

The reduction of Montreal would be a heavy blow and sore discouragement ; more than any other conceivable casualty, it would jeopardize the independence of Canada. Situated, as this city is, in the centre of the Dominion, a centre at once of commerce and manufacture, at the head of the ocean navigation and at the foot of the chain of lakes, and canals which connects it with the boundless West, containing 125,000 inhabitants, replete with resources and wealth, intelligence and enterprize, and destined to a development beyond thought, the fall of Montreal would shake the land to its foundation ; but there need be no apprehension of any such catastrophe. Montreal is naturally of great strength, a strength fortified by abounding supplies of men, material, and provisions. It could hardly be reduced by famine. Properly cared for at the first outbreak of a war, it would stand a siege as long as that of Troy. We speak not of the city alone, but of the whole Island of Montreal. The city itself, backed by Mount Royal, is almost impregnable, but the inhabitants will never be driven to seek refuge in this, their last stronghold, so long as they improve wisely the natural defences which encircle their island, and defend them, as brave men are wont to defend, all that they hold to be most dear.

The defence of Montreal consists in the network of rivers, rapids, shoals and other natural obstacles by which the island is surrounded. This island is as large, and very much of the shape, of the Isle of Wight. Its own resources are great, but the supplies from a hundred miles round might be poured into it by a provident Government, and would there find shelter and sustenance, and furnish food for the large force which could be brought together for its defence. The men of the north shore would all be available for this purpose. The men of the south shore, burning with anger and the rage of resistance, would fall back slowly on Montreal, covering their retreating families, their herds and household