

to drive back the enemy from a situation commanding the passage of the boats. This attempt was gallantly made, but numbers prevailed, and the result of the affair was the destruction or capture of the whole party. As a proof, however, of the resistance, it will suffice to state that the killed and wounded amounted to more than one-third of the party. That the Americans must have had Indians as their allies, is evident from the conclusion of Captain Popham's official despatch:—"The exertions of the American officers of the rifle corps, commanded by Major Appling, in saving the lives of many of the officers and men, whom *their own men and the Indians were devoting to death*, were conspicuous, and claim our warmest gratitude."

Armstrong begins his statement of the affair by styling it an "achievement" accomplished by Major Appling and one hundred and thirty-two men, omitting all mention of either militia or Indians, and he declares that the whole British party fell into the hands of the Americans without the loss of a single man of their party. The probability of this the reader can judge of, when it is borne in mind that a hand-to-hand conflict occurred on both banks of the river, and that the British were only overpowered by numbers. The same disregard of truth, however, which caused Armstrong to suppress all mention of the militia and infantry, would doubtless prompt him to conceal the American loss, whatever it might have been.

An occurrence on the shores of Lake Erie, to which we have already alluded, does not reflect quite so much credit on the national character as did Major Appling's and his officers' conduct. Early in March, General Drummond had quartered at the inconsiderable village of Dover a small body of dragoons. This was done by way of establishing an outpost, so that the Americans might not be enabled, having the command of the Lake, to land, without opposition or notice, troops, at a post so close to Burlington heights, the grand centre of the British position, and the depot for the troops on the Niagara line.

Fear of another attack on the part of the

British had induced the American commander to concentrate about Buffalo and Erie (where the fleet lay) a large body of troops. One of the American officers, a Colonel Campbell, judging, doubtless, that it was a pity so many men should remain inactive, saw, in the occupation of Dover, an opportunity of distinguishing himself and benefiting his country. Taking, then, full five hundred United States infantry, he crossed over from Erie on the 13th May, and, the British troops retiring before him, destroyed the mills, distilleries, and houses in the village. Mr. Thornton says: "A *squadron* of British dragoons stationed at the place fled at the approach of Colonel Campbell's *detachment*, and abandoned the women and children, who experienced humane treatment from the Americans."

If the burning of stores, barns, and dwelling houses of peaceable and unresisting inhabitants be included in Mr. Thornton's category of humane treatment, we should like to be enlightened as to what would be considered harsh treatment. As a proof, however, that even the Americans were ashamed of the transaction, we have only to mention that a court of inquiry, of which General Scott was president, was instituted to take the facts into consideration, and that their decision was, "that in burning the houses of the inhabitants, Colonel Campbell had greatly erred; but this error they imputed to the recollection of the scenes of the Raisin and the Miami, in the Western territories, to the army of which Colonel Campbell was at that time attached, and to the recent devastation of the Niagara frontier."

The court appears to have had most convenient memories, or they could scarcely have forgotten that an act very similar to the present had alone caused the destruction along the banks of the Niagara. We learn from the transaction, that the American military tribunals of that day looked upon pillage and destruction of private property, only a "a trifling error." We will have occasion to notice in what light the destruction of the public buildings at Washington was regarded, and whether the course of the British Generals is so lightly considered.