

struction of defensive works at the mouth of the Genesee river, and the repairs of Fort Ontario at Oswego; also, appropriations for other defensive works on Lakes Erie and Ontario and the river St. Lawrence, and for the construction of Fort Montgomery, on Lake Champlain. The committee will report bills to carry out these suggestions and recommendations.

It will be observed, in regard to Lake Ontario, that we have no access to that lake from the upper lakes except through foreign territory; our superiority in shipping, therefore, on the upper lakes, would be unavailing on Lake Ontario. It is therefore important that, in addition to the fortification of exposed points, additional provisions should be made for securing and maintaining our supremacy on that lake. The committee recommend the establishment of a naval depot on Lake Ontario for arms, munitions, and naval stores. The possession of this lake is of the utmost importance. These great arteries of trade, the Erie canal and New York Central railroad, are within a day's march of nearly the length of Lake Ontario, and for a considerable distance within a few miles of its shores. The importance of lake defences to the State of New York has already been alluded to. It will not be forgotten that in the war of 1812 her borders were the scene of bloody battles. Buffalo, now the queen city of Lake Erie, then a small village, was burned. Oswego was captured, and Lake Champlain and Niagara river the scene of some of the most stirring events of the war.

We should pursue no aggressive policy; on the contrary, cultivating amicable relations with all nations, yet at the same time we should look carefully to our defences.

The Secretary of State well said, "that any nation may be said to voluntarily incur danger in tempestuous seasons, when it fails to show that it has sheltered itself on the very side from which the storm may possibly come." And the President of the United States spoke wisely when he said, "it is believed that some fortifications and depots of arms and munitions, with harbor and navigation improvements at well-selected points upon our great rivers and lakes, would be of great importance to our national defence and preservation."

II.

The second proposition, in regard to the defences of the northern frontier, is the establishment of a national foundery on the upper lakes and of naval depots. Attention has already been called to the superiority of the American lake marine over that of Canada on the upper lakes. In 1861 the number of American vessels of all descriptions on the upper lakes was 1,166; of Canadian, 326. Our superiority was 830. Our superiority in tonnage was 238,126 tons. Our superiority in sailors, 10,911. This superiority, without arms, is unavailing, and would only invite attack, and the immense merchant marine unarmed would furnish rich prizes to British gunboats. Great Britain has been collecting an abundance of the