The month passed away in enforced idleness, and still the promised reinforcement of regulars did not arrive. By that time the Indian warriors assembled at Detroit, almost three thousand in number, were on the brink of starvation. Early in August, Proctor was actually forced by their necessities. against his better judgment, to undertake a forward movement in the hope of supplying them at his opponent's expense. He soon found that his operations would be regulated by their "caprices and prejudices," as the regular force he took with him numbered only about one-tenth of the whole. For a few days after Dickson's arrival, his Indians proved "restrainable and tractable to an unexpected degree, but were afterwards contaminated," and became as lawless as the others. Accordingly, after having invested Fort Meigs for a few days, they began to desert and return to Detroit in such numbers that when the blockade was abandoned only about two hundred of Elliott's and a few of Dickson's Indians remained. Proctor then moved against Fort Stephenson, where he met with a bloody repulse. The Indians offered on this occasion to storm one face of the fort while the British troops assailed the other, but they had scarcely come within range of the fire of the besieged before they ran away in dismay. This disastrous experience convinced the British general that the Indian force is "seldom a disposable one and never to be relied on in time of need."

Although his levies had proved of little service, Proctor spoke officially of their energetic leader as, "Mr. Robert Dickson, to whose zeal and ability, which from circumstances have not had full scope, I must offer full testimony," and despatched him on a confidential mission to the governor-general, whose headquarters were then at Kingston.

Black Hawk and many of the western warriors returned home within a few days, being tired of the service and anxious to make the most of the approaching hunting-season, but a great number still remained. The total number of mouths to be fed actually numbered about five times