

Children had been born and grown to manhood since the conflict began and after all that bloodshed the power of "the Corsican tyrant" as our ancestors delighted to call him, was more firmly established than ever. It is true that she was mistress of the sea, but in that whole vast coastline extending from Hammerfast to the Golden Horn there were but two ports—Cadiz and Lisbon—which her ships could enter in peace and these only because they were held by British garrisons. That gallant little army that had been fighting for three years in Portugal and Spain had lately been forced to retire to these famous lines at the gates of Lisbon, whence it was destined to march forth to victory on victory, but that result no one foresaw or expected.

Such was the time selected by the United States to declare war. The hour of England's need would be their opportunity they shrewdly argued. They would take Canada they proclaimed, and none dared gainsay them. Never since the days of Thermopylae had a contest seemed more hopeless. Beyond the Atlantic Britain found a continent in arms. Here a nation of eight millions was arrayed against these provinces with a population of less than five hundred thousand. In Upper Canada less than eighty thousand people occupied a narrow fringe of settled country, skirting the lakes and rivers from the Ottawa to Lake Huron, of whom probably one third were disaffected or apathetic. It was confidentially asserted that the militia of Kentucky alone would suffice to conquer them. The Governor-General frankly confessed that he scarcely hoped to retain anything outside of the walls of Quebec. General Brock, on the whole much more hopeful and sanguine, admitted that Upper Canada would probably be overrun. The British Naval Chronicle, referring to General Hull's proclamation on crossing the Detroit River, which it had just received, said,—“This may prove the

forerunner of the fall of Canada, which once gone in all probability will never return to the British crown any more than Hanover.”

Had any one ventured then to predict that not only would every attempt at invasion be ignominiously baffled, but that in less than three years one British army would march in triumph into Paris and another into Washington, he would have been regarded as a madman.

The battle fought here five and eighty years ago was remarkable and memorable for several reasons. It was the turning point of the last and most formidable campaign of invasion. After threatening the forts at the mouth of this river for some days the American army had retired to Chippawa with the intention, as its commander stated, of sending away his surplus baggage and making a rapid advance across the country against Burlington Heights, where he hoped to be joined by the American fleet on Lake Ontario. An urgent summons had that morning been issued to the Indians in the U. S. service to rejoin him in time to take part in this movement. The advance guards of the two armies came into collision quite unexpectedly at this place shortly before night, 25th July, 1814, and drew the remainder of the forces on both sides that were within marching distance into a prolonged and bloody struggle, which neither of their commanders had intended to bring on at that moment. The battle consequently was mainly fought in darkness and disorder, beginning near sunset and lasting nearly until midnight. On both sides the soldiers displayed great discipline, courage and tenacity in very trying circumstances, and the number of killed and wounded was unusually large. Neither at Austerlitz or Waterloo, at Gettysburg or Gravelotte was the loss proportionately so great in respect to the numbers engaged. Of 2800 British soldiers 878, or almost one third, were reported killed,