

its forest, though curtailed in its expanse, still continues to be a lucrative source for commercial enterprise, with safe and costly canals, slides and lights, to facilitate this great present staple of our commerce.

I repeat, if Canada in 1775 and 1812 was worth fighting for, without these several great advantages, how much more so now.

Since the day of Arnold's invasion our population has increased from thousands to millions, and our wealth and power proportional, and so has the avidity with which the American Government contemplates the hoped for conquest of Canada. Its acquisition would give them 3,000,000 consumers of the Northern manufactories, and rate-payers for their enormous national debt, and with our 20 millions acres of wild land, their visible wealth in timber, and unknown amount of mineral treasure. They would acquire the free use of the St. Lawrence, a commercial necessity to the vast agricultural products of the Western States, and the shortest and most practical route to the Pacific—thus augmenting the power of the Northern States by sea and land; for I contend the possession of Canada by the United States involves the acquisition of the whole of British America by the American Republic. The Newfoundland and St. Lawrence fisheries will become the nurseries for their seamen—from the Banks and Gulf they will exclude the powers of Europe—and their commercial navy, so augmented by these fisheries, coupled with a most extensive coasting trade, they will become equal to any European maritime power, and as they extend their borders and augment their powers they will in the same ratio diminish that of England, for the inevitable consequence of the loss of Canada is that of British America, with a loss of prestige in Europe that would soon be followed by an armed European confederation against her.

When we consider the former invasions of Canada, then comparatively unknown, laying in the shade of her wilderness, but now surging to the surface-level of nations, and estimating her present value as such, politically and commercially, from this point of view, if the past and present may not justify a decided belief in an invasion from the United States, it certainly warrants our being prepared for such an eventuality.

Is our present Militia organization such as to give us a reasonable hope of successful resistance to the next and third onslaught on our homes by the American Republic? If I were to answer in the affirmative, not a man in Canada would concur in my reply.

On the contrary, it is the general impression, unreservedly and loudly expressed, that the absence of everything like an efficient Militia Act invites aggression, leaving us, in that event, without hope to the tender mercies of the invader. But this is not all we have to deplore; why has that so important measure to our defence, the Intercolonial Railway, been abandoned? by which, for five months of the year, we must draw from our sea-base all British reinforcements and munitions of war, should the scourge of battles