

closing their warehouse armed their men awaiting the result in cool confidence.

Pontiac had crossed the River with the canoe fleet and at once proceeded to the Fort at the head of sixty of the principal chiefs. On entering the gateway he was observed to start with surprise, and well he might, for on either side were double lines of glittering steel from the garrison under arms, while the men of the fur-trade establishments armed to the teeth were grouped at the corners; he saw at a glance the ruin of his plot, but recovering his composure he strode to the Council Chamber where Gladwyn and several of his officers were seated in readiness to receive them, and the observant chief did not fail to remark that every Englishman wore a sword at his side and a pair of pistols in his belt. The wily Indian chief saw at a glance his whole plot was defeated, he however rose to speak some studied nonsense about the chain of friendship and other topics of savage oratory, and it is said he raised his head with the intention of making the premeditated signal, on which Gladwyn made a slight sign which was answered by the role of a drum beating the charge and the clash of fire arms in the passage to the Council Chamber, which so confounded the subtle savage that he sat down unable to conclude his harangue through doubt, fear, and amazement—Gladwyn after a long pause quietly replied that as long as the Indians deserved protection they should have it, but the slightest act of aggression would be punished with signal vengeance—he thereupon distributed a few presents, ordered the gates of the Fort to be thrown open and the Indians were allowed to depart. Pontiac before leaving promised to come again with his followers who had not all yet arrived, and shake the hand of their Great Father's warrior, a proposition to which no reply was deigned.

It would doubtless be thought a piece of foolish policy in those days to allow such treacherous scoundrels with full evidence of their guilt existing to escape in the manner described, but Gladwyn appears to have had a very difficult duty assigned to him, and like all Amherst's officers to be fully equal to its discharge—he had in the first place a weak garrison, poorly supplied with munitions of war, and with hardly provisions enough for a fortnight—any act exasperating what was thought to be only an exhibition of feeling would precipitate a blockade, for the villages of the savages numbered 2,000 men, quite sufficient to cut off all supplies and starvation would follow. Secondly, he knew the garrisons of Michilimackinac, St. Joseph's, and other outlying dependencies could offer no resistance if attacked, and any act of aggression on his part would be visited on defenceless people. Thirdly, he did not know anything of the treaty of Versailles in the previous spring and might be obliged to hand over Detroit to its old proprietors, when his descent of the Lakes would be im-

perilled by the exasperated savages, and it was possible his acts might rekindle the flames of war along the Frontier. Fourthly, he doubtless felt his duty to be one of conciliation towards those who were about or had become subjects to his Sovereign, by conquest; and lastly, like a true soldier, he was averse to shedding blood needlessly. It does seem a pity that such a set of treacherous scoundrels should be allowed to depart, but Major Gladwyn evidently looked on the outbreak as a temporary ebullition of feeling which would soon subside—this is the view taken of the affair in his own letters—but time was to show that it was a deeply laid and well considered (taking the means into account) plot.

Enraged and mortified Pontiac withdrew to his village and called his warriors together, his escape seemed to him either the result of cowardice or ignorance, and the latter seemed the most probable supposition, and he resolved to visit the English once more and convince them, if possible, that their suspicions were unfounded. Early on the following morning he repaired to the Fort with three of his chiefs bearing in his hand the *sacred calumet* or pipe of peace, the bowl carved in stone the stem adorned with feathers; offering it to the commandant he addressed him and his officers to the following effect:—"My fathers, evil birds have sung lies in your ears, we that stand before you are friends of the English, we love them as our brothers, and to prove our love we have come this day to smoke the pipe of peace." At his departure he gave the pipe to Major Campbell, second in command, as a further pledge of his sincerity. That afternoon the better to cover his design Pontiac called the young men of all the tribes to a game of ball; this game, now known as *La Crosse*, is carried on with great noise and shouting.

On the following morning, being Monday, 9th May, the French inhabitants went in procession to the principal church which stood near the River's brink half a mile above the Fort; having heard mass they all returned about 11 o'clock without discovering any signs that the Indians meditated an immediate act of hostility. Scarcely, however, had they done so when the common behind the Fort was once more thronged with Indians of all the four tribes, and Pontiac advancing from among the multitude approached the gate, it was closed and barred against him, he shouted to the sentinels for admission, but Gladwyn himself replied that the chief might enter but his followers must remain outside. Thus repulsed he threw off the mask, returned to his followers who had lain flat on the ground just out of reach of gunshot, and at once they all leaped up and ran off, in the words of an eye witness, "yelping like devils." Looking out from the loop holes the garrison saw them rush to the house of an old English woman who lived with her family in a distant part of the common, they beat in the doors and rushed tumultuously in, and in a moment more the *scalp-yell* told the dreadful fate of the inmates. A large body ran to

their canoes, paddled to the Isle au Cochon, where an Englishman named Fisher dwelt, he had formerly been a sergeant in the regular army, him they murdered with shocking barbarity. Pontiac furious with rage passed over to the Ottawa village and ordered an instant removal to the western shore. The war dance and song consumed a part of the night, but before morning the whole population crossed the River and pitched their wigwams above the mouth of the little stream then called Parent's Creek, but since named *Bloody Run*.

But now disastrous news began to come in fast, a Canadian, named Desungers, came down the river in a birch canoe, and landing at the water gate, brought news that ten English officers, Sir Robert Davers and Captain Robertson, both of the Royal Artillery, had been murdered by the Indians above Lake St. Clair. During the whole night the garrison was under arms, but at daylight in the morning the war whoop rose on every side, and a perfect storm of bullets rapped hard and fast against the gates and palisades. The garrison were momentarily expecting an assault, but such was contrary to Indian tactics, although the few tribes of Ottawas, Wyandots, Pottawattamies and Ojibewas, numbered over 2,000 men, and a couple of axes would have sufficed to lay the fortifications open, when the whole might be carried by a rush. Hardly a man showed himself, sheltered behind inequalities of the ground, behind barns, fences and bushes, they blazed away at the loop-holes with the least possible risk. Driven from the cover of the outbuildings by red hot shot, after blazing away at the feeble palisades for six hours, the cowardly assailants, like baffled wolves, retreated. The loss to the garrison being five men wounded. Still Gladwyn could not be persuaded that the affair was anything but a sudden ebullition of temper which would soon subside, and being in want of provisions he despatched his interpreter, La Butte, to the Camp of Pontiac, to enquire the reasons of his conduct and what was amiss, and to declare he was ready to redress any real grievances existing. Two old French Canadian inhabitants of Detroit, accompanied him. As the gates were opened for their departure many of the inhabitants took this opportunity to leave the Fort, declaring they did not want to witness the approaching slaughter of the English.

The result of this mission was that the interpreter returned for Major Campbell for the purpose of negotiating with Pontiac. On that officer expressing his desire to go, a Lieut. Macdougall volunteered to accompany him. Meantime M. Gouin suspecting Pontiac's sincerity, entered the Indian camp, when he soon saw and heard enough to convince him that the British officers were rushing within the jaws of death. He despatched two messengers to warn them not to venture on their fate, but though the men met them at the Fort they were too infatuated to retire. On their arrival at the camp they were set upon, and would be compelled to run the gauntlet by the savage multitude, which would have ended in their being beaten to death, but for the arrival of the chief, who conducted them to a lodge prepared for the occasion, where they were exhibited to the savages. Major Campbell addressed a short speech to the Chief, but no reply being vouchsafed, he rose to his feet, and declared his intention of returning to the Fort. Pontiac made a sign that he should resume his seat. "My Father, he said will sleep to-night in the lodges of his red children." The gray haired soldier and his companion was betrayed into the hands of their enemies.