

## HARBOR DEFENCES ON GREAT LAKES AND RIVERS.

FEBRUARY 12, 1862.—Laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. ARNOLD, from the select committee on defence of great lakes and rivers, made the following

### REPORT.

*The committee to which was referred so much of the President's message as refers to the defences and fortifications of the great lakes and rivers, and to which also were referred various resolutions, petitions, and memorials on this subject, having had the same under consideration, respectfully submit the following report:*

The line between the United States and the British possessions in North America, running from the gulf of St. Lawrence on the east, and extending west through the river St. Lawrence, thence through Lake Ontario, Niagara river, Lake Erie, and thence westerly, through the great lakes, to and beyond the frontier settlements, presents a boundary line, running through these great lakes and rivers, of more than three thousand miles in extent.

The feeling of good neighborhood, of reciprocity of interests, and of mutual good will, had been growing up, and, with slight disturbance, had continued since the close of the war of 1812. For nearly half a century we have regarded our Canadian neighbors as our good friends, with whom we desired to establish the kindest and most intimate business, commercial, and social relations. In the great lines of railway and water communication between the east and west, combinations and connexions have been established of mutual advantage. A treaty of reciprocity has been entered into. Some of our great thoroughfares of trade and travel have not avoided the Canadian territory, all indicating a willingness to break down or disregard division lines, and to live on terms of mutual good will. During this period the few scattered and imperfect defensive works and fortifications which had been constructed on the frontier had fallen into decay, and in some instances the military reservations around our old forts had been converted into station grounds and depots of railways. We had come to regard it as scarcely within the range of possibility that we should go to war with our neighbor over the line. This very neglect of the means of defence recent events have indicated has increased the danger and liability of war; so that it seems that the best security for peace is to be prepared for war. The defence of