

march under a proper person commissioned for that purpose, and actually dispatched 79 warriors to Amherstburg on the very day of the declaration of war, and issued instructions for the remainder to assemble at St. Josephs on the 30th of June.

He does not seem to have taken any pains to conceal his intentions, for as early as the 24th of April, 1812, Ninian Edwards, governor of the Illinois Territory, informed the Secretary of War that "the opinion of the celebrated British trader, Dickson, is that in the event of a British war all the Indians will be opposed to us, and he hopes to engage them in hostility by making peace between the Sioux and Chippewas, two very large nations, and getting them to declare war against us."

Dickson asserted that he had found the agents of the American Government among the Indians extremely active, "making them unusual presents of goods and inviting them in the most pressing manner to visit the President of the United States at Washington." He spent about \$10,000 out of his own means in frustrating their efforts in the course of the spring and summer of 1812.

Everywhere the Indians were ripe for war owing to the failure of their crops for two years in succession, and the migration of game caused by excessive drought. They were, besides, bitterly exasperated by the refusal of some of the American officers to furnish them with supplies on credit, and Dickson confirmed his influence by distributing his entire stock among them and purchasing all the provisions he could obtain.

At the same time the Governor-General of Canada sought the assistance of the two great fur companies, upon whom so much of the prosperity of the colony at that time depended. The Northwest Company replied that they could control 250 engagés and from 300 to 500 Indians. The Michilimackinac or Southwest Company with equal readiness promised the services of 100 engagés and 300 Indians.

Prevost then endeavored to increase the efficiency of the Indian department, which consisted of a superintendent-general, 3 superintendents, and 14 interpreters, many of them very old men who had been in the service since the Revolution. With this object, on the 1st of May, 1812, he addressed a careful letter of instructions to Sir John Johnson, who was still superintendent-general:

You are to keep up friendly intercourse and communication with all the Indian nations, to preserve economy, regularity, and order,