

of two minutes, a fact as creditable to their own activity and bravery as to the skill and bravery of their officers. The battle soon became general, and was maintained on both sides with signal and even desperate valor. The Indians advanced and retreated by the aid of a rattling noise, made with deer hoofs, and persevered in their treacherous attack with an apparent determination to conquer or die upon the spot. The battle raged with unabated fury and mutual slaughter until daylight, when a gallant and successful charge by our troops drove the enemy into the swamp and put an end to the conflict.

Prior to the assault the prophet had given assurances to his followers that in the coming contest the Great Spirit would render the arms of the Americans unavailing; that their bullets would fall harmless at the feet of the Indians; that the latter should have light in abundance, while the former would be involved in thick darkness. Availing himself of the privilege conferred by his peculiar office, and perhaps unwilling in his own person to attest at once the rival powers of a sham prophecy and a real American bullet, he prudently took a position on an adjacent eminence, and when the action began, he entered upon the performance of certain mystic rites, at the same time singing a war song. In the course of the engagement he was informed that his men were falling. He told them to fight on—it would soon be as he had predicted. And then, in louder and wilder strains, his inspiring battle song was heard commingling with the sharp crack of the rifle and the shrill war whoop of his brave but deluded followers. (*Drake, Tecumseh, 6.*)

Drake estimates the whole number of Indians engaged in the battle at between 800 and 1,000, representing all the principal tribes of the region, and puts the killed at probably not less than 50, with an unusually large proportion of wounded. Harrison's estimate would seem to put the numbers much higher. The Americans lost 60 killed or mortally wounded, and 188 in all. (*Drake, Tecumseh, 7.*) In their hurried retreat the Indians left a large number of dead on the field. Believing on the word of the prophet that they would receive supernatural aid from above, they had fought with desperate bravery, and their defeat completely disheartened them. They at once abandoned their town and dispersed, each to his own tribe. Tecumtha's great fabric was indeed demolished, and even its foundations rooted up.

The night before the engagement the prophet had performed some medicine rites by virtue of which he had assured his followers that half of the soldiers were already dead and the other half bereft of their senses, so that the Indians would have little to do but rush into their camp and finish them with the hatchet. The result infuriated the savages. They refused to listen to the excuses which are always ready to the tongue of the unsuccessful medicine-man, ~~denounced him~~ ^{a³} as a liar, and even threatened him with death. Deserted by all but a few of his own tribe, warned away from several villages toward which he turned his steps, he found refuge at last among a small band of Wyandot; but his influence and his sacred prestige were gone forever, and he lived out his remaining days in the gloom of obscurity.

From the south Tecumtha returned through Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois, everywhere making accessions to his cause, but reached the Wabash at last, just a few days after the battle, only to find his followers scattered to the four winds, his brother a refugee, and the great