

their laws, nor their institutions, nor one inch of their territory. If war is forced upon us we should stand purely upon the defensive, nor should we depart from that policy, except where outrage demanded retribution and compelled reprisals.

But, it may now be asked, what defensive attitude or precaution could you take which would answer any practical defensive purpose? You have a frontier 1,500 miles in length and vulnerable at any point; how could you practically defend such a frontier with the forces at your disposal? These are questions easy to put, and difficult often, on the spur of the moment, to answer, but they can be answered, and, we think, satisfactorily. In the first place, the frontier of Canada is not vulnerable at any point. In the greater part of its length, by present preparation, and by the aid of British gun-boats in the hour of need, it is simply invulnerable. The time of real need will be the summer season, the winter will extemporize its own defences. The weakness of a frontier will be found, not in its dimensions, but in its assailable points, and its strength consists in the ingenuity, the engineering skill, by which those assailable points can be made unassailable. The wit of man, the forecast of statesmen, have been, and still are, the true defence of England. The coast-line of the British Isles presents a frontier of four thousand miles, open at all times to the hostile combinations of foreign nations and to the attack of steam fleets, but, before foreign nations can assail her ports, they must get out of their own. In the words of the old song, she "needs no bulwarks nor towers along the steep," simply because until her navy is swept from the ocean, no foreign foe can affront her frontier. When the economists have got rid of Gibraltar and of Malta, of Halifax and Bermuda, England may be doomed "to point a moral and adorn a tale," but not till then.

Foresight and forethought are the cheap defence of nations. To know what to do and how to do it, at the right time, to provide beforehand where provision is necessary, to