

probable that if the war had continued another year, peace would be made in New York instead of Ghent. Twice during the contest that measure was possible, and the opportunity was sure to occur again.

In the event of any future contest, Canada holds undoubtedly the best strategical positions—with all her communications open she can remedy more quickly than her opponent any disaster to the fleets which occupy her Lakes, and while it is quite possible that a struggle for the supremacy thereon may occur immediately on commencement of hostilities, it will not be decided by an indecisive action or even a defeat; always provided her proper line of communication by the Ottawa River is opened. The danger to be apprehended arises from want of preparation, not from any overwhelming force that could be brought against her. It will be hardly possible to avoid taking Lake Champlain into account in the event of Naval operations on the Upper Lakes. The Richelieu river is navigable for the smaller class of Gunboats, and it is evident that operations on its area must be combined with the Military defence of the Province. One thing is certain, the possession or occupation of the Hudson would render operations through the old "Gate of Canada" impossible; and steam would enable properly constructed Gunboats to run past shore batteries. There can be little doubt that a contest in this direction would be materially affected by a strong naval demonstration at New York, and it would be more than probable that good strategical reasons would influence the United States to leave that Lake without a naval force. Because, a disaster there would bring the conquerors within striking distance of Albany and New York, whereas the Northern and Western frontier of Canada are accessible from totally distinct *points d'appui*. Therefore in the event of a contest the Upper Lakes will undoubtedly be the scene of the most serious struggles. The possession of the St. Lawrence Canals gives Canada a preponderance which she did not enjoy in the last war; while the United States could obtain no advantage from the Erie Canal both termini of which is liable to be closed by vigorous and well concerted naval operations, and she would be reduced to the necessity of building, repairing and refitting in situations sufficiently exposed and defenceless on the Lake shores.

Lake Ontario would have two lines of communication with the Seaboard independent of each other—that through the St. Lawrence Canals and through the Rideau Canal and Ottawa River. But the whole system of Naval defence is founded on the fact that the opening of the Ottawa navigation places the key to the Upper Lakes in the hands of the people of the Dominion.

It is a Commercial as well as a Military necessity, alike requisite to the present and future security and prosperity of British America and to her further development.

A PERIOD OF TRANSITION.

Any one who is accustomed to note the signs of the times, and observe the gradual development of ideas which inaugurate those great changes in the social and relative condition of nations which are ever occurring, must be forcibly struck with the rapid decomposition of old sentiments in connection with the military organization of the leading powers of Europe. The present has been well called a transition period, in this respect, and this transition has doubtless been caused by the wonderful improvements which have of late years been made in the weapons and instruments of war. And it is this very improvement in the art of killing which paradoxically tends to further the best interests of all governments, (which is the happiness of the governed,) by making war a too costly and dangerous game for even the most powerful to play at. The tendency of civilization has ever been towards establishing higher and purer systems of government, thereby lessening the chances of war, and although the world will have to grow a great deal older and wiser before it will be inhabited by an universal brotherhood and the figurative lion will lie down with the lamb; yet, nevertheless, it is a fair presumption to suppose that the great, if not terrible lesson taught of late years will be productive of such results as may give some tangible hope to the philosopher and philanthropist. The comity of nations shows how completely the policy of each depends upon the other, and the fact of one great power maintaining an immense armed force in times of peace, compels all its surrounding neighbors to do likewise, and the inevitable consequences are an increase of those evils which ever attend a false state of affairs. A writer in the *North British Review*, declares, in a recent article, that standing armies so far from abolishing war, created it, but, although we are not prepared to accept this in its fullest sense, we must nevertheless admit that the assertion contains a great deal of truth, for the very facility for levying war afforded by the command of large armies, has been fruitful in precipitating an appeal to brute force in the settlement of national disputes. The establishment of free institutions and the spread of knowledge, indeed the whole genius of the age, is opposed to war and the maintenance of standing armies. But, as society is at present constituted, force is a guiding power, therefore we see the tendency of this "transition period" is to substitute armed nations for standing armies; or, to speak more correctly, to educate and train the citizens of the nation, and thereby create a force from among the people sufficient for the protection and defence of the country under any circumstances. Prussia has taken the initiative in this movement, and the recent French Army Bill shows that France has seen and imitated its wisdom, thus assimilating herself to the exigencies of the

times. A nation of citizen soldiers, like Prussia, must ever be more powerful for defence if not for aggression, than one with a standing army, like France or England. A striking illustration of this is afforded in Russia, which sustains an immense standing army totally distinct from, and very often antagonistic to, the rest of the population; hence the aggressive policy of that nation, for a great army is a great monster and must be fed with the flesh and blood of man.

An attentive study of the subject of armed nations and standing armies, shows conclusively that this manifest tendency of the age is one of the best indications of that spirit of progress which has arisen out of the admission of the doctrine of homogeneity of nations. This idea first put in practical shape by Louis Napoleon, perhaps the most astute governing intellect of the day, has been productive of many startling changes among the peoples of Europe, and is destined to work still greater and more startling changes anticipated before the Italian Revolution. And, when Napoleon declared himself Emperor, not of France, but of the French, he gave, unwittingly perhaps, the first indication of those changes which have taken place in Europe since his assumption of power; and also the inauguration of new ideas and new men that were to succeed to the direction of the nations on this new principle. But this again was only the natural consequence of the spread of education and thought among the masses; and goes to prove what we have before asserted, that this state of transition in which all civilized nations at present are, is precursory of a better and more peaceable communion of nationalities than was ever before known in the history of mankind.

To the Government and people of Canada a careful study of this subject may hereafter preserve us from much vexation and trouble. The principle is one we have long advocated as the only reliable means for securing protection in the event of aggression from our more powerful neighbor; and if the wisdom of its application is acknowledged by the rulers of the great empires of Europe, who have the means and ability for maintaining large standing armies, how would it not apply to us who are too poor to keep up even the minimum of such a force as would be of any service upon extensive borders and widely scattered interests? Of a necessity the Dominion must be an armed nation for it cannot, for any time, maintain a standing army.

A BIG LAND SPECULATION.

In an American paper we came across an article which astonished us not a little. It starts by observing that "Congress has already received projects for the annexation of the greater part of the habitable globe, situate between the Atlantic, Arctic and Pacific Oceans and the Gulf of Mexico." This is certainly one of the coolest things in the