

may retire, the military authorities on the spot must select some position where the grand army, which they propose to employ in active operations shall assemble. Such a position ought to be central, so that support may be conveniently sent from it to either flank, without, however, too much weakening the force which is kept in hand, to act wherever the enemy may show himself in greatest strength. It is not for us to indicate where the position should be. Enough is done when we point out that it ought not to be too distant either from Montreal or from Quebec, and that it should be chosen with a special eye to the railways, canals, roads, and other lines of communication which, when manœuvring begins, can be made available.

This plan of ours may, perhaps, be objected to as implying the abandonment of all those valuable counties which lie on the right bank of the St. Lawrence, and, still more, of the Grand Trunk Railway between Quebec and Montreal. Why not endeavour, in the first instance, to retain your hold upon these counties? and if that be impossible, why give up the railway without a struggle? Our answer is, that it would be imprudent at the opening of a campaign to commit a young army to a general action with such a river as the St. Lawrence in its rear; and that, in order to nurse such an army, and render it effective, you must leave many outlying provinces to take care of themselves. With respect, again, to the Grand Trunk Railway, it has elsewhere been shown that, with an enterprising enemy in our front, it becomes useless to us as soon as hostilities begin. A chain, be its length what it may, is only as strong as its weakest link; and a railway which runs for thirty miles within ten miles of a hostile frontier, can scarcely be made use of in war for the conveyance of troops. As to patrolling these thirty miles, either on foot or by detached cars, that expedient could serve no possible purpose. The first effort made by the enemy will be to pos-

sess themselves of the line, and destroy it; and unless you are prepared to support your patrols with an army, the patrols can offer no resistance which shall be effectual against superior numbers.

But though we may withdraw our divisions for a time from the districts to the South of the St. Lawrence, it does not therefore follow that they are abandoned. Each county has its own local militia — these will all turn out; and should the enemy be so ill advised as to weaken himself in order to put them down, they will show good fight for their hearths and homes against his detachments. But this is not all. The armies of New Brunswick and of Nova Scotia will not be idle. Leaving a sufficient number, say 2000 regular troops and 8000 or 10,000 militia, to guard the provinces, the remainder will act upon the enemy's communications, eluding or fighting the corps of observation which watches them, and breaking up every line of rail to which they can gain access. If successful here, success will soon attend the British arms elsewhere. The heavy columns in front of Montreal will find it necessary to retire. The British army will cross the St. Lawrence in pursuit, and the campaign is just as likely to end by establishing a new frontier for Canada, with Portland on one flank, and Lake Ontario on the other, as by leaving the enemy in permanent possession of a mile of Canadian territory.

We give these speculations for what they are worth. The results of a war so waged must, of course, depend upon the military genius of the leaders on either side, and the bravery of the troops. But assuming these to be equal, we think the odds are in favour of our own countrymen. Indeed, if the proposed canal be completed in time, from the seaboard to Lake Ontario, and the flying corps, which is to harass the American coasts, do its duty, the war with England of 1863 will probably teach the Federals a lesson which they are not likely to forget for many years afterwards.