

This was the prelude to a more decisive step. War was declared by Congress on the 18th of June, 1812, President Madison, though morally responsible for much of the hostile feeling, eluding the formal personal responsibility, which was assumed by the Legislature.\* The step was not, however, unopposed. Honourable and high-minded Americans, such as Quincey, Sheffey, and Randolph of Virginia, strongly denounced the proposed invasion of a peaceful and unoffending Province, and especially the idea, openly expressed, of endeavouring to seduce the Canadians from their loyalty, and as Randolph expressed it, "converting them into traitors, as a preparation for making them good American citizens." A heart generous enough so to speak would, it may be believed, be generous enough to rejoice when the Canadian people proved themselves incapable of being "converted into traitors." Despite, however, such nobly expressed opposition, the declaration of war was carried by seventy-nine votes against forty-nine—its supporters being chiefly representatives of Southern and Western States, while its opponents represented the East and North. In New England, indeed, the oppo-

\* The extravagant hopes and expectations entertained by the Americans as to the easy conquest of Canada, will be best seen from the following extracts from speeches delivered upon the floor of Congress previous to the declaration of war. Dr. Eustis, United States Secretary of War, said :—" *We can take Canada without soldiers; we have only to send officers into the Provinces, and the people, disaffected towards their own Government, will rally round our standard.*" The Hon. Henry Clay, who, in 1814, signed the treaty of peace as one of the Commissioners, expressed himself still more strongly: "It is absurd to suppose we shall not succeed in our enterprise against the enemy's provinces. We have the Canadas as much under our command as Great Britain has the ocean, and the way to conquer her on the ocean is to drive her from the land. *We must take the Continent from them. I wish never to see a peace till we do. God has given us the power and the means; we are to blame if we do not use them.* If we get the Continent, she must allow us the freedom of the sea."

sition to war was intense; and Boston, foremost before in defending American liberty, displayed her flags half-mast high in token of mourning, while a mass-meeting of the inhabitants passed resolutions protesting to the utmost against a war so ruinous, so unnatural, and so threatening, from its connexion with Imperial France, to American liberty and independence. The protestors deserve the grateful remembrance of Canadians, and these facts should not have been forgotten by Great Britain during the late unhappy contest between the North and South.

Canada, the destined victim of these complicated misunderstandings, had of course full warning of the impending storm. The President's message in 1811, and the report made to Congress by its Committee on the Foreign affairs of the United States, conveying sentiments of the most decided hostility to England, had been a presage of what might, ere long, be expected. General Brock, who was at that time acting not only as Commander in Upper Canada, but as administrator of the Government, was not slow to take the alarm, and inaugurate, so far as possible, preparations for defence. In opening the Session of the Legislature at York, in February, 1812, while expressing his hope "that cool reflection and the dictates of justice may yet avert the calamities of war," he impressed the importance of early adopting "such measures as will best secure the internal peace of the country, and defeat every hostile aggression." It was, indeed, to this wise, energetic, and brave commander, that the country looked as its stay and its hope, at a time when Great Britain, worried and harassed by European complications, listened to the representations of the colonists with an incredulous and what seemed an inconceivable apathy.

General Brock, who, though still comparatively a young man, had already distinguished himself with his brave 49th regiment in Europe and the West Indies, had been detained in Canada long beyond the time