

may, those in Britain who most condemned the conduct of Sir James Craig, in employing Henry, agreed that the President would have acted more correctly in making a remonstrance to the British administration, and receiving its explanations, before he brought the charge in Congress, by laying before it the correspondence so infamously consigned into his hands by the disappointed Captain Henry; but the President probably could not resist the temptation of making use of such an opportunity to re-kindle the animosity of his fellow citizens against Great Britain, which was perhaps beginning to subside. It was indeed too efficacious for this purpose; for it is said, that when the documents were read, a burst of indignation proceeded from all parts of the house. A thousand copies were ordered to be printed for dispersion throughout the Union. Early in June the President sent a long message to both Houses, in which he set forth all the injuries and hostile measures (as he considered them) practiced by the government of Great Britain, and still persisted in, towards the United States, and recommended the subject to their early deliberations. In consequence, discussions with closed doors, took place in the two houses, the final result of which was an act passed on the 18th of June, declaring the *actual existence of war*, between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the United States of America. Subsequent events rendered it highly probable that the American Government had anticipated credit from the commencement of the war, especially from the conquest of Canada, which seems to have been regarded as an easy task.

An occurrence near Montreal, about this time, doubtless animated the hopes of the Americans with respect to the meditated expedition against Canada. By a late militia law, a draft of 2000 men was to be made from the militia of the province, for three months, in order to be trained and disciplined. Some of those who were to be drafted from the parish of St. Claire, having refused to march to LaPrairie to join the division stationed there, an officer was sent to apprehend the refractory persons as deserters. Four of those were taken and carried off, but were followed by a mob who rescued one, and threatened to come the next day to LaPrairie, and liberate all the young men of their parish who were kept there. Accordingly a large body assembled at LaChine to execute their purpose, many of whom were armed with fowling pieces, when they were met by a Police Magistrate, with a detachment of regular troops. A parley ensued, in which the insurgents pleaded that they did not consider the militia act as fully passed, and that it had not been properly promulgated among them. They declared their readiness to concur in the defence of their country, but persisted in their determination relative to the object they had in view. The riot act was then read; and on their refusal to disperse, shots were fired by the troops, which were returned by the insurgents. By a more direct aim on the part of the military, whose fire had hitherto been in the air, the mob was soon dispersed with the loss of one man killed and thirteen prisoners. On the next day a large force was marched into several parts of the Island, who made a considerable number of prisoners and brought them to Montreal—many others soon after following them to crave the Governor's pardon. The Governor acted with pru-