in which we were embarked, it was for a more hostile and decided purpose than that which we previously entertained. As we rowed up the river, the country was, for a series of miles, precisely as we had found it on our first approach, the wild turkey occasionally winging its lazy flight from shore to shore, and presenting a tempting and seldom neglected mark to the rifles of the Indians who flanked our advance on either bank, and to the less effective musket of the soldier, fired by some eager and imprudent officer; but when we had traced about one third of our former route, and approached the point where had stood the deserted cabin to which I have alluded, we discovered that around that, and extending over ground where, on the first occasion, we had amused ourselves with shooting down the hogs, which, untended by their owner, had become absolutely wild, had now risen, in imposing strength, fortifications, against which our present efforts were to be directed. This fort was commanded by General Harrison, the very man whom a strong political party were now

assembling to honor in the immediate theatre of his assumed military achievements, and in order that the reader may fully understand the value of these, I will briefly refer to the circumstances as they took place.

On taking up our position about a mile below the fort, which was reconnoitred and found impracticable except by breach, the necessary batteries were immediately thrown up opposite to the American defences (the river or "foot of the rapids" separating the armies,) at a distance of about eight hundred yards, and in a few days, protected by strong covering parties, these were in readiness to receive the battering guns which had accompanied the expedition. Two of these were long twenty-four pounders which we had previously taken at Detroit, and well do I recollect the immense exertion it cost us to drag them from the point where they had been landed, to the batteries. The distance was a mile, and the roads so bad that it required many yokes of oxen and nearly two hundred men, (the latter furnished with drag ropes,) from nine o'clock in the evening until three in the morning, to effect this important duty, which, at one time, had nearly been abandoned in very hopelessness of success. A principal object was to get the guns into battery before the Americans could be aware of their advance, for the range was so short that they could not fail, in day-light, to have caused us serious molestation. This, after extraordinary effort, was accomplished, and at a given signal from a gunboat anchored abreast of the encampment, and the hoisting of the union jack at the batteries themselves, a furious cannonade was opened upon the enemy, who returned it with spirit, but not with the same efficiency. Well did these beautiful twenty-four pounders throw their metal. They were, in comparison of one arm with the other, as true as rifles, and at whatever point the gun was directed, there the shot was sure to fall. I had more than once, while forming one of the covering party, prevailed on the bombardier who had charge of these pieces to allow me to point them, and I remember feeling all the delight which is natural to a young soldier on occasions of the kind, and during his earlier days of service, wherever I perceived the destruction I had been instrumental in effecting. There was one point at which the twenty-four pounders were principally aimed, and this was the roof of the powder magazine which the enemy were busily engaged in endeavoring to render bomb-proof. Most gallantly did they acquit themselves of this dangerous duty, for although our heavy and hissing shot struck the roof at every discharge, tearing up the new laid earth, and occasionally mixing it with the blood and limbs of those who were employed in placing it there, no sooner were they extricated from the shower of wet earth which, scattered high in air, fell enveloping their persons as in a dark cloud, than they recommenced their task with an undiminished ardor that astonished us, nor ceased until they had accomplished their object. The magazine was, in spite of our incessant fire, rendered bomb-proof; and then, and not until then, did the workmen retire from their exposed position. For four consecutive days we continued, with little intermission, to bombard the place, throwing into it shells, and red hot, as well as the ordinary round, shot; and such was the number of these that we could not possibly conceive how the enemy was enabled to hold out as he did. But the resources of these brave men were in proportion with the magnitude of their danger. With the same indefatigability and resolution they had manifested while covering their powder magazine, they prevented that destruction in their force, which must else have resulted from our fire, by excavating obliquely in the earth, and forming burrows in which the Indians used to say they buried themselves like "ground hogs,"—thus finding shelter from our shells. The state of the earth itself had greatly contributed to their exemption from serious loss, for in consequence of the heavy rains which had fallen since our arrival in the neighborhood, the clayey soil of the newly dug fort had become so saturated, that the area was one continuous paste reaching to the ankles, and as the shells dropped in this, the fuzes were generally instantly extinguished, while the hot shot fell equally without effect.

Thus stood matters in relation to the siege itself, when, on the fifth day from the opening of our fire, the affair occurred which gave to General Harrison, according to American history, a victory some sixty thousand persons, from most parts of the Union, were now about to celebrate in presence of the assumed victor, and on the very theatre of contest.

General Harrison being uncertain as to the ultimate results of the siege, and moreover extremely annoyed by our guns, resolved upon an attempt to silence these latter; and with that view despatched a messenger to General Green Clay who, he had been apprized, was a few miles up the river, advancing to the relief of the garrison with a force of fifteen hundred men, and some ammunition and stores. The orders now sent to him were to move forward without delay; land within a short distance of the British batteries; carry and spike the guns—destroying the carriages, and instantly recross the river, and join him in the fort.

It should have been previously mentioned that, prior to the opening of the guns from our batteries opposite to Fort Meigs, two