

ence, with its lamentable effects, were made known in the general orders issued by the Commander of the British forces from Montreal on the 27th of October, 1813. The facts stated were, that 23 soldiers of the infantry of the United States, being made prisoners, were sent to England, and held in close confinement as British subjects; that General Dearborn had been instructed to put into similar confinement 23 British soldiers as hostages for the safety of the former; that the Prince Regent had given directions to put in close confinement, 46 American officers and non-commissioned officers to answer for the safety of the last 23 soldiers; and also to apprise General Dearborn, that if any of them should suffer death in consequence of executing the law of nations upon the first 23 confined as British subjects, double that number of the confined American officers should immediately be selected for retaliation; and moreover that the commanders of his Majesty's armies and fleets had received orders to prosecute the war with unmitigated severity against all the cities, towns, and villages of the United States, in case their government should persist in their intention of retaliation. In this dreadful state of mutual menace were affairs remaining at the conclusion of the campaign of 1813; and should the threats on each side be brought to effect, scenes of blood would ensue worthy only of the times of barbarism. But happily for the honor and humanity of civilized nations, so dreadful an alternative was obviated by the sentiments of justice and a better policy. The determined conduct of the British government, with the untenable ground upon which retaliation was first declared by that of the United States, doubtless produced that accommodation which was made public in another general order from Montreal on the 18th of the following July. Its substance was, that on the invitation of the American Government, Colonel Baynes, and Lieutenant Colonel Brenton having been deputed to meet Colonel Lear at Champlain, for the purpose of reconsidering the convention for the exchange of prisoners entered into in April last, between Colonel Baynes and Brigadier-General Winder, all objections to that convention were removed, and it was ratified, with a supplementary clause, by which the 23 British soldiers, and the 46 American officers and non-commissioned officers, detained as hostages were included in the convention, to be released and exchanged in the same manner as other prisoners of war mentioned in the articles of convention, notwithstanding the exception therein contained.

On January 7th, 1814, the President of the United States communicated to both houses of Congress, copies of a letter from the British Secretary of State, Lord Castlereagh, to the American Secretary, Mr. Monroe, with the answer of the latter, the subject of which was the proposed negotiations for peace. Lord Castlereagh added, that the American Commissioner having declared their readiness to treat in London, he had transmitted this proposal by a flag of truce; and that the British Admiral on the American station would be ready to give the necessary protection to any persons sent by the United States in furtherance of the overture. The reply of Mr. Monroe, after expressing the President's regret at the new obstacle which had arisen to the negotiation for peace, finally conveyed the President's consent to the proposal, and made election of Gottenburgh for the place of conference. The