

in which he delivered himself into his opponent's hands, would almost brand him as such.

On the other side were Lord Gambier, who could command a ship or a squadron but not himself; Dr. William Adams, an able lawyer at his own Bar, but otherwise incompetent, and Henry Goulburn, afterwards Secretary of State. Of these, Goulburn alone rose even to mediocrity, and he but little, if any, above it.

These Commissioners met at Ghent, and it very soon became apparent that the British representatives were not anxious for peace. This was a matter of astonishment to those from the United States, who seem to have believed, as so many have believed since, that Britain was at her last gasp. The fact is that any reverses she may have suffered were as nothing compared with the mighty victories she had achieved in Europe; and she never looked upon the American War as a serious matter.

Territory she desired from the United States; a road from Halifax to Quebec, the control of the Great Lakes, room for a buffer land to be occupied by Indian allies; all of these were as impossible for the United States to grant as it was for Britain to grant exemption from impressment; and peace seemed hopeless.

To better her position, she determined upon invasion. In taking this step she was undoubtedly influenced by an erroneous view she had of the sentiment of many of the American people. New England and New York had voted against the war; during or before the war a whole political party had vehemently inveighed against it with solemn warning that it would destroy the Union; Massachusetts had declared and acted upon her detestation of the invasion of Canada; the Assembly of New York had, in February, 1814, in their reply to Governor Tompkins, savagely assailed the General Government; the Governor thought and said that "the Assembly had too much Massachusetts leaven in it to do anything favourable to the support of the country," and many Englishmen believed a great part of the American people were ready to revolt.