

Tecumtha's Project of a Confederation.

Harrison denounces the Prophet.

Tecumtha's Boldness.

ing men from all the surrounding tribes, even from the Upper Mississippi, and he had a rare opportunity to confer with them together on the subject of his darling project, a grand confederation of all the tribes in the Northwest to drive the white man across the Ohio, and reclaim their lands which they had lost by treaties. He declared to assembled warriors and sachems, whenever opportunity offered, that the treaties concerning those lands northward of the Ohio were fraudulent, and therefore void; and he always assured his auditors that he and his brother, the Prophet, would resent any farther attempts at settlement in that direction by the white people.

Governor Harrison perceived danger in these movements, and early in 1808 he addressed a speech to the chiefs and head men of the Shawnoese tribe, in which he denounced the Prophet as an impostor. "My children," he said, "this business must be stopped. I will no longer suffer it. You have called a number of men from the most distant tribes to listen to a fool, who speaks not the words of the Great Spirit, but those of the Evil Spirit and of the British agents. My children, your conduct has much alarmed the white settlers near you. They desire that you will send away those people; and if they wish to have the impostor with them they can carry him. Let him go to the Lakes; he can hear the British more distinctly."

This speech exasperated and alarmed the brothers. The Prophet and his followers, frowned upon by the Shawnoese in general, who listened to the governor, took up their abode in the spring of 1808 on the banks of the Wabash, near the mouth of the Tippecanoe River. Tecumtha was there too, when not on his political journeys among the neighboring tribes, but he was cautious and silent. The Prophet, more directly aimed at in Harrison's speech, hastened to deny any complicity with the British agents, or having hostile designs. He visited Vincennes in August to confer in person with the governor, and to give him renewed and solemn assurances that he and his followers wished to live in harmony with the white people. So specious were the words of the wily savage, that Harrison suspected he had misjudged the man, and he dismissed the Prophet with friendly assurances.

The governor soon had reason to doubt the fidelity of the oracle. There were reported movements at the Prophet's town on the Wabash, half religious and half warlike, that made him suspect the brothers of unfriendly designs toward the Americans. He charged them with having made secret arrangements with British agents for hostile purposes, and pressed the matter so closely that, at a conference between the governor and the Prophet at Vincennes in the summer of 1809, the latter acknowledged that he had received invitations from the British in Canada to engage in a war with the United States, but declared that he had rejected them. He renewed his vows of friendship, but Harrison no longer believed him to be sincere.

September 30, 1809. Soon after this interview Harrison concluded a treaty at Fort Wayne<sup>a</sup> with Delaware, Pottawatomic, Miami, Kickapoo, Wea, and Eel River Indians, by which, in consideration of \$8200 paid down, and annuities to the amount of \$2350 in the aggregate, he obtained a cession of nearly three millions of acres of land extending up the Wabash beyond Terre Haute, and including the middle waters of the White River.<sup>1</sup> Neither Tecumtha, nor his brother, nor any of their tribe had any claim to these lands, yet they denounced those who sold them, declared the treaty void, and threatened to kill every chief concerned in it. Tecumtha grew bolder and bolder, for he was sanguine of success in his great scheme of a confederation, and the arrest of the white man's progress. He had already announced the doctrine, opposed to state or tribal rights, that the domain of all the Indians belonged to all in common, and that no part of the territory could be sold or alienated without the consent of all. This was the ground of the denunciations of the treaty by Tecumtha and his brother, and the justification of their threats against the offending chiefs—threats the

<sup>1</sup> The Weas and Kickapoos were not represented at the council, but the former, in October, and the latter, in December, confirmed the treaty at Fort Wayne.

Signs of Indian Host

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<sup>a</sup> Statement of Mr. Ba He was employed by He ity, and very interesting plexion, a prominent no down his back. He was of music, and played the Mississipp. In 1837 he the same tribe in 1838 to tracted illness, died on tl fluence with the Eel Riv

Mr. Barron was at the exasperated the Indians So important did they c barks of trees, and sent him. One of these was f carried to Germany by a bark, was preserved a loz Hertz, a private soldier t of 1861 sent me a tracing George Winter, Esq., at 1837. He kindly furnish with the information con was the painter of the por *Field-book of the Revolutio* Brouillette and Dubois, ner, and William Prince, as messengers to the Indi