

ney to be obtained? And they talk, very wisely, concerning common sense and common prudence, and will show, with much learning, how this attempt is an offence against both the one and the other. But, sir, it has been my lot, to be an observer of the character and conduct of the men, now in power, for these eight years past. And I state without hesitation, that no scheme ever was, or ever will be, rejected by them, merely on account of its running counter to the ordinary dictates of common sense and common prudence. On the contrary, on that very account, I believe it more likely to be both suggested and adopted by them. And, what may appear a paradox, for that very reason, the chance is rather increased, that it will be successful.

I could illustrate this position twenty ways. I shall content myself with remarking, only upon two instances, and those recent;—the present war; and the late invasion of Canada. When war against Great Britain was proposed, at the last session, there were thousands, in these United States, and I confess to you, I was, myself, among the number, who believed not one word of the matter. I put my trust in the old fashioned notions of common sense, and common prudence. That a people which had been more than twenty years at peace, should enter upon hostilities, against a people which had been twenty years at war; that a nation, whose army and navy were little more than nominal, should engage, in war, with a nation, possessing one of the best appointed armies and the most powerful marine, on the globe; that a country, to which neutrality had been a perpetual harvest, should throw that great blessing away, for a controversy, in which nothing was to be gained, and every thing valuable put in jeopardy; from these, and innumerable like considerations, the idea seemed so absurd, that I never once entertained it, as possible. And now, after war has been declared, the whole affair seems so extraordinary, and so utterly irreconcilable to any previous suggestions of wisdom and duty, that I know not what to make of it, or how to believe it. Even at this moment, my mind is very much in the state of certain Pennsylvanian Germans, of whom I have heard it asserted, that they are taught to believe, by their political leaders, and do, at this moment, consider the allegation, that war is at present existing, between the United States and Great Britain, to be a "*federal falsehood*."

It was just so with respect to the invasion of Canada. I heard of it last June. I laughed at the idea, as did multitudes of others, as an attempt too absurd for serious examination. I was in this case, again, beset by common sense and common prudence. That the United States should precipitate itself upon the unoffending people of that neighbouring colony, unmindful of all previously subsisting amities, because the parent state, three thousand miles distant, had