

THE SOLDIER OF AUVERGNE.

BY MISS HARRIET ANNE WILKINS.

'Twas midnight, and the soldier took
His lone and quiet march;
The moon's bright rays fell gloriously
Upon the forest arch;
And through that forest's dreary gloom,
Full twenty leagues away,
The army of the enemy
Waited the dawn of day.

The watcher listened, for he heard
The wild-wolf's dismal howl,
A crashing of the underbrush
Betrayed his wary prowl;
Yet where the branches thickest weave
The soldier took his way;
He started—for a band of foes
Had seized him as their prey.

He was a captive—one strong hand
Upon his lips did lie,
While in hoarse whispers rung their words,
"Betray us and you die."
Warm love was nestling at his heart,
Warm life was in his veins,
One dream of love, of life, of home,
One dream of captive chivalry.

'Twas but a moment, and he thought
Of those who slept around,
Safe and secure while he kept watch
Upon the sentry ground.
'Twas but a moment and a flash
Passed o'er his cheek and brow;
His voice rang on the midnight air,
"Auvergne! Auvergne! the foe!"

The swords that in the moonlight shone
Upon his bosom rushed
And from the dauntless soldier's heart
Life's streamlets quickly gushed.
Yet ere his beaming eye was closed,
He saw his brethren's lance;
Trampling down bush and brake, he heard
The cavalry of France.

He felt strong arms round him placed,
He saw their princely train;
A nation's thanks were in his ears—
He had not died in vain;
They laid him while the host pursued
The fast retreating foe,
Beneath that glorious flag for which
He laid himself so low.

O! may it be that when, if e'er,
So dire a fate we claim,
And through our country loud resounds
War's fearful, shuddering name—
Then may our hearts and households yield—
Then may our foemen learn,
We have such hearts as sleep beneath
The banner of Auvergne.

THE BATTLES OF 1812-15.

IX.

The action at Fort George and subsequent retreat of Gen. Vincent to Burlington heights were operations conducted with spirit and in perfect accordance with the rules of military science. We have now to record the result of an expedition of an exactly opposite character, conducted by the Commander-in-Chief in person, disgraceful in every respect to all concerned and only redeemed from actual infamy by the daring and bravery of a few Indians.

Sir James Lucas Yeo had arrived at Kingston in command of a party of officers and seamen as Commodore, and at once proceeded to man and equip the vessels lying there. When that work had been accomplished it was proposed to Sir George Prevost to make an attack on Sackett's harbour which from the absence of the American fleet was known to be defenceless, a blow struck there effectually would be irreparable, as it was in reality the American base of operations. As the proposition was acceded to on the morning of the 27th May the vessels of Sir J. L. Yeo's fleet, having on board about 750 soldiers, left the harbour of Kingston and arrived off Sackett's harbour at noon the same day.

Sackett's harbour bears from Kingston on Lake Ontario, South by East, distant in a straight course 25 miles, but by a ship's 35 miles. Its description in 1813 was as follows:—"It stands on the south east side of an expansion of Black river, near to where it flows into Hungry bay; the harbour is small but well sheltered. From the North-west runs out a low point of land upon which is the dock yard with large store-houses and all the buildings requisite for such an establishment. Upon this point there is a strong work called Fort Tompkins, having within it a block house two stories high, on the land side it is covered by a strong picketing in which there are embrasures. At the bottom of the harbour is the village containing 50 to 70 houses, to the southward of it is a barrack capable of containing 2,000 men and generally used for the marines belonging to the fleet. On a point eastward of the harbour stands Fort Pike surrounded by a ditch in advance of which there is a strong line of picketing about 100 yards from the village and a little to the westward of Fort Tompkins is Smith's cantonments capable of containing 2000 men. It is strongly built of logs forming a square with a block house at each corner and is loop holed on every side. Most of the guns belonging to the works had been conveyed to Fort Niagara.

Towards the middle of 1814 there were three additional works, Fort Virginia, Fort Chauncey and Fort Kentucky with several new blockhouses erected mounting in all 60 pieces of heavy artillery.

The British squadron with the Wolfe, having Sir G. Prevost on board, leading, stood in about two miles to reconnoitre the squadron lying to. The troops were embarked on board the boats awaiting the signal to pull towards the shore. After half an hour's delay they were ordered to return on board the fleet; this done the squadron wore and with a light wind stood back for Kingston. A band of 40 Indians in their canoes accompanied the expedition and not being accustomed to the naval mode of warfare as practised by Sir G. Prevost resolved to have a closer view of the enemy, accordingly they steered round Stoney point and discovering a party of American troops on shore paddled in to attack them. As soon as they saw the Indians they immediately hoisted a white flag which was luckily seen from the Wolfe and they were brought off in the ships boats; they proved to be 70 dismounted dragoons in 12 batteau, seven more having escaped.

Upon this circumstance or information received from those men Sir G. Prevost determined to stand back to Sackett's harbour, but the ships, owing to the light wind, were not able to fetch within less than six miles of it. The troops were again embarked in boats and before day on the 29th advanced towards the shore covered by the gunboats. Being without guides or a knowledge of the topography they were landed on Horse is-

land which was connected with the mainland by a narrow causeway defended by a six pounder supported by 400 militia; these were driven back and the gun captured, and thus immediately captured Forts Tompkins and Pike; the American troops rapidly retreated setting fire to the naval barracks, the prize schooner Duke of Gloucester, the ship Gen. Pike, then building, and destroying the naval stores and provisions captured at York. The log barracks and a stockade held by the Americans, on which the British were advancing, when an order arrived from Sir George Prevost to fall back and reembark; Major Drummond of the 104th, a gallant officer, stepped up to him and said:—"Allow me a few minutes, sir, and I will put you in possession of the place." The answer was, "obey your orders sir, and learn the first duty of a soldier. The British retreated to their boats and returned to Kingston with a loss of 50 killed and 211 wounded; the total American loss was 157; their force was 787 regular troops and 500 militia. They extinguished the fire in the vessels but the naval barracks was destroyed.

Sir George Prevost got his Adjutant General, Col. Baynes to write the following despatch:

Kingston, May 30th, 1813.

Sir:—I have the honor to report to your Excellency that in conformity to an arranged plan of operations with Commodore Sir James Yeo, the fleet of boats assembled astern of his ship at 10 o'clock on the night of the 27th inst. with the troops placed under my command, and led by a gunboat under the direction of Captain Mulcaster, Royal Navy, proceeded towards Sackett's harbour. In the order prescribed to the troops in case the detachment was obliged to march in column, viz: the grenadier company, 100th with one section of Royal Scots, two companies of the 8th (or Kings), four of 10th two of the Canadian Voltigeurs, two 6 pounders with their gunners, and a company of Glengarry light infantry were embarked on board a light schooner which was prepared to be towed under direction of officers of the navy so as to insure the guns being landed in time to support the advance of the troops. Although the night was dark with rain the boats assembled in the vicinity of Sackett's harbour by one o'clock in compact and regular order; and in this position it was intended to remain until daybreak in the hope of effecting a landing before the enemy could be prepared to line the woods with troops which surrounded the coast but unfortunately a strong current drifted the boats considerably while the darkness of the night and ignorance of the coast prevented them from recovering their proper station until the day dawned when the whole pulled for the point of debarkation.

It was my intention to have landed in the cove formed by Horse Island but on approaching it we found that the enemy were fully prepared by a very heavy fire of musketry from the surrounding woods which were filled with infantry supported by a field piece. I directed the boats to pull round to the other side of the island where a landing was effected in good order and with little loss, although executed in the face of a corps formed with a field piece in the wood, and under the enfilade of a heavy gun of the enemy's principal battery. The advance