

he promised. I was told that we were immediately to proceed about a mile up the river, to a place where we could not fail to annihilate the expected war party. My gun having been well swabbed out, and charged with twenty-five fusil balls, and a novel kind of port-fire constructed of dry cedar bark, crushed fine, and rubbed with a coat of tallow—the construction of which occupied me, perhaps, five minutes. Meanwhile, I was reminded by my chief every ten seconds, that delays were dangerous.

All, at length, being ready, one of my gunners shouldered my cannon, the other its carriage—they were very Sampsons; and all on tip-toe marched off for the selected battle-ground—"conquer or die," and "no quarters," were our mottoes. The artillery commander had neither paint nor feathers; but his braves were dressed in their best, so that in the event of the enemy taking one of their scalps, the Chippewa women might say: "What a handsome fellow he must have been!"

When the words "halt! prepare for action" were whispered, I found myself, gunners, port-fire, all, on the edge of a perpendicular sand-bank, which terminated at the water's beach, sixty feet below; and, immediately opposite, an island, which, at this season of the year contracted the stream to about thirty yards wide, the main channel being on our side. It was now getting dark, and I had much difficulty in adjusting the Royal Artillery, so as to fire a perpendicular shot downward to destroy the expected fleet of Chippewa canoes.

The plan of attack was so arranged that on the canoes arriving within common range, I was to discharge my one pound artillery, which, it was supposed, would throw the fleet into confusion, when the general discharge of small arms would cause many to fall, and throw the enemy into still further dismay. The Sioux braves would jump, roll or tumble down the hill, plunge into the grand old Father of Waters, and stab, tomahawk or drown every Chippewa son of them who should have the temerity to invade the country of the Waubeshas, the Red Whales, and the Cut-Thumbs. The dry grass was to be fired, to throw light on the massacre, and to distinguish friend from foe. I was to remain on the bank, and witness the extreme horrors of Indian war, or to