

wards us, on the slightest pretences, these great municipal and commercial interests are utterly unprotected. We have not a fortification on the Frontier that a modern iron-clad gun-boat cannot pass with impunity ; nor a city on the Lakes that their shells could not speedily lay in ashes. Our Government has not sufficient naval stores, on all the Lakes, to fit out a single efficient vessel of war, and only a single vessel in commission of less than a hundred tons, carrying a single gun, on all the Upper Lakes, and none on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence. As the British Government constantly stands prepared for aggressive war on the Lakes, the treaty limiting her naval power, except on the six months' notice, is no protection to us.— War between nations ends their treaties ; and the first beligerent act may be the violation of a treaty stipulation.

The question naturally presents itself, how are these great Frontier interests to be placed in a condition of greater security ? They are National in extent and general character, and have a right to demand the protection of the General Government, whose Constitutional duty it is "to provide for the general safety and welfare."

The proposed Ship Canal is the only link wanting to give free communication through and between all the great Lakes and the River St. Lawrence, for vessels of the largest size navigating the Lakes.

On the Upper Lakes, the commercial marine is almost exclusively American ; on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence, the preponderance is largely in favor of Canadian bottoms. By the establishment of Naval Depots on Lake Ontario and the Upper Lakes, at several points least exposed to attacks from the Lakes, the vessels engaged in commerce, among which are a large number of propellers of the very first class, could be speedily converted into vessels of war, which a Ship Canal around the Falls, under American control, could pass between the Upper Lakes and Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence, as the exigencies of the case might require ; thus using the natural excess, in time of peace, of American tonnage on the