

We will defend our country, then, because our institutions are a part of it, and our institutions are worth preserving. In any future contest with our Republican neighbours, trust me, that the concessions made to us by England in 1839 will be worth an army upon the frontier. You seem to be half repentant for the share you have had in urging these concessions. Be re-assured. Do not lend your fine talents to those who mean what you do not mean, who would go further than you, who would pollard the British oak that you would only trim; who, not having themselves the wit to guide the glorious ship of Empire, in which we are all embarked, would put her under jury masts, and hug the shore to disguise their ignorance of navigation.

But I admit that when fighting is to be done, there is something more required even than enthusiasm in a good cause. I have not lived all my life in a garrison town without knowing the difference between discipline and the want of it; between a soldier and a civilian.

But a great mistake prevails in this country as to the amount of discipline which our North American Militia would require, in order to make them, if not quite equal to your crack regiments, quite as good as the ordinary rank and file in conducting defensive warfare in a new country. Let us see what our young men know that many of your old soldiers do not. In the first place they are trained to field work and field sports. They can row, swim, fish, shoot, ride, walk on snow shoes, and camp in the woods in half an hour without the aid of canvas, but themselves in the winter anywhere where wood is to be had. These are fine accomplishments, as your Guards would have discovered last winter, had two or three thousand of our young fellows, with their rifles and snow shoes, and a week's provision on their backs, chosen to have disputed their passage anywhere between Bic and Montreal. But suppose that war had been declared last year, and that the youngsters had joined the Guards, as they would have done to a man, how long would they with their hearts in the business, have been learning, in addition to what they knew, all that a disciplined soldier has to teach; and how rapidly would they have taught the Guardsman what, for his own preservation and efficiency in such a country, it is indispensable that he should know? It is on this admirable combination of qualities, on this reciprocal interchange of services, sympathy, and instruction, that, in the second place, I rely on any future wars which we may be compelled to wage in defence of our Provinces in North America. Your troops will always have the highest discipline, the most perfect knowledge of a profession, in its elementary stages not difficult to learn, and our young men, who cannot afford to leave their farms and play at soldiers in time of peace, will be apt scholars, and not bad teachers to the soldiers in time of peril. It was this admirable combination of the finest qualities required to make an army, that told upon the combats of 1812-15, and that will tell upon any future contests into which we may be driven. We ought to have good leadership and good drills from the first apprehension of hostilities, and, having these, it must be confessed that our materials wherewith to work are in quality unsurpassed.