

Spirit which actuated Canadians,—although, from a knowledge of their weakness, it might lead them to deprecate hostilities—yet, not adverse to Great Britain.

Canadians were not disloyal at that period. We may fairly deduce this fact, as far as Upper Canada is concerned, from the tenor of General Brock's despatches. Even so far back as 12th February, 1812, we find him writing to Colonel Baynes, the Adjutant-General,—“I have reason to look for the acquiescence of the two Houses to every measure I may think necessary to recommend, for the peace and defence of the country. A spirit has manifested itself little expected by those who conceived themselves the best qualified to judge.” Even in speaking of those who were considered, if not hostile, to be, at least, indifferent to British interests, the Lieutenant-Governor remarks: “I do not, of course, think it expedient to damp the ardour displayed by those once doubtful characters. The most powerful opponents to Governor Gore's Administration take the lead on the present occasion. Some opposed Mr. Gore evidently from personal motives, but *never forfeited* the right of being numbered among the loyal. Few, very few are actuated by base or unworthy considerations; their character will very soon, however, be put to a severe test. The measures which I intend to propose are—1. ‘A Militia Supplementary Act;’ 2. ‘The Suspension of the Habeas Corpus;’ 3. ‘An Alien Law;’ 4. ‘An Act for the better apprehension of deserters.’”

Now, although General Brock found himself beaten, in the House of Assembly, on both the Militia and Habeas Corpus Acts, yet we find, in the reasons he assigns, no ground to change our opinion. On the contrary, he distinctly attributes the miscarriage of these two measures—the first was lost by the casting-vote of the chairman, and the second by an almost equally trifling majority—to the strong sentiment that prevailed, that war was not likely to occur with the United States; an opinion which was carefully disseminated by the numerous settlers from that country, and which tended materially to influence the votes of the members, or of such of them at least as, by their ignorance of the real position of

affairs, were easily betrayed into error. That General Brock, at all events, saw no reason to induce a change of opinion, is pretty evident, if we may judge from the tone of his despatch, of 16th May, to Sir George Prevost, the Governor-General:—“Every one with whom I have had an opportunity of conversing, assures me that an exceedingly good disposition prevails among the people.” The soundness of this opinion was most triumphantly established by subsequent events,—not the least important of which was, that as soon the Militia Bill, but slightly modified, was passed, although a clause had been introduced, authorizing the raising of flank companies, to be trained at least six times in each month, and although the inhabitants knew that they would have to go to a great distance to attend parade, would be liable to heavy expense, and be subject to no inconsiderable privations, the flank companies, in the districts in which they were established, were instantly completed with volunteers; and, indeed, an almost unanimous disposition to serve was evinced. Now, this feeling was manifested at a time when the prospects of the Colony were most gloomy, and when the almost defenceless condition of the Province was but too apparent,—at a time when the Governor, on whose judgment so much depended, was forced to acknowledge, that although every man capable of carrying a musket, along the whole of the line, should be prepared to act, he “had not a musket more than would suffice to arm part of the militia from Kingston westward.”

The advices from England at this juncture were also equally dispiriting, so much so, that, about this time, Col. Baynes is found expressing himself, “Sir Geo. Prevost has directed me to inform you, that unless reinforcements arrive from England, (of which his Excellency is not sanguine, as the prevailing apprehension in England seems to be, that hostilities would not ensue on this continent; and as, moreover, the pledge held out in the Prince Regent's speech, of supporting with energy the contest in Portugal and Spain, renders it little likely that troops will be sent to this quarter.) although he may be very desirous to render you any