

sible for an enemy to carry on operations on the large scale necessary to capture them.

Canada is a long strip of communications, its main artery, the St. Lawrence, being the fosse of a natural fortress, open during the summer season (winter operations may be deemed impracticable in this climate)¹ to the gunboats of Great Britain, and to them alone, as long as the fortress of Quebec is kept in a defensive condition. In consequence of the character of the original seigniorial settlement of the Province of Quebec, there are numerous lines of roads running parallel to the St. Lawrence, forming the front and rear of the concessions or seigniorial grants of land.

The Grand Trunk Railway and others on the south shore are now supplemented by railways on the north shore of the St. Lawrence and the Lakes, with their usual telegraphic lines, the whole forming a series of communications which have always enabled Canadian troops to act upon, what are practically interior lines, and so concentrate readily upon important strategic points, as was proved in the late Fenian raids.

Successful initiative in war counts for much. Both Great Britain and the United States are forbidden by treaty to build gunboats on the Lakes, but gunboats can and have with the first note of war passed up the St. Lawrence through the Lachine Canal² and on to the Lakes. The Beauharnois Canal on the south shore would probably be rendered useless at the commencement of hostilities by the United States; but the necessities of commerce, which are with us stronger than any consideration of Imperial defence, point to the probable enlargement of the old canal on the north shore of the Cedar rapids to Coteau landing. There is moreover the second and protected inland navigation route by the waters of the Ottawa to the capital, thence by the Rideau Canal to Lake Ontario and Kingston, which is the other gate opening to us the initiative against the comparatively defenceless emporiums of commerce on Lake Ontario; while the Welland and other canals lead to the more western waters. A counter-initiative from the Atlantic seaboard by the Erie Canal would no doubt be attempted. The Ohio Canal and river debouching at Cleveland is too long a line of counter-current navigation from which to start initiative gunboat attack.

Colonel Fletcher in his paper under this head remarks: "The great trading city of Chicago affords means to the United States, commanding as they do the outlet from Lake Michigan, rapidly to extemporise at the commencement of hostilities out of their fleet of merchantmen and steamers, vessels of war, sufficient to command Lake Huron, and probably to force an entry into Lake Erie, where they would be met by vessels from Buffalo and other large ports. Thus Ontario would be threatened on its northern, western, and

¹ Though the old French Canadian *voyageur* soldiers and Indians often made during winter, inroads into English Colonies, yet the conditions attending these self-reliant expeditions of a few hardy men hidden by dense forests till they burst upon some defenceless post, are entirely unlike the conditions of modern warfare.

² Now being still further enlarged.