

Amnesty offered and accepted.

Preparations for attacking Detroit.

Its Surrender predetermined.

them that he had come to assist them in driving the Americans from Detroit and their rightful hunting-grounds north of the Ohio. His speech was highly applauded by Tecumtha, who replied in an eloquent and sagacious manner, and gave Brock a high opinion of his genius.¹ Not deeming it prudent to reveal too much of his plan of operations to the assembled savages, the latter invited Tecumtha, with a few old chiefs, to Colonel Elliott's quarters, and there he laid the whole matter before them. The chiefs listened with great attention, and assured Brock that he should have their cordial co-operation. In reply to his question whether the warriors could be restrained from drinking whisky, Tecumtha replied that, before leaving their country on the Wabash, they had promised him that they would not taste a drop of the fire-water until they had humbled the *big-knives*—the Americans—and that they might be relied on.²

Brock had issued a general order early in the morning of the 14th, in which he calmed the fears of those inhabitants who had deserted from the British army, or had taken protections from Hull, by expressing his willingness to believe that their conduct proceeded more from their anxiety to get in their harvests than from "any predilection for the principles and government of the United States." This ingenious offer of amnesty by implication was sent out upon the roads northward, and was accepted by the great body of the inhabitants, who were alarmed and exasperated by Hull's desertion of them; and when, on the same day, Brock marched from Malden to Sandwich, he passed through a country of friends.

¹ August 11,
1812.

Major Denny had already evacuated Fort Gowrie,³ and, with the convalescents and troops under his command, had crossed the river to Detroit. The American camp at Sandwich and vicinity was immediately taken possession of by British troops, under Captain Dixon, of the Royal Engineers (whom we shall meet at Fort Stephenson), and a battery was planted so as to command Detroit. The American artillerists begged permission to open upon them from the fort with twenty-four pounders,³ but Hull would not grant it, and the enemy was allowed to complete his preparations for reducing the fort without molestation. The brave Captain Snelling asked permission to go over in the night and take the works, but Hull would listen to no propositions of the kind. He seemed unwilling to injure or exasperate the enemy.

That General Hull had determined to surrender Detroit, under certain contingencies, rather than risk an engagement with, or a protracted siege by the British and Indians, at least two or three days before that deed was accomplished, the careful student of the history of that affair can not doubt. All of his movements indicate this, according to the positive testimony given by M'Afee, and of Colonel Stanley Hatch's narrative, already cited. Hatch was Hull's assistant quartermaster general. Hull seemed convinced that, under all the circumstances, the post would be untenable against such a force as the enemy might bring to bear upon it, unless his communication with Ohio might be kept up. Dearborn had failed to make any diversions in his favor on the Niagara or at Kingston, as he had been directed to do.⁴ His communication with Ohio (his only source of supply), lying beyond a trackless wilder-

¹ Brock wrote of Tecumtha as follows: "A more sagacious or a more gallant warrior does not, I believe, exist. He was the admiration of every one who conversed with him. From a life of dissipation he has not only become, in every respect, abstemious, but he has likewise prevailed on all his native, and many of the other tribes, to follow his example."

² Tupper's Life of Brock, page 230.

³ The execution of heavy guns at long distances at that time was feeble when compared to that of the rifled cannon and conical balls used at the present day. In the year 1812, the late Ichabod Price, of New York (who died in that city on the 1st of March, 1862, at the age of eighty-one years), suggested to the War Department both rifled cannon and conical balls. He was then a sergeant of an artillery corps of the State of New York, who volunteered for the defense of the state. The department would not listen to Price's proposition; but his genius was so well attested in the presence of President Madison that he commissioned him a lieutenant in the regular army of the United States.

⁴ Letter of the Secretary of War to General Dearborn, August 1, 1812. Of the position of affairs on the Niagara frontier at this time much will be said hereafter. Suffice it to say now that General Dearborn agreed to a conditional armistice with Sir George Prevost, an arrangement which the government of the United States subsequently repudiated.

Hull deceived by false R

ness two hundred ing too scarce to from Proctor to R from that region. appointment, and old age, made him at Malden had been know that a large the militia of Long He was too honest tions of this kind, inated by the savag of another mould, triumphed over the t sistence of an ener mayed antagonist t

On the 14th General sufficient detachmer directing him to re attempt a forward r with Colonel Ander evening of the same to escort Brush to l Cass, who not only a permitted to choose M'Arthur, as senior c without a sufficient s ets for repose in resti between the Rouge a remonstrated because promised to send mor al with him to remai provisions received fr The detachment un ing,⁵ and the next da head waters of the H tangled in a swamp, a tiqued by their march when, just as the ever mons from Hull to retu

¹ I was informed by the vener in the British army in Canada was considerable, and that he no tions, was intercepted, and place down upon his rear, while a sup

² I visited the Long Point regi was informed, from the lips of A neighborhood were dressed in s raw recruits were mixed with th was deceived into the belief that and soon won the confidence of H wich from Amherstburg: If you falls, take his place. As no bloo circumstance to show how nearl

³ Historical Sketches of the Secon

⁴ Hull's Memoir of the Campaign

⁵ Letter of Colonel Cass to the