

No. 8.—SIR J. H. CRAIG TO LIEUT. GOVERNOR GORE.

(Archives, series Q., vol. 107, p. 209.)

SIR,—Though a very severe malady with which I have been afflicted since my arrival here has put it out of my power before to pay that attention to business, which would be necessary to enter into a confidential communication with you, such as the urgency of public affairs demands, yet it has been with concern that I have found on enquiry that owing to some mistake or neglect, which I am afraid I must take to myself, my arrival here was not announced to you, otherwise than by the circulation of the military orders by the Adjutant General. I trust you will have the goodness to excuse what has certainly been an omission and attribute it solely to my temporary incapacity.

I was in hopes before now to have received some information, by which I might have been able to form a conjecture as to the probable issue of the pending controversy on which the continuance of our tranquillity with our neighbours depends, but there has not elapsed a sufficient time for the means that I have myself employed to have produced any effect and I have not been honoured with a single communication from our minister to the United States. I therefore know little more than what can be gathered from the papers and from the temper of the president's speech at the opening of Congress. Either of these afford but slender grounds on which to rest judgment. It must be our business therefore to take such precautions as may place us in a state of preparation for the event of Hostility and with this view to concert a general outline of co-operation that may, as far as it can be done, compensate for our deficiency in strength and at any rate to enable me to pursue that line of conduct that has been marked out for me by His Majesty's Instructions.

These Instructions, as far as they relate to the Canadas, as well indeed as my own view of the subject, in every light in which I can possibly turn it, point out the preservation of Quebec as the object of my first and principal consideration and that to which all others must be subordinate. It is the only post, defective as it is in many respects, that can be considered tenable for a moment, nor is the preservation of it of less consequence to the Province under your immediate direction, than it is to this, as affording the only door for the future entry of that force which it might be found expedient and which the King's government might then be able to send for the recovery of both or either, although the pressure of the moment in the present extended range of warfare would not permit the sending of that which would be sufficient to defend them and the considering it in this view will place its importance in its truest light, for if the Americans are really determined to attack these Provinces and employ these means which they may so easily command, I fear it would be vain for us to flatter ourselves in the hopes of making an effectual defence of the open country, unless powerfully assisted from home. And indeed, although we would certainly resist every predatory or ill concerted attack, which presumption might lead them to undertake without sufficient means, yet in every event of Invasion, not conducted on such principles of inefficiency, it might perhaps be wise to act with that caution, that would enable us to husband our own Resources for that future exertion to which I have alluded and I should therefore hesitate to recommend a more extended scene of operations than might be adapted to that object, were it not in the idea that such might be called for as immediately and essentially connected with the still more important object which I have laid down as that which must be our first consideration and must absorb all others — the defence of Quebec.

I am totally unacquainted with the state of the Militia of Upper Canada and unable to obtain any information on it upon which I can place any dependence. Indeed if it were otherwise, I should not feel inclined in the slightest degree to interfere or interpose my opinions as to the arrangements which you may think proper for your internal defence, the fatal effects of division and dissipating our Force, by attempting to act on too many points, have been too frequently illustrated of late for me to be under any apprehensions that you will not feel, that it is by concen-