

the abrogation of the Rush-Bagot Agreement and a general arming of the lakes. Probably the principal factor in restraining the American authorities from overt sympathy with the "Patriots" was the fear that Great Britain would lend to the aid of her colony her great naval resources.

Relations were further strained by the Maine boundary dispute, and raids and counter-raids were constant. In order to cope with the situation both Governments chartered boats for coast defence purposes. The United States were afraid we were arming the frontier against them and during the session of 1840 there was much talk of their unpreparedness and our activity. On March 8th, 1840, the following resolution passed the House of Representatives: "That the President of the United States be requested to communicate to this House, if compatible with the public service, whether the Government of Great Britain has expressed to the Government of the United States a desire to annul the arrangement entered into between the two Governments in the month of April, 1817, respecting the naval force to be maintained upon the American Lakes; and that, if said arrangement be not annulled, whether there has been any violation of the same by the authorities of Great Britain."

Resolution after resolution was introduced calling for more and stronger fortifications, each representative speaking for his own locality. Many residents along the southern shores of the lakes, official and non-official, seemed to have become alarmed at the necessary defence preparations we were making. At this time the American Government built at Pittsburg a side-wheeled iron steamer, the "Michigan." She was taken across the country in sections and placed upon Lake Erie in 1843. She was 498 tons burden with an armament of two eight inch Paixhan guns, and four thirty-two pound carronades. This was in excess of the stipulations of the Agreement of 1817, both as to tonnage and armament, and in 1844 the British Minister at Washington entered a protest. In the correspondence which ensued it was pointed out by him that, although Great Britain had during the rebellion of 1837 maintained in the defence of the Canadas, a naval force exceeding that stipulated, as soon as the Government felt that danger was past it had reduced the force in order to adhere strictly to the rules of the Rush-Bagot Agreement. It appears that the British Government was satisfied that the United States had no ulterior motive in the construction of the "Michigan," and, as they had not availed themselves of the privilege of maintaining four vessels, this ship was allowed to remain, and it continued for about 50 years to be the only American war ship on the lakes.

No sooner were the troubles over the Mackenzie rebellion and the Maine boundary settled, than a difficulty arose regarding the Western Boundary. "Fifty-four-forty or Fight" was the slogan of those who were enthusiastic in their ideas concerning the "manifest destiny" of the United States, and even the school boys wrote it on the fences. President Polk proclaimed to the Senate on March 4th, 1846, that "Under this aspect of our relations with Great Britain I cannot doubt the propriety of increasing our means of defence both by land and sea." This trouble