

beginning at page 38, and, being an official report to his superior officer, there can be no just reason to discredit it.

Disastrous as was St. Clair's defeat, it would have been still more so, but for the Indians having indulged in their usual love of plunder. Brant in his account of the battle, after stating that St. Clair had partially succeeded in checking the Indians, says, "that those who formed the centre getting into the middle of the camp attacked the body under St. Clair who gave way leaving their cannon and camp in possession of the Indians. Before 8 o'clock the engagement in the camp was over and a few Indians pursued who did a great deal of mischief *but the greatest part took to plundering the camp.*" (Q. 58-1 p. 227.) Among the plunder was a large collection of letters from the United States War Office, addressed to St. Clair and other officers, besides private correspondence. Copies of the most important of these were sent by McKee to head quarters. A sufficiently full abstract of the captured correspondence is given in the calendar forming part of this report to make it serviceable.

The defeat caused dismay in the frontier settlements and great disappointment throughout the States. According to St. Clair, the agitation in the public mind was "increased by bitter calumnies, gross misrepresentations and vile falsehoods, spread abroad to every region by means of the public prints, and every species of misconduct was attributed to me." (St. Clair's Narrative introduction p. vii). A writer, friendly in words at least, to St. Clair, says that the army was certainly taken by surprise (Inlay's Western Territory, 1797 p. 286). This assertion, which appears to have been given from rumour alone, was indignantly denied by St. Clair, who throws the whole blame on the War Office which, he contends, had by vacillation and delay been the real cause of the defeat. The captured correspondence to be found in Q. 58-1 and additional documents in other volumes, throw great light upon the real state of the case and may be consulted with advantage by those who desire to investigate the matter more fully than can be done with the help of St. Clair's Narrative alone.

In the course of the correspondence, a letter from the United States War Office warns St. Clair not to incur the risk of a war with Great Britain. The words of the letter will show the motives which led to this order:—

We must by all means avoid involving the United States with Great Britain, until events arise of the quality and magnitude as to impress the people of the United States and the world at large of the rank injustice and unfairness of their procedure. But a war with that power in the present state of affairs would retard our power, growth and happiness beyond almost the power of calculation.

The British Government had meanwhile been making efforts to bring about a peace between the United States and the Indians, but offers of mediation were steadily refused by the former. The tone of the letters from the administration of the United States left no doubt on the minds of the Governors of the British Provinces that a hostile feeling existed. Governor Clarke, writing to Governor Simcoe on the 21st of January, 1793, (Q. 62 p. 70), informed him that it was the earnest desire of His Majesty and his Ministers to avoid war and that Canada should cultivate a good understanding with her neighbours, and adds: "We should be particularly cautious not to furnish the grounds of quarrel, that you seem to think and I agree, Mr. Knox, in his instructions to General St. Clair, had in view as the most popular of any they could desire." The attempts at conciliation were consistently