

enough to create any alarm. But whether it is a force more than sufficient to protect the public property of the State from numerous bands of lawless men, grown desperate by being deprived of their accustomed plunder, and over whom their own government seems heretofore to have had but little controul, is a question which this State must be permitted to decide for itself. In such a case it would be degrading to consent that limits should be prescribed by any power whatever. If the right to protect our territory from invasion, and the public property from plunder, be clear and undeniable, no less so is the choice of means for carrying that right into effect.

Upon the Aroostook a large number of men have been employed. A boom has been extended across the river—a fortification of hewn timber erected near it—and a blockhouse and a few other more temporary buildings put up. The men stationed at what is called the Fort, say twenty-five or thirty in number, are armed with muskets, and I believe that they have also two small pieces of artillery. The remainder, say 100 to 125, have been engaged for the most part in opening roads for summer as well as winter communication, and preparing facilities for supplying the posse. How far these proceedings furnish ground for the complaints of the British Government, you will judge. That any preparations short of them would be insufficient to protect the public property, to me seems to be clear. At all events, the complaint at the extent of this force, was hardly to have been expected from the British Government just at this moment, when a few days only have elapsed since some fifty of its own subjects, bearing the Queen's arms, and otherwise suitably equipped, headed by a veteran militia captain, made an assault in the dead of night upon that very force which is now described as "greater than the occasion would warrant."

No better justification is needed for the course which has been pursued by Maine, especially in regard to the force employed, than a reference to this case. Nor is the force of the circumstance diminished by the fact, that this attack was repulsed by the firing of but one gun; for a disposition is manifested which may not always exhibit itself in so harmless a manner. Again, the complaint at our "establishments upon the disputed territory fortified with entrenchments and cannon," would seem to come with but little show of consistency from the British Government, when it has just completed most extensive and permanent barracks upon the same territory, north of the St. John's, and is in the habit of transporting troops and munitions of war over it at their pleasure.

The third allegation is, "that a permanent state road is being constructed, leading into the valley of the Restook, and from thence, on the south side of the St. John's to the Fish River, the object of which is to connect those portions of the disputed territory with the towns of Augusta and Bangor, and other acknowledged parts of the State of Maine."

That a road commencing near Mattawamkeag point in the county of Penobscot, extending to the Aroostook River, and thence on to the mouth of Fish River, upon the St. John's, is in process of construction, and is even now passable the whole way with some vehicles, is certainly true. But it is not perceived why, at this particular time, it should be regarded as a cause of complaint. This is no new thing. An appropriation for this road was made by the Legislature of this State as early as 1826; from which time it has steadily progressed, and in another year, probably, will be nearly if not quite completed. To say nothing of other advantages anticipated from it, it is manifest that it will afford great facilities for preventing trespasses upon the public lands; and indeed, I may say, that trespassing upon the streams emptying high up upon the St. John's cannot be prevented without such a road. This, therefore, is no new project, got up in violation of any stipulation or understanding, to which this State has in any way been a party, or for the purpose of gaining an additional extent of possession; but is the exercise of a lawful right over that portion of the territory to which we have not only the legal title, but over which we have ever had possession and jurisdiction.

But again, may I not inquire with what propriety and consistency this complaint is made on the part of Great Britain, when she has