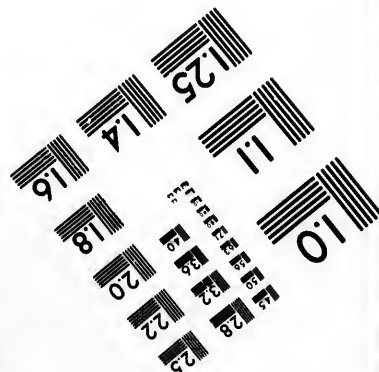
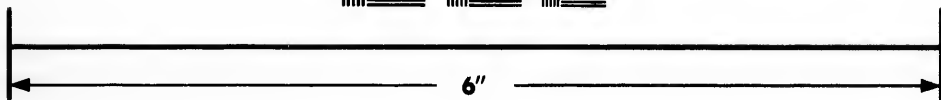
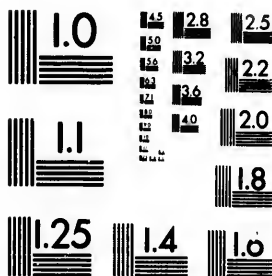


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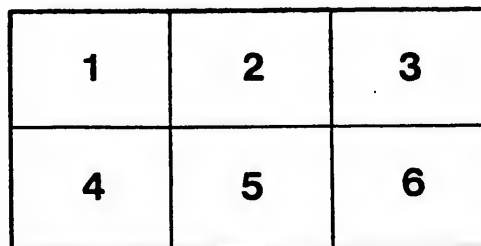
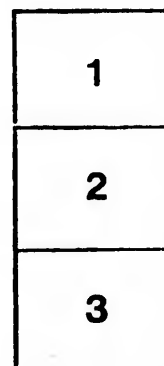
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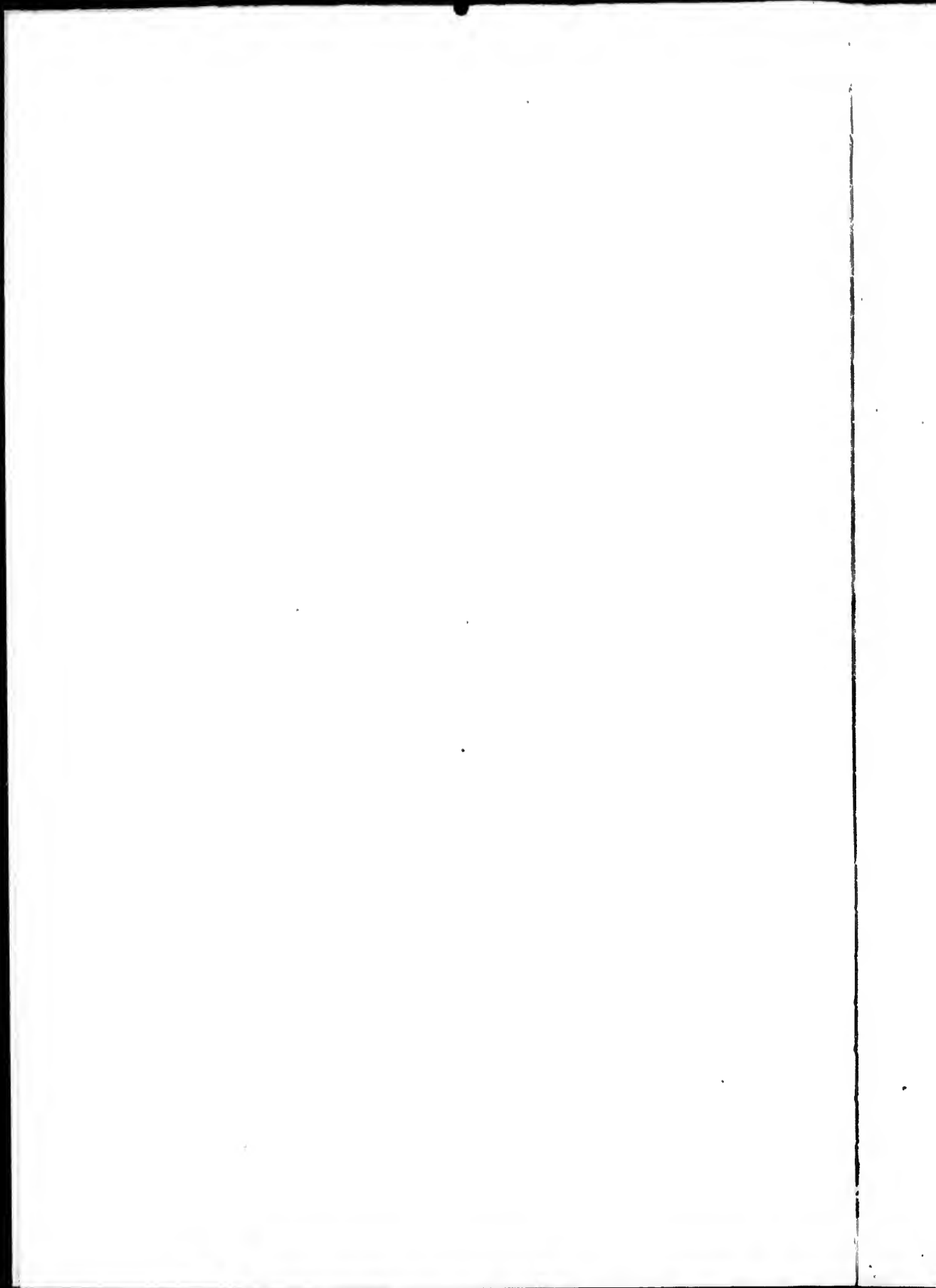
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*Living Age*  
July 12, 1845

D. Shaw  
1844

From the United Service Journal.  
**REMARKS ON THE DEFENCES AND RESOURCES  
OF CANADA IN THE EVENT OF A WAR.**  
BY CLAUDIUS SHAW, ESQ., K. S. F., LATE OF THE  
ROYAL ARTILLERY.

At this time, when all eyes are turned to the other side of the Atlantic with so much anxiety, and from the very great probability there is just now of an eruption between Great Britain and the United States, a few remarks from a person who served in Canada during part of the last war, and remained several years in that country, when he visited, on duty, every military post in both provinces, and had particular opportunities of making observations, may not be unacceptable.

When the last war with the States broke out, all the disposable British troops were engaged in the Peninsula, and those under Sir George Prevost, the Governor of the Canadas, were very few indeed, and they dispersed over some thousand miles of frontier. The force consisted only of two regular regiments of the line, 41st and 49th,

and some provincial and fencible corps just raised. The militia were quite unorganized, and some among them were considered a little disaffected; but this last number was small.

The gallant and lamented General Brock was the first to set the example by commencing hostilities. He, with one wing of the 49th, part of the 41st, and a few unorganized militia, made a dash from York, and captured Detroit. He was following up his success in other parts when death put an end to his career in the moment of victory; and thus fell a man universally beloved and esteemed by all parties.

Soon after this a war of extermination was waged along the frontiers. A party of Americans crossed the Niagara river at Fort George, near where it falls into Lake Ontario, and set fire to the village of Newark, as it was then called—Niagara at present.

It was in the most inclement season of the year, the beginning of February, the ground covered with snow, and the thermometer several degrees below zero, when the American general, M' Lure, and his myrmidons, crossed the river. Arriving about four o'clock in the morning, they gave the inhabitants notice that in two hours they would commence burning, and that they might do the best they could in that time. What were the poor people to do? All the young men and horses were away towards Burlington, fifty miles off; there was nobody but old men, women, and children. Some were sick in bed—two women had actually been confined that very night—yet off they must go. No house or village near. Through the Black Swamp lay their road. About four miles off were some farms; here the poor creatures crept, but there was not accommodation for the inhabitants of a whole village. Some of them had to go more than twelve miles before they could get shelter. Their road was well illuminated; for the burning houses shone brightly on the white snow.

This act was not long being avenged; and the American villages of Buffalo, Lewiston, and Blackrock, soon shared their fate.

It is not our intention here to enter into a detail of events which occurred during the last war, though we may have to revert to them occasionally, but more to use them as examples of what have happened, and might occur again in the event of hostilities. We will, therefore, take a cursory view of the defences of the province in the first instance, beginning at Quebec, as below this the security of the St. Lawrence must be trusted to our never-failing warden walls.

The position of Quebec and its works are so strong, and the country so difficult of access, that there is not the least probability of its being attacked by American troops; and the river may be considered perfectly secure from aggression till we come to the Montreal district.

The southern part of the district of Montreal is one most vulnerable point, and has always been the seat of war since the earliest period that European arms have been used on the western side of the Atlantic.

This frontier is intersected for a considerable distance by a navigable river and lakes, of which Lake Champlain is the most important and remarkable in history. On a small island, Isle Aux Noix, we have a considerable fortification, which would prevent shipping from going up the River St. John's to Chambly, which was an important

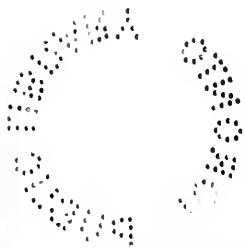
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post during the last war, and head-quarters for a regiment of infantry, one of cavalry, and a force of field-artillery. But though we may hold those points, the first step to be taken is to seize upon the *Crown Point*. In the event of a war it must become British by right of conquest and tenure; for without it we lose the command of this lake, which is so important an object in Canadian warfare. It was the want of this that caused our misfortune on this lake in 1814, and made our army, composed at that time of the best soldiers in the world, retire before a few half-disciplined Americans. Had Commodore Downie succeeded, the success would have been complete; but, independent of the loss sustained by his death, it was next to impossible he could have been victorious. His vessel was quite new, badly found, worse manned, and his cannon of different calibres. The crew was principally composed of Canadians, who mostly spoke French, and the few English sailors there were could not be understood by them; besides, they were all strangers to each other. The business on the lake was soon decided, and the troops ordered to retire. This last there was not the least occasion for, at least, not till the fort was destroyed. This will be borne out by Generals Brisbane, Power, and Robinson; and last, not least, the American General Macomb told the writer of this article that he was just about giving orders to his men to retreat, and was never more astonished in his life than when he heard the British bugles sound one, and saw them commence to move off. This retreat of eighteen miles caused the light company of the 76th to be entirely cut off and made prisoners, their captain killed, several others killed also, and more ordnance stores and ammunition lost than in both the retreats from Talavera and Burgos, besides an immense quantity of men who deserted.

This country must be well known to many officers now serving in Canada, as it was pretty near the scene of the late rebellion. This is an advantage; because, in the case of another *fr* with Brother Jonathan, this ground is likely to be again the scene of conflict.

We will now return to Montreal. During the last war this was quite an open place, without any fortification whatever. Soon after, the island of St. Helens was purchased by our government, and strongly fortified. It is not quite a mile from the city of Montreal, and serves not only to quarter our troops out of town, but also defends the shipping. The river is navigable so far from the ocean for vessels of considerable burthen; and in the summer there is daily steam-communication from and to Quebec; though it was not till the close of the war that the second steamer was built. Above St. Helens the river expands to a great width, forming a beautiful sheet of water across to Longueuil and La Prairie. Above this are very formidable rapids; and goods, &c., are now transported to Lachine, a distance of seven or eight miles, by canal. Formerly everything was carried over in small Canadian carts. The scenery from this point is most beautiful; above Isle Perault the Ottawa falls into the St. Lawrence. The banks above this are well defended, as there are some very strong rapids between this and Coteau du Lac, which is a considerable work.

From the Ottawa a canal, called the Rideau Canal, has been formed since the war; so that stores, &c., may be forwarded to Kingston without being exposed along the frontier on the banks of the St. Lawrence, as before.

It is remarkable that the Americans should have allowed us to pass stores, as we did, in open boats, during the whole war. Not only common stores were sent up this way to Kingston, but the whole frame of a frigate, the *Psyche*, which had been built in England, and sent out in pieces to Quebec or Montreal, there unloaded, and sent by carts to Lachine; from thence they were embarked in batteaux, and sent up the river to Prescott or Fort Wellington, where an immense raft was made. A battalion of marines, and two light guns, under an officer of artillery, were placed upon it, and taken through the Lake of One Thousand Islands to Kingston, where the raft was taken to pieces and formed into a frigate, without the loss of any material part. So particular were our government at home that nothing might be wanting to equip the ship fully for sea, that they even took the precaution of sending out staves for water-casks, on the fresh Lake of Ontario! And a merchant in Kingston was able to recognize his own private mark upon some of the timber, which he had sent to England from Canada some time previous.

It is to be hoped that, in the event of another war, our people at home will learn a lesson from past experience, and be a little more careful.

This frigate cost government *one million* of pounds sterling!

This raft has run away with us to Kingston before our time, so we must return again to Coteau du Lac. From here the river is not easily crossed by any number of boats, on account of the rapids; yet there are some important points to be considered.

Where the 45° of latitude strikes the St. Lawrence is the spot where the United States come first upon the St. Lawrence, close to the Indian village of St. Regis, nearly opposite our town of Cornwall. And from this point the treaty of Ghent determined that the boundary-line between the British and the Americans should be the centre of the water-communication, as far as the Lake of the Woods, and Rocky Mountains to the south of the river Columbia, in about 42° of north latitude,—that is, the river; where the exact boundary may be we in our ignorance cannot pretend to decide at present.

The Scotch settlement of Glengarry is near this place. Here the loyalty of the inhabitants was always conspicuous, as they raised a most effective corps of light infantry, which was highly distinguished during the war.

Near Glengarry is an island which is very important, and, owing to some blunder among our commissioners for the survey of the boundary line, it was given over, by a decision of the emperor of Russia, to the Americans. This island lies a considerable distance from the mainland, or nearest island north, but then the water is very shallow on the British or north side—we remember sticking in the mud in an unarmed gun-boat—while on the other side there is plenty of water to float a frigate. Our surveyors were not ordered to sound the depths of the streams; and, as it appeared that the channel was *wide enough*, the island was given over without the least remark. Though many of the people on the adjacent shores were aware of this blunder, we never heard of its being rectified.

In the event of another war, from the circumstance of the transport going round by the Rideau canal, it would not be of so much consequence as formerly, yet it might be important, in the event of wishing to push troops up in a hurry, and



should be taken possession of immediately. A detachment of the gallant sons of the Highlanders could always hold it; as no doubt they have the proper blood in their veins. At all events the matter should be investigated without loss of time.

For about thirty miles above this the river keeps pretty full of rapids, till within a short distance of Prescott, a small village near Fort Wellington. This work was constructed during the last war. It was very badly planned from the first, being only a square, without flanks or ditch. It had a strong blockhouse in the centre, into which if the garrison should have been driven they might have been all roasted. The outer works, or surrounding parapet, only served to mount a few guns on, to keep the American village of Ogdensburg in order. The river here is very narrow, not much above eight hundred yards across. The village of Prescott, being at the foot of the steam navigation from Kingston, may rise to some importance. Immediately above this it widens again into the Lake of One Thousand Islands.

During the last war there were two small posts at Gananoqui and Catarauqui, Indian villages, but as the Americans could at any time run over through the islands, it was considered necessary to have some small works here; and they also served as harbors to the gun-boats we were obliged to keep running constantly among these islands.

The Lake of One Thousand Islands contracts rapidly before coming to Kingston. Passing between an island and some high land, Lake Ontario lies in wide expanse before you. Turning sharp to the right, the traveller has a view of the town of Kingston, lying close to the water's edge; on the hill immediately on his right, which he has just come round, stand the high towers of Fort Henry. At the foot of this is a deep bay running up, in which is the dockyard; this is again protected by a fort au pleine d'eau, mounting eight or nine guns, 32 and 24-pounders.

Fort Henry contains two large stone towers, capable of mounting two heavy guns on top of each, besides smaller ones in the sides; so that, in case the outer fort might be carried, the garrison could maintain themselves inside. There are good stone barracks, and the works are well reveted with stone, mounting several guns. It is quite inaccessible, except on the land side, and there it could only be carried by a regular siege; but, being situated on a rocky point, it would be no easy matter for an enemy to make his approaches.

The dockyard is at the foot of this hill, upon the low land of Fort Frederick, as described above; a large arm of the lake runs between this and the town, about six hundred yards across, and extends five or six miles into the country. On the shore above the town are two small forts, Missisquoi and Gurney's Points, capable of holding three or four heavy guns each. A small island, called Snake Island, about three miles up the lake, is fortified; it has a block-house and one or two guns. It having an extensive view of the lake, can always make signals to the town and other works of the approach of the enemy, though it could not do much itself to prevent a fleet entering the bay. A chain of block-houses and a stockade, round the land-side of the town, finishes the defence of Kingston.

During the last war this was the great arsenal for the Upper Lakes. A stranger might have almost fancied himself near Portsmouth. In the

bay there lay the St. Lawrence, 98 guns, carrying 120, in her stern she had 10 guns, to keep small craft from lying under it; the Regent, 44; the Psyche, 26; the Montreal, 20; Niagara, 12; and a large store-ship, or transport, besides schooners and gun-boats. When the ships were in harbor there was all the stir and bustle common to such scenes; there were hundreds of ship-carpenters in the dockyard, with all the usual accompaniment of riggers, sailmakers, *et hoc genus omne*. The peace came, these ships were all laid up in ordinary, and most probably by this time they have disappeared altogether; as they were built of unseasoned timber, it is not probable they could have held together all this time.

The Americans had a similar establishment at Sackett's Harbor, about twenty miles up the lake. They had about the same number of ships as we had, though none so large as the St. Lawrence. They used to cruise across the mouth of the Bay of Kingston every Sunday evening, while the St. Lawrence was building, bragging that as soon as she was ready they would meet our fleet outside the Ducks (islands so called.) At last the St. Lawrence was launched, and ready for sea; she sailed, and all the fleet with her, one wing of the 90th Regiment on board, acting as supernumerary marines—they were to be left at Niagara, if they got there. Great was the anxiety of the Kingstonsians awaiting the event—not a soul was in their beds after daylight—the fleet sailed—the people cheered—and anxiety was depicted in every countenance. Every noise that was heard was taken for a gun; everybody started at the least sound; but no gun was heard till the garrison-gun at sunset. The fleet passed the Ducks, but no Brother Jonathan was there—he either forgot to come out, or did not choose. He never assigned any reason. So in a few days our fleet returned, after throwing in provision and supplies to our forces on the Niagara frontier, and neither saw or heard of the enemy.

Some months previous to this Sir George Prevost had made an attack on Sackett's Harbor, which succeeded in every point except one; there a small blockhouse still held out. Our troops had landed with but little resistance, the Americans were retreating, we could have had their dockyard in flames in five minutes; but no, our commander ordered the men to retire and reëmbark, without setting fire to the dockyard, or doing the least injury to anything. There was, however, the extraordinary scene of two hostile armies back to back!

There was a gallant little affair further up the lake, at Oswego, where a small dockyard, stores, &c., were destroyed.

The shores of Ontario are mostly precipitous clay banks, till they come near Toronto; the country round is now well settled, and there are some flourishing villages, such as Coburngh and Hamilton, scattered along them, though there is no harbor or place of any importance till arriving at Toronto. Here is a considerable bay, at the end of which is the city; it is shallow, and only admits small vessels. There is a fort upon the rising ground within the bay, too far from the town to be of any service to it in case of need.

The American troops effected a landing, and the British troops evacuated, the magazine blowing up just as they were about to take possession; the American general and several of his men

being killed, the rest reëmbarked, and the British troops gallantly returned from a distance, and kept possession.

At the back of Toronto, there is a considerable settlement, which extends up Yonge street, about seventy miles back to the shores of Lake Huron, at Penetanguishene and Nottawasaga; these were important naval posts during the last war. The country then was not even surveyed; in this district now there is a flourishing settlement almost all the way.

We must now proceed to more classical ground, on the Niagara frontier. The mouth of the river lies about twenty-three miles nearly south of Toronto. On its right bank is the American fort of Niagara; this is one of the oldest buildings in this country, having been built by the French, on their first settlement, as a defence against the Indians. It is a very large and strongly-built edifice, the walls, especially near the lower part, being extremely thick; it is three stories high, and guns are mounted on the top; but it is probable, if they were of heavy calibre, that their own firing would injure the building. This is surrounded by some modern fortifications and barracks, and altogether makes a very respectable fort; it completely commands the entrance of the river.

It was carried by a gallant *coup de main* last war. A party of the 100th Regiment, under Major Hamilton, crossed the river about two miles up, where there was a bend; they disembarked, and caught the party relieving an advanced sentry. They had left the gate open behind; they were made to give the countersign—an officer and a few men dashed on and secured the gate—the guard was seized before they could give the alarm. The soldiers were mostly in bed—they made but little resistance—in a quarter of an hour the whole business was finished—and the fort remained in possession of the British till the close of the war.

In the event of hostilities, something of a similar nature must be done; at all events, Fort Niagara must be British.

The old Fort George stood some hundred yards higher up the river; it was a low square fort, without tower or blockhouse of any description, except low, log, loop-holed barracks. This fort was so admirably placed, that it could be enfiladed upon every face by the enemy's shot; but he never seemed to have skill enough to place his artillery so as to annoy the people in the fort; indeed, he never tried, but with a few light guns he would have made the place too hot to be tenable. The remains of General Brock were interred in one of the bastions, and were the means of preserving the fort for some years, till a beautiful monument was erected for him on Queenston Heights, near where he was killed. This monument was afterwards defaced and partly thrown down by a Yankee blackguard, named Lett.

The Mississauga Fort was built during the war; it consisted of a strong tower of brickwork, with guns on the top, and was surrounded by an earthen star fort, which had several guns mounted in it, but it was far too confined to be of much use, and there was scarcely accommodation for a few artillerymen within its inclosure.

It was discovered soon after the war, when the guns in Fort George were ordered to fire upon the building in Fort Niagara, that a twenty-four-

pounder had no effect upon the building at six hundred yards! The reason was the powder had been so long in store that its strength was all gone. What state is it in now!

From these forts the country runs pretty level as far as Queenston. Here it rises abruptly about three hundred feet, into what is commonly called "the Mountain." This is a table-land, which runs all round the south side of Lake Ontario. Lake Erie is situated on this, and running down into the Niagara river or strait, falls over about seven miles above Queenston, and causes the far-famed cataract. The river can be crossed as far up as Queenston; but here it becomes too rapid, and cannot be again till about two miles above the falls, where the Welland or Chippewa river runs into the Niagara.

This was a point of some importance, and this river was crossed by a bridge, defended by a *tête du pont*. The main road from Fort George to Fort Erie passed through it, and there was no good road for a considerable distance to the right; indeed, there was none of any importance, except merely to farm houses.

The Welland Canal has been constructed since the war; it runs from this river to the shores of Lake Ontario, at St. Catherine's, a considerable village now. During the war, there were not above three or four houses and a small church.

Fort Erie was situated at the head of the Niagara river; it consisted of two strong stone buildings, inclosed within an earthen rampart. This was garrisoned by two or three companies, commanded by a major. Some Americans came over, and summoned the place, which he gave up without hesitation: it required a regular siege to get it again. This occurred about the period when the St. Lawrence and the other vessels went up the lake.

When the Americans found we were about investing the place, they in one night threw up a breastwork from the fort, to connect a small hill (Snake Hill) about a mile off, which was immediately on the lake shore, and prevented us from turning their flank, or getting between them and the water.

After it was considered that a respectable breach had been formed in the mud bastion, dispositions were made for a general attack. The 8th Regiment and De Watteville's were sent in the direction of Snake Hill; the others to storm the breach, and be in reserve. The flints were taken out of the muskets, and the troops moved to the attack with the bayonet. The light company of the 8th succeeded in getting in; but as the Americans did not choose to give them time to fix their flints, they had no opportunity to open a fire upon the rear of the Americans, which would have driven them away; but, on the other hand, the Yankees drove them out. An explosion taking place on the breach, just as our troops had established themselves there, nearly a whole company was destroyed, and the Americans remained masters of their fort; all because the flints had been taken out of the muskets.

Why Fort Erie should have been thought worthy of a regular siege is inexplicable; had the British moved up sharply after the business of Lundy's Lane, near the falls of Niagara, they might have been up nearly as soon as the Americans; at all events, they would not have given them time to establish themselves, and they might.

have been driven at once into the lake, or otherwise annihilated, without all the trouble, expense, and loss of men and time attendant on a siege. Soon after, the Americans retired across the water, without saying anything, and there was not a single American soldier in the province in 1814.

The battle of Lundy's Lane was fought some time before; it did not commence till afternoon, and was a sad confused piece of business. An American gun was limbered up to a British limber, and *vice versa*. The Glengarry regiment had been skirmishing in front, and were coming in again, when a British regiment taking them, from their dark uniforms, for Americans, fired a volley into them, and did them more injury than the enemy had all night. So much for the system of night attacks. It still remains a matter of doubt to whom the victory belonged, both parties claiming it; but the British may be considered as victors in this case, as they remained on the ground, and allowed the Americans to move off unmolested in the course of next day, and make themselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit in Fort Erie.

Lake Erie is about two hundred miles long from Buffalo to Amherstberg; it is of no great depth, and vessels can anchor in any part. The site of the fort is well chosen, as it commands the entrance into the river. About twelve miles higher up is an important point, affording a good shelter under Point Abino, when the wind will not permit of vessels running into the river, which, except Buffalo, is the only harbor at this end of the lake. About half way up the lake, the Ouse, or Grand River, falls into it. This was made a naval station, and served as a winter-harbor for our ships. There is also good shelter under Long Point. We had a redoubt near here, so as to protect vessels between Long and Turkey Points, this also being the most probable place for the enemy to land, as it is easy of access, and a flourishing settlement running for some distance back, might be a temptation to them.

In the upper end of the lake are some important islands, one in particular, Put-in-bay Island, so called from the beautiful harbor it contains, where a large fleet may lie perfectly secure while waiting for a wind up or down. This lake never freezes all across, though it does for a considerable distance, at least thirty miles below Amherstberg.

We lost a fleet there of several vessels, after a gallant action, in which Captain Barclay, the commander, lost his arm. It arose from the same cause as the failure on Lake Champlain—want of sufficient equipment and good crews.

Soon after, two beautiful schooners, the *New-wash* and *Tecumseth*, of one hundred tons each, were built, and some smaller craft; one of the latter was commanded by the famous African traveller, Captain Clapperton.

The town of Amherstberg is situated upon the banks of the Detroit. There is a fort above the town; it was never completed, which is an advantage, as it was most injudiciously placed. Immediately opposite the town of Amherstberg is the Island of Bois Blanc; this is the place for the fort, as it commands the mouth of the river and both channels. It was very near sharing the fate of the island near Glengarry, as the Americans claimed it, saying that the channel was between it and Amherstberg. This is the most frequented

one, but nevertheless, there is sufficient water on the other side, as well as a greater width. In this case we were fortunate; but, in the event of war, this island must be fortified immediately, with a battery at each end; by this means the lake will be of little or no use to the party wanting the island, as no vessel can pass it up or down, and the communication between the upper and lower lakes will be destroyed.

About eighteen or twenty miles higher up are the towns of Sandwich and Windsor; the American city of Detroit is immediately opposite the latter place. This is one of the oldest places in this country, having been settled by the French soon after Montreal. There is a fort here, but it is badly placed, having been intended only as a protection against the Indians; it has but a poor command over the river, it is some distance back, and stands high, yet it serves as a *dépôt* for arms and troops, from which they could easily be transported up or down the lakes, or sent across to plunder on the Canadian shores.

Detroit formerly belonged to the British by conquest; but by a subsequent treaty, it was given, with Fort Niagara and some other places, to the Americans, in 1791.

Lake St. Clair is at the upper end of the Detroit; it is so very shallow, that vessels of 100 tons burthen find some difficulty in getting through it, as they stir up the mud the greatest part of the way. The river Thames empties itself into it; some of the best land in the province is on the banks of this river. At Chatham there is reserved ground for building a fort on, at a point where the river branches off. There was some skirmishing here, when General Proctor retired from Amherstberg and Sandwich. Tecumseth, the great Indian chief, was killed on the occasion; his loss was severely felt at the time, as he possessed abilities of the highest order. It would far exceed our limits to enter into details here.

The river St. Clair joins the lake of that name with Lake Huron. It is a fine rapid stream. The Americans have a fort on it, at the entrance into Lake Huron, and we had one nearly opposite.

Lake Huron may safely be called one of the great lakes, from its extent and depth. There are many fine islands upon it, especially Michilimackinac, St. Joseph's, and Drummond Island.

The first is a very old settlement, and was taken possession of by our fur-traders, as a *dépôt*. It belongs to the United States; we took it from them last war, and kept possession of it till the close.

St. Joseph's was made a British settlement after Mackinac was given over to the Americans, and we always kept a garrison there; but finding that Drummond Island, though a poor barren rock, was more advantageous as a military post, we took possession of that also, and withdrew the garrison from the more fertile place of St. Joseph's. After being at considerable expense in fortifying it, improving the harbor, building barracks, &c., the Commissioners for the Boundary Line discovered that it belonged to the Americans; and we were obliged to give it, and all our improvements, to Brother Jonathan. No doubt he will now avail himself of them.

This is the end of the navigation from Lake Erie, as the rapids of the Sault Ste Marie, between Lakes Huron and Superior, intervene. The distance is not very great, but the difficulties of the channel are too many to be easily made navigable,

and it was not thought of in the former wars, as this point seemed to put a limit to our proceeding further; but now we may say we are only half-way, as we have to break new ground before we can get upon the debatable land of Oregon.

Before, however, leaving Lake Huron, we must also remark the ports of Penetanguishino and Nottawasaga. These have been already mentioned as lying nearly north of Toronto about sixty or eighty miles. The country is well settled, and troops and stores could be more easily conveyed to this part, for the service of Lake Huron, than in any other way, and communication kept up better with head-quarters, whether at Toronto or Niagara, as information could be quickly transmitted *via* Yonge Street (the name of the road, about seventy miles long); besides, there is good winter accommodation for the ships at these places.

Little is known beyond the shores of Lake Huron to any but the fur-traders of the Hudson's Bay Company. The writer of these articles having often fallen in with these people, gained some hearsay knowledge of this country.

The first place where the traders put up at is Fort William, a station built by the North-west Company, where they received the furs from the hunters and traders, and stored the goods they received from Montreal and the Canadas, embarking the furs here again for those places.

The Hudson's Bay Company denied the right of the North-west Company to trade or hunt in certain districts, which they had been in the habit of doing for years. As the people in this distant region considered themselves almost out of the pale of the laws, they determined to bring the matter to an issue *ri et armis*. On the reduction of some foreign regiments, De Meuron's and De Watteville's, the two rival companies enlisted several of the men, who, with some of their officers, went up to the North-west Territory, as it was then called; and the business did not finish without some bloodshed. Fort William was surprised, the principal partner of the North-west Company and some others taken prisoners, and carried down to Canada. Between war and law, the North-west Company was obliged to coalesce, and formed one company, under the title of the Hudson's Bay Company.

It will remain to be seen what steps our government will pursue as to taking possession of the Oregon Territory, and of keeping the Americans from it; but the distance is so great, that this cannot be effected without some difficulty. For in the first place, let us suppose troops on Lake Huron, there are no means of transporting them across Lake Superior; and even if there were, how are they to be conveyed to the foot of the Rocky Mountains through a country without a house or the least accommodation for them! All their provisions would have to go with them, and there are no beasts of burden fit for the service. Pemican is bad food for English soldiers.\* Supposing these difficulties to be overcome, it would take near a whole summer to move a regiment to the foot of the Rocky Mountains—say nothing of getting them over. This scheme must be abandoned. The other way of getting to the Oregon, *via* Cape Horn, is so tedious that it would be next

\*Pemican is dried meat, chopped up, and mixed with grease; it forms the principal food of the fur-traders.

to impossible to think of doing anything in an efficient manner on that side.

There is nevertheless an effective body to be got on the spot, *viz.*, the Traders, and their children the Bois Brûlés, or half-breeds. The country has plenty of them, and they being loyal British subjects, there would be nothing wrong in employing them; and a few officers going out to organize them a little, a most effective force could be raised in a short time. They are already accustomed to the climate and inured to hardships. The Americans that Mr. Polk sympathizes with so much, are, no doubt, people of pretty much the same class, though he would make them appear as innocent as Arcadian shepherds. We well know "*the real nater of the genuwine kreeter*;" and as it may be taken as a matter beyond the slightest doubt that they are fellows who will not stick at trifles, why, therefore, should we be scrupulous about employing the means in our power to protect the property which they would deprive us of! Depend upon it, if it was not worth having, they never would have thought of taking it; and if it is good for them, it is equally so for us. It is also most certain that there is no advantage, however mean, that they will not take against us; and if we wish to prosper in this business, we must not be particular as to the means we may employ.

From the Amulet.

## STANZAS.

Why are springs enthroned so high,  
Where the mountains kiss the sky?  
'T is that thence their streams may flow,  
Fertilizing all below.

Why have clouds such lofty flight,  
Basking in the golden light!  
'T is to send down genial showers  
On this lower world of ours.

Why does God exalt the great?  
'T is that they may prop the state;  
So that toil its sweets may yield,  
And the sower reap the field.

Riches, why doth he confer?  
That the rich may minister,  
In the hour of their distress,  
To the poor and fatherless.

Does He light a Newton's mind?  
'T is to shine on all mankind.  
'Does He give to Virtue birth?  
'T is the salt of this poor earth.

Reader, whosoe'er thou art,  
What thy God has given, impart.  
Hide it not within the ground;  
Send the cup of blessing round.

Hast thou power!—the weak defend;  
Light!—give light: thy knowledge lend;  
Rich!—remember him who gave;  
Free!—be brother to the slave.

Called a blessing to inherit,  
Bless—and richer blessings merit:  
Give—and more shall yet be given:  
Love, and serve—and look for heaven.



From the Cincinnati Gazette.

## THE CRUSADE AND THE CURSE.

THE National Intelligencer quoted some days ago an article of ours on the crusade against Mexico, and the "Union," in transferring it to its columns, remarks:

"The facts, then, are these: the *London Times* was taking the part of Mexico against our own country. It sought to encourage Mexico, even into war, by telling her that she might worst us in the campaign; that she need not dread an invasion; that we had not more troops than were necessary to garrison our own posts; we had none to spare for the invasion of Mexico. Was it not right in us to expose the blunder into which the *London Times* had fallen? to warn the British ministers, to warn Mexico herself, against the consequences of acting upon these erroneous views? to entreat Great Britain not to meddle with us; not to stimulate Mexico to hostility; not to force us to take California, and there to keep it? Was the spirit of our article, in attempting to prevent all the injuries it would bring on us, wrong? Was it wrong in us to tell the *London Times* that, though we might not have troops enough, yet volunteers would start at the first sound of the bugle by the government of the United States sufficient to overrun Mexico, occupy the halls of Montezuma, and conquer the valleys of California? Whose spirit, then, is the best, and the most patriotic—his, who, seeing the blunder of the *London Times*, sought to correct it, and to point out the danger of provoking a war, or to etch out the resources of a free and enterprising people, or the *London Times*, who would encourage Mexico to plunge into war, by the hope of impunity and the prospect of success?"

Let us, on this question of peace or war, waive all minor matters. The Union need not fear the loyalty of any party, if conflict comes with any foreign nation. Americans will be Americans in that hour. Oppose its coming—regret it—dread it: all this may be with a portion of them. But there will be no fear, no division, when the hour is: we shall all move together as one man—as one party. Nor should the Union trouble itself about the *London Times*. That journal neither aways the British public, nor speaks for the British ministry. And if it did both, the Official misunderstands the real drift of its articles about Mexico, if we read them aright. But let the *Times* go. It was not the reference to that; it was not the notice of any blunders committed by that journal; it was not for any of the suggestions thrown out by the Union, that we were lead to speak and write as we did; it was the apparent seeming purpose of the Official, strong as leading friends, to keep alive the spirit of the land; to inflame the people unnecessarily, only, against foreign power, in preparation for conflict; to shorten, such conflict even while preparing, in speech, and pretension. This it was dreaded, both for the present and for the future, and this alone. And this dread is in nowise diminished by the explanatory article of the Union; for that assigns as the reason why it spoke as it did the purpose to "entreat Great Britain not to force us to take California, and, therefore, not to tempt us to keep it." Why should Great Britain fail for us to do wrong?

Why tempt us to excess—to a boundless ambition for conquest? But we shall pass by all these matters, and, if the Union (to whose general fairness and gentlemanly bearing we bear cheerful testimony) will lend us its ear for a few moments, we will give some of the causes for our anxiety on this important subject.

1. The social position of the West, as it knows, is somewhat peculiar. From a variety of causes the ambition with all to be first, to get up in the world, is as hot as ever inflamed or afflicted the human breast. The competition in trade—the intense, fierce energy with which business and labor are driven for money—not for its sake simply, but for the power it gives, and the rank it confers—these things are as marked upon the face of our society as the foam on the storm-beaten wave. What climate stops our adventurers? What peril, by land or sea, disheartens or damps their efforts? What scheme, however mighty, or bold, alarms their fears or retards their action? For self-advancement, for social power and position, they will brave anything and everything—disease, privation, famine, even death itself. This is a characteristic of the social temper of the west.

2. Our political ambition is, if possible, bolder and more reckless than our social ambition. We have been educated in strife. We love it, and look for it, as a necessary aliment of life. The people enter into it, indeed, as if it were all in all to them, and consequently party is carried into everything, and, with few exceptions, rules everything. For proof of this we need only look at the gigantic undertakings by western states—their failure—the manner in which that failure was met by them—and the character of their legislators, at home and at Washington. The latter consideration alone will explain all we would say. For one of the most alarming symptoms we have noticed is, the character of the representation, as a whole, sent by the west to their home legislatures and to congress. It is young, inexperienced, reckless, ignorant, coarse, revolutionary in spirit, and, in part, infidel at heart. It scrambles for office by using the most polluting means, and, when in office, puts itself in market for higher advancement, or a surer position, with the most corrupt policy. Let it not be said here that any party in the west lacks the necessary virtue or intelligence to prevent this state of things. They do not. They have enough of both, under a proper self-control, to meet any crisis in a wide and wise spirit, and to do for the country what the country might need in it. But they have been carried away, maddened and blinded by party excess and political ambition, and they have thus impulsively sacrificed, so far as they could sacrifice them, their immediate interests and the interests of the state and nation, for the present and future.

3. Our location—the very natural advantages we enjoy—give a vigor, an energy to human life, which, with these operating causes, surround us with peril. No man can be great without reverence, a love of home, steadiness and patience. No nation can be great or permanent without these same qualities. Look at the west, with this view, geographically. There is hardly a spot, distant or near, which may not be reached in a few days. If the wayfarer stands on the wharf at Cincinnati, he knows, as he hears the escape of steam, that he may be at the Balize or the Falls of St. Anthony ere he is missed almost from home; and

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