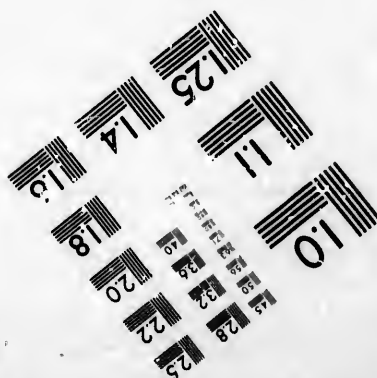
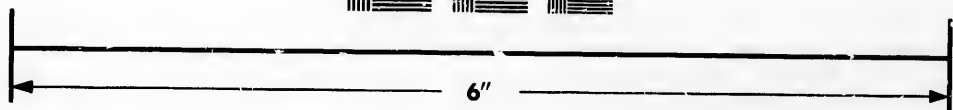
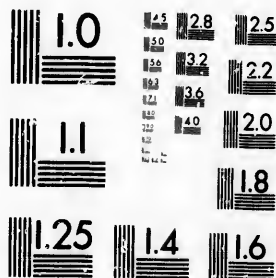


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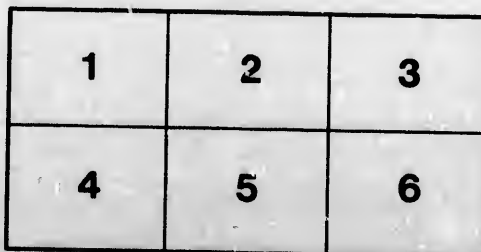
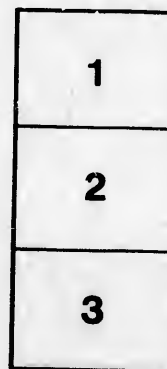
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A LECTURE

DELIVERED AT THE

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE

OTTAWA

BY

COL. FLETCHER

Scots Fusilier Guards, Military Secretary,

FEBRUARY, 1875.

OTTAWA, CANADA.



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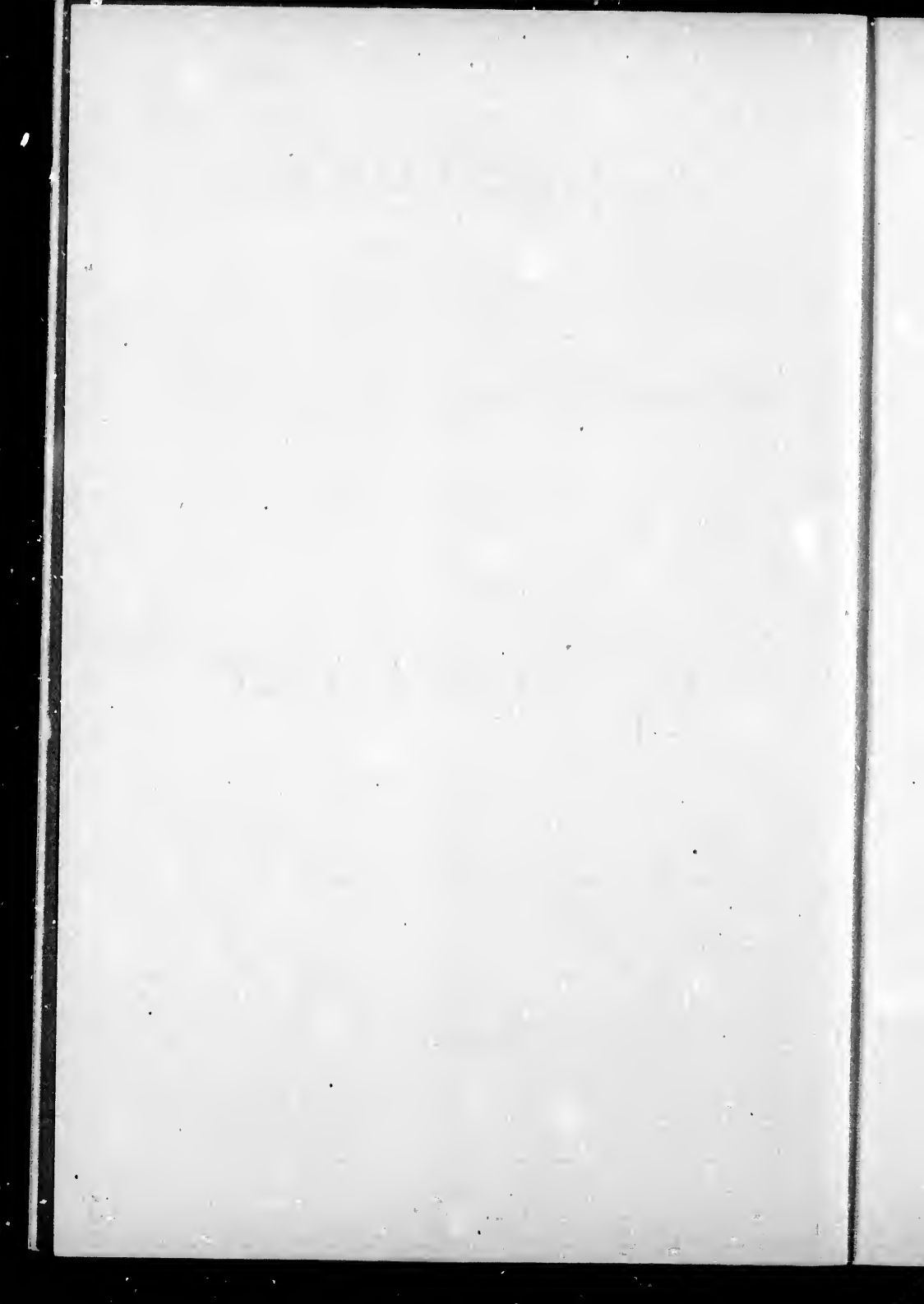
BY

COL. FLETCHER,

Scots Fusilier Guards, Military Secretary,

FEBRUARY, 1875.

OTTAWA, CANADA,



THE DEFENCE OF CANADA.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED AT THE

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE, OTTAWA

BY

COL. FLETCHER,

SCOTS FUSILIER GUARDS,

Military Secretary to His Excellency the Governor General.

In bringing under your notice the subject of the defence of Canada, I hope I may be allowed to deprecate any idea of suggesting that the matter requires consideration, other than that which is due to the state of military preparation incumbent upon all nations in the present, past, and, unless the millennium arrives, in the future ages of the world. The very fact that money is voted for the maintenance of defences, shows that in the opinion of the majority of the nation such defences are necessary, and looking from our neighbors point of view, it must be a healthy sign that the protection of our own country is a matter of consideration rather than aggressive tactics against those who live beyond our frontier.

At no period in the history of Canada were the relations between herself and the United States on a more satisfactory footing than at the present time. At no period have the causes of even possible disagreement been so few, and at no time have the two countries been so strenuously engaged in the peaceful rivalry of developing their great and as yet unrealized resources. Still, with the teachings of history before them, neither nation has dared completely to disarm, and we in Canada might with equal justice resent the care evinced by the majority of the several States of the Union in the maintenance of their militia, as they might look askance at us for considering the best method of utilizing our

comparatively slight resources for our own protection. As long as the States remain united, and ruled by men whose objects are to wage war with nature and bring her under subjection, rather than to extend a territory already almost beyond the control of a central Government, so long will Canada be secure from danger from external foes. But if the central power should show signs of weakness, if sections of men, or even separate States should break off, and, giving way to lawless desires, become turbulent and unruly, then Canada will have need to look to her defences and to take measures for the protection of her hearths and homes. To be prepared for such eventualities is often the best way of preventing their occurrence, and therefore it would be an affectation of sensibility if we refrained from consideration of our own means of protection in the fear lest our friends and neighbors should consider that any reflection were directed against, or doubts entertained of their peaceful intentions.

Canada is so situated that as long as she remains a part and parcel of Great Britain, and so long as Great Britain maintains her maritime superiority, she has no danger to fear from the seaboard, and her land frontier alone requires protection. Here, however, lies a difficulty which will need much skill and forethought to meet.

A casual glance at the map of the Dominion is sufficient to shew the weak natural features of its frontier. Putting aside British Columbia, which in the event of war must be dealt with separately from the other Provinces, and Manitoba, which also must depend for protection on resources other than those in immediate connection with Ontario and Quebec, I would direct attention to the long frontier extending from Georgian Bay through Lakes Huron, St. Clair, Erie, and Ontario to the River St. Lawrence, and thence inclining southward to the Bay of Fundy, a distance of upwards of 2,200 miles. If this frontier had at its back a cultivated country of extent proportionate to its length, there would be little difficulty in guarding it, but the reverse is the case. Excepting the peninsular of Ontario formed by Lakes Huron, Erie and Ontario, there is little depth of cultivated land, the Dominion being shut in by the vast northern forest, which together with the severity of the climate forces the tide of emigration westward.

The problem to be solved is how with a total* population of

* This does not include P. E. Island, Manitoba or British Columbia.

about three million five hundred thousand, and with a frontier of 2,200 miles, the country can best be protected. Now, included in the general defence of the country there are two main objects to be looked to, viz: the necessity of keeping open communication with England by the St. Lawrence, and of preventing the Dominion itself from being cut in two. For the first the maintenance of Quebec is obviously necessary; for the second the safety of Montreal and of the narrow strip which extends from Montreal to Kingston, including Ottawa, the Capital of the Dominion, must be carefully looked to. For the present I would put aside the Maritime Provinces, as until the Intercolonial Railway is established there can be little communication for defensive purposes between them and the two Provinces of Quebec and Ontario, whilst Halifax "Nova Scotia," St. Johns "New Brunswick" and Charlottetown "Prince Edward Island," would depend for protection in a great measure on the British fleet.

The subject therefore under consideration may be subdivided as follows:—The protection of Ontario as far as Kingston. The defence of the country between Kingston and Montreal, including Ottawa. The defence of Montreal the commercial capital. The keeping open of communication between Montreal and Quebec. The defence of Quebec.

Before however proceeding to details, I would allude to one problem difficult of solution in all countries, but especially difficult in Canada, viz.:—How can the defence of the country be provided for without too greatly crippling its resources either by the expenditure of money or of labor. Military expenditure is the insurance that a country pays against loss by war, but the amount of insurance must depend on the value of the property, on the risk insured against, and on the means of the insurer. In Canada and the United States the risk, happily, is not great, whereas, owing to a variety of circumstances, such as the scarcity of labor in comparison with the vast works requisite for opening up new countries, and the dread of checking, either by taxation or much more by forced service, the tide of immigration, there is a well-grounded opinion that military efforts at all commensurate with those of European nations, are neither desirable or even possible. To ask Canada to build and arm fortifications which, considered purely from a strategical point of view, might be deemed requisite, would consequently be to require more than could reasonably be expected. To keep up

a force which military authorities would consider necessary for her protection would also probably be beyond her capabilities, and therefore, whoever deals with the subject of the defence of the country must, to use a homely proverb, cut his coat according to his cloth.

Indirectly in connection with these considerations, I would wish to offer a few cursory observations on a matter which men responsible for the security of the Dominion should consider with care and attention. There is a great danger lest a country should be misled by numerical statistics, and lest it should find when the day of trial arrives that it has been resting on a paper army. There is a danger lest it should be deceived by the outside show of a military force when the true requisites of military strength are wanting. The accidents, "so to speak," of an army, sometimes tend to conceal its weakness, in place of adding to its strength by the influence they bring to bear on men's sentiments and feelings. Bright uniforms, stirring music, and even the assemblage of considerable bodies of troops to go through a few showy manœuvres do not prove that the real requisites of an army are present and available. For the military profession, military training is required, and it is better to maintain a small force so educated as that it may serve as a nucleus for a greater, than to have a large force which cannot be moved, and in which those who are to command know little more than those who are called on to obey. On an alarm of war a considerable army might be rapidly raised in Canada if trained officers and non-commissioned officers were ready at hand, and if plans for its organization had been carefully prepared and were clearly understood: whereas, unaided by such preparation, the troops would be mere mobs of armed men, without knowledge, discipline or cohesion. A chain is weak if one link lacks strength, and an army fails in efficiency if one of its many requisites are wanting. It needs first the nerves, or staff, to put the mass in motion; then the officers and non-commissioned officers with a fair knowledge of their respective duties; then the men, with a supply of arms, clothing, and a sufficiency of ammunition, not to speak of horses for the cavalry and guns, and reserve ammunition for the artillery. Then the transport, commissariat and hospital arrangements, and last, but not least, the reserves with their due supplies. To take a palpable instance, the military stores may be full of Snider rifles, but unless the supply of ammunition is in proportion, these rifles are comparatively useless, as Canada is dependent on England for its breech-loading

cartridges. Not that all the requirements for even a small force must continually be ready, but the staff must know how they are to be obtained, and how the organization can be most readily effected. Supplies that cannot be procured in the country should be stored in magazines; supplies that can be obtained, in case of need, from the various districts should be catalogued, and at least an approximate estimate made of their quantity. As an instance, guns and ammunition should be kept in magazines, possibly also uniforms, at all events for a proportion of the force; whereas transport, even for artillery ammunition, could be provided from the surrounding neighborhood, and therefore need not be retained in stores. It would be out of place to do more than to allude to this portion of the subject, especially as steps are being taken to procure for Canada a means of educating the officers, and, I trust, the non-commissioned officers of her militia; and it is only to impress on all the importance of this scheme, that these observations have been hazarded.

I will now turn to the geographical features of the country, and in doing so propose rather to offer suggestions for thought and consideration than dogmatically to lay down plans which my knowledge of the subject could only allow me to do most imperfectly.

Supposing that it were possible to hold entire possession of the Lakes, and of the great river which under different names flows through them to the sea, there would be but few places at which the Dominion would be assailable, and, as in England, the first and principal line of defence might be the navy. But this supposition is evidently based on false premises. In the first place the treaties with the United States prevent vessels of war from navigating the inland waters; in the second place, the great trading city of Chicago affords means to the United States, commanding as they do the outlet from Lake Michigan, rapidly to extemporize at the commencement of hostilities out of their fleet of merchantmen and steamers, vessels of war, sufficient to command Lake Huron and probably to force an entry into Lake Erie where they would be met by vessels from Buffalo and other large ports. Thus Ontario would be threatened on its northern, western and south-western frontier, and would in great measure depend for its defence on a land force. But this land force would run a risk of being isolated and cut off, unless its left flank were protected and communication maintained with the Province of Quebec, and through that Province with the

sea. Therefore, *coute que coute*, the command of Lake Ontario must be secured and maintained. Here Canada lies under an advantage, the best harbors being situated on her shores and the greater number of the steamers trading on the Lake being held or manned by Canadians. These harbors would require the protection either of permanent or field fortifications, and above all Kingston would have to be placed beyond the possibility of capture. The next difficulty to be met is the preservation of the communication between Kingston and Montreal by the protection of the Grand Trunk Railway, and of the canals which avoid the several rapids of the St. Lawrence. Here again gun boats are necessary, but the assistance they afford must be supplemented by a considerable military force, and by the erection of earthworks to cover the several locks on the canals, together with block houses similar to those constructed by Sherman, in his advance from Nashville to Atlanta, to protect his line of communication. These would probably be erected on the threat of war, and would suffice to guard the canals and the railway from the enterprise of small bodies of men. In addition to the protection of the frontier line, the defence of Ottawa and of the Rideau canal, together with the Grenville canal on the Ottawa river, must not be neglected. The capture of the Capital of the Dominion would be a serious blow, not only from its moral effects, but also as cutting off the Province of Ontario from the Province of Quebec by preventing communication by the St. Lawrence, the Grand Trunk Railway and the Rideau canal. The fortification and garrison at Kingston would protect the mouth of the Rideau, whilst if a strong garrison were maintained there, and the lake and river held by gunboats, no attempt, except by a very considerable force, could be made on the Capital. But if these conditions were not completely fulfilled, there would be danger less a comparatively small number of troops should be able by a rapid movement against Ottawa, to sever the Province of Ontario from that of Quebec, and from the means of communication with England.

The next object of importance is the protection of Montreal, the commercial capital of the Dominion, and the head of the Ocean Navigation. The desirability of fortifying this city has been often mooted, and plans have been prepared for erecting a line of defensive works at sufficient distance to prevent it from being bombarded. These plans require careful study, and if not carried out, estimates should at least be prepared showing the number of men and the time required to raise field works sufficient to hinder any

attempt at capture by *coup de main*. The United States possess easy and rapid communication to the frontier which is only about thirty miles distant from Montreal, and a work of considerable strength at the head of Lake Champlain affords a convenient base of operations for any attacking force. At Montreal, therefore, a considerable garrison would be collected on the threat of hostilities, this force would watch the frontier and protect from partial enterprises the Beauharnois canal, whilst it would be supported by gunboats on the river, which would keep open communication with Quebec and possibly secure the Richilieu canal.

Communication by means of the river being secured, the passes leading through the White mountains and the forests which border on the frontier of the New England States, would require watching. Positions would be taken up to cover Richmond junction, and for the protection of the Grand Trunk Railway and the approaches to Quebec. The fortifications of this city on the right bank of the St. Lawrence would be completed on the first symptoms of hostilities, and the place rendered strong enough to stand a siege in the event of Montreal falling, and the main force of the enemy being brought against her.

As long as Quebec should hold out Canada would be unconquered; during the summer she would receive the supplies which so powerful an Empire as Great Britain would pour in with no sparing hand. During winter the climate and the hardships consequent upon it would in all probability prevent active hostilities from being directed against her.

Such sketched very roughly is an outline of the general principles which appear adapted to the defence of the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and it is now proposed to consider what steps should be taken to enable the Dominion with as little confusion as possible—if unhappily so unfortunate an occurrence should ever arise—to pass from a state of peace to one of war.

In the first place it must be presumed that a sum of money is yearly voted for purposes of defence, *i. e.*, for the maintenance of a militia and of certain fortified places. The expenditure of this money is in the hands of the Minister of Militia assisted by the advice of experienced officers. He has to determine the number of men who are to be yearly trained and the amount of efficiency to which they

are to attain. To work this problem correctly is the test of a good administrator, as its solution depends on a careful consideration and a just appreciation of the principles of war. To drill and discipline in peace time, an army at all commensurate with the need of Canada if she were obliged to undertake a serious war, is evidently out of the question. Consequently all that can be attempted is to maintain in a fair state of efficiency a small force which would on the threat of hostilities serve as a nucleus and a training school of one much larger. With this object in view it would in my opinion be better that with a given sum of money the efficiency should be increased even at the expense of a reduction in numbers. A short period of warning must always precede the outbreak of hostilities, and to form an army the employment of a comparatively small number of trained men would be of greater service than the assistance which could be afforded by a larger number who merely possessed the rudiments of military instructions. The next question is the composition of this force, including the proportions which the artillery, engineers and cavalry should bear to the infantry. This should be determined partly by the experience of other nations, especially in recent wars, partly in reference to the character of the country in which the army would be required to act. For instance in the greater portion of Canada there is little ground for the action of cavalry organized similarly to that of European armies, although for mounted infantry there might be considerable scope, and this question of the best method of organizing and arming horsemen requires deep consideration and a careful study of recent campaigns especially of those of the great American civil war. It is, I believe, the opinion of General Sheridan, an officer of the highest reputation in the United States army, formed from his personal experience during the civil war in all branches of his profession, checked and supplemented by what he observed during the time he was a spectator from the German side on the war with France, that the teachings of modern campaigns shew the desirability of augmenting the mounted infantry, or cavalry armed with good rifles and taught to fight on foot, at the expense of the artillery. No doubt there is much that may be urged on the other side, but this instance is given with the view of showing that modern military history together with a just estimate of the probable theatre of war should influence the decision of those whose duty it is to organize an army.

With regard to artillery there can be no question but that guns are of great value, especially as giving confidence to

inexperienced and young troops but on the other hand they impede the march of an army and are difficult to move along the roads which often form the only means of communication through Canadian forests. This was observed in the earlier campaigns of the American war, and lead ultimately to a considerable diminution in the proportionate number of guns as compared with infantry. For siege trains there would be little need in a Canadian army, as happily there are few fortifications to beseige; but on the other hand there appears to be scope for garrison artillery which may be, and, I believe, is organized with great success in the towns and villages on the Lakes and seaboard of the Dominion. A knowledge of gunnery supplemented with but slight and easily acquired instruction in field fortifications and with the assistance of good plans, would enable the population of these towns and villages in great measure to provide on the threat of war for their safety against predatory and unsystematic attacks.

The exigencies of the settler's life and especially the needs of the lumbermen tend to the cultivation of rudimentary, but most useful engineering knowledge, which a little teaching would render available for military purposes, thus improvising a corps of engineers for service in the field.

Of infantry, the mainstay of an army, there is little to be said especially applicable to Canada, except that for wood fighting and for working in extended order greater knowledge is required from officers, and higher discipline and more perfect steadiness from the men, than when manœuvring in the open. The officers should be able rapidly to avail themselves of the advantages of ground, and those of junior rank should be capable of acting independently, whilst the men must have confidence in each other, and possess the steadiness and discipline which will lead them to individual exertion, and to a careful system of husbanding their ammunition.

The proportion of the several arms in each military district having been determined, their relative proportion in peace and war should be approximately fixed, and the best method ascertained of rapidly augmenting the active force on the threat of hostilities. Here experience indicates, and notably the knowledge gained in the American war, digested, and so to speak, codified by General Sherman, in his very able recently published memorandum, that to increase and recruit regiments already existing, is a far more efficient method of augmenting and keeping up an army, than by replacing with new regiments those that may have suffered by

active service in the field. He especially instances the value attached to the Wisconsin regiments, which in contradiction to those furnished by other States were supplied by fresh recruits, in place of being replaced by new regiments.

Having thus briefly glanced at the composition of a defensive force, I propose to turn to a most important matter connected with the military organization of the country, viz.:—the duties of the staff, and especially of the officers of the higher grades. Irrespective of their ordinary work of commanding and inspecting the militia, on the Deputy Adjutant Generals and their assistants must devolve the duty of procuring, and systematizing reports on all that would relate to the defensive capabilities of their several districts. The head quarters at Ottawa should be in possession of the most accurate information, in order to compensate by the facility with which plans of defence could be prepared, and organization carried out, for the very imperfect defensive condition of the country. All places that it would be desirable to fortify in case of war, should be designated, and plans of suitable works with estimates as to the amount of labor, and of time necessary for raising them should be ready at hand. Not a block house, or coast battery should be omitted, and in cases where scarcity of earth or other considerations would prevent the construction of earth works, the fact should be noted, in view of the need of more permanent fortifications. These plans and specifications would be carefully examined at headquarters, where the defence of particular localities should be subordinated to the general plan for the protection of the Dominion. The Deputy Adjutant Generals should also select the best places for the position of troops in the event of an outbreak of hostilities, together with schemes for offensive and defensive operations in the several districts. Accurate rolls of the number of able bodied men, of horses, of carts and waggons, should also be in their possession, together with the quantity of rolling stock on the several railways; their capabilities for transport of cavalry, artillery and infantry, especially in regard to the fitness of the stations, and platforms for entry and departure. All roads, bridges, ferries, and fords should be well examined, the character of the roads, whether metalled or merely country roads shewn, the strength of the bridges calculated, and the fords explored. Then again estimates should be made of the amount of provisions which the several districts could furnish, and of the number of men and horses that might be raised for military purposes without destroying hopes

of harvest. These are matters about which information could be readily obtained and arranged in peace time to the advantage of the staff officers employed, and to the great economy of time and labor when threats of war might necessitate hurried preparation. They are the details, the mastery of which by the staff is said so greatly to have assisted the German commanders in their invasion of France, and which from being more easily collected, could be even better systematized for defensive than for offensive purposes. Not that information of the power and means of attack on the part of our neighbors should be neglected: in a most friendly and philosophical spirit, their capabilities of aggression, and the weak points in their defensive preparation should be gauged by our staff, so that if need arise and opportunity offer, the theatre of war might be transferred across the frontier, an arrangement which would suit the people of Canada far better than fighting on their own soil.

Such sketched very broadly and without any attempt at detail, appear to be the subjects towards which those who are interested in the military condition of the country might direct their attention. One important consideration has, however, been omitted, viz. :—how would the marine department be able to meet the strain which war would immediately put upon it? As has been shown, the defence of the country depends in great measure on its capability for maintaining command of the water way of the St. Lawrence, at all events as far as the western end of Lake Ontario. Gun boats would therefore have to be quickly improvised, river and lake steamers would have to be altered and adapted to warlike purposes, as was done during the American Civil War. Whichever power could be first on the water would probably secure most important advantages, in fact the defence of Ontario may be said mainly to depend on securing the command of the Lakes, whilst on the safety of the canals and the security of their locks would hinge the possibility of gun boats sent from England being able to reach the waters above the St. Lawrence rapids. Consequently plans should in time of peace be prepared of the best method of converting the fleet of river and lake steamers into vessels of war. Their armament should be ready, and means at hand for coating at least some of them with extemporized armour plates. A marine force might with great propriety be enrolled in time of peace as a supplement to the land force, whilst every detail in respect to the inland navigation, and of the class of vessels best suited for the defence of the various rivers,

canals, and lakes should be in the hands of the Admiralty in England. To the command of the inland waters was the success of the Northern Armies in the American War in great measure due, especially at its commencement, and this lesson should not be lost on those who have charge of the defence of Canada. How nearly the "Merimac" hastily equipped at Norfolk, annihilated the Northern fleet, and prevented the landing of Maclellan's army in the York Town Peninsular, will be in the remembrance of all who took an interest in that great struggle, and there is little doubt but that a repetition of a similar event might make or mar the most carefully prepared schemes of Canadian defence.

I will now conclude this very imperfect sketch of the subjects which appear to me to be worthy of consideration in reference to the defence of Canada by an attempt at realizing what would probably occur in the event of anticipated hostilities. Suppose, and here again I would urge that my supposition refers to an event which, judging by recent appearances, is as unlikely as the disruption of the States themselves, that our neighbors and ourselves fell out, that intelligence of very disagreeable diplomatic notes had reached Canada, and that we had heard that unprecedented activity prevailed on the one hand at Portsmouth and Chatham, on the other, at New York, Philadelphia, and other naval stations in the United States.

What would the Government of Canada at once do? First, embody the active Militia. Then complete to war strength the several batteries and regiments of cavalry, adding guns, troops and battalions, so as at least to treble the strength of the present active Militia: bringing up, at the very commencement of hostilities, the number to above 100,000 men. Secondly, steps would be taken, by utilizing the trained officers and non-commissioned officers together with the more intelligent of the privates, to discipline and drill the newly raised force, which would already have been assembled in places convenient as regards the several districts, and valuable for their strategical positions. Then Quebec, Montreal, Kingston, and possibly Toronto and Ottawa would be fortified, and proper armaments placed in the several works. The several garrison companies of artillery would also raise batteries on the shores of the lakes, of the St. Lawrence and along the sea coast, to keep off any isolated attacks. Block houses would be erected to protect the Grand Trunk Railway in places where it runs near the frontier, and

to defend the locks on the St. Lawrence, Niagara and Ottawa canals. All steamers and transports on the lakes and rivers would be taken for Government purposes, the former being transformed as far as might be possible into vessels of war, and used as training ships for the newly raised maritime force. A dockguard and naval arsenal would be established at Kingston and possibly also at Collingwood, Owen, or Parry Sound, or at the terminus of the Midland Railway, so as to secure, and if possible maintain the command of Georgian Bay, and thus protect the right flank of the force raised for the defence of Ontario. The main lines of communication by rail and river would be appropriated for the conveyances of troops and stores, the passenger traffic being greatly restricted. The telegraphs would be in the hands of Government, and the press would be warned to abstain from publishing news likely to be of use to the enemy. Hospitals would be organized in convenient situations, slight wooden structures easily raised, being preferred to the larger and more substantial buildings. Magazines and supplies for the troops would be established in secure positions, probably in parts of the back country accessible by rail or by steamers, but easily protected by being in great measure surrounded by forests.* These would, of course, be in addition to the magazines collected in the fortified towns.

Such given very generally would be the preparations that would immediately precede the commencement of hostilities, and it is needless to point out how much their success would depend on the amount of information and knowledge collected in time of peace by the staff, and by them transmitted to the head-quarters at Ottawa. With such assistance, the commanding General would at once be able to lay before the Government a plan of operations, and to state clearly the requirements for the defence of the country, whilst the local staff would be in a position, without delay, to utilize the many able heads and hands which patriotism and zeal would immediately place at their disposal: and here I would observe that the organization, command, and provisioning of the large gangs of lumberers resembles in many particulars the formation of an army, consequently many men possessing singular capability for this description of work would be available in time of threatened war.

* NOTE.—There is a good summer and winter road running from Renfrew to Braicebridge. This would form a most important means of interior communication, far removed from the frontier, and yet easily accessible from the more important towns on the St. Lawrence, and on Lake Ontario, by existing railroad and water ways.

During these preliminaries the plans of the enemy would in some measure have developed themselves, and the preparations for defence would consequently be modified to meet them, but, looking to broad outlines, the picture presented by the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario would probably be somewhat as follows :

If the navigation of the St. Lawrence were open, and, except during that period of the year, the difficulties of offensive warfare consequent on climate would be very great, the base of operations would be England. Quebec, therefore, would be the primary receptacle of stores, and her defence would be provided for by the completion in earth works of her enceinte of detached forts. Here the regiments from the eastern portion of the province, and from the neighborhood of the city would have been assembled for drill, and to act as working parties for the construction of the fortifications. The river between Quebec and Montreal would be patrolled by gunboats and it is to be hoped that a north shore railway would be in working order, so as to provide a more secure mode of communication with Montreal than that afforded by the Grand Trunk. A strong force would be assembled somewhere in the neighborhood of Richmond and Sherbrooke to protect the Grand Trunk Railway, and possibly to lend a hand to any British force advancing from Portland. Montreal would be garrisoned and earth works raised by the militia of the neighborhood, who would also furnish strong patrols towards the frontier and either guard or destroy the locks on the Richelieu Canal. The main force would probably be pushed forward some distance in front of Montreal, having the fortifications of that city to fall back upon. These fortifications would embrace a large area which the configuration of the ground, of the river, and of the lakes would render necessary and comparatively easy to hold. If possible, the Beauharnois Canal should be preserved intact, as on it would depend the navigation of the St. Lawrence, but the short distance of this canal from the American frontier would render its protection a matter of some difficulty, and for the same reasons the preservation of the Cornwall and Williamsburg Canals would be equally important, but equally hard to maintain. The locks on the Grenville Canal would be zealously guarded so as to preserve water communication with Ottawa, and, by means of the Rideau Canal, with Kingston and Lake Ontario. A considerable body of troops would probably be concentrated at Prescott, covering the rail to Ottawa, threatening Ogdensburg and connecting, by means of water and rail, with the fortress, arsenal, and dockyard at Kingston. Here

would be a strong garrison, as from its harbor would issue the fleet which should protect the towns on Lake Ontario, threaten the opposite shore, and secure the left flank of the main army of Ontario, which, facing south-west, would endeavor to cover Hamilton and Toronto from the advance of an enemy from Buffalo or Detroit. The position of this army would probably be such as to cover, at all events at the commencement of hostilities, the line of railway, which, traversing the centre of Ontario, connects Lake Huron with Lake Erie. The frontier at Sarnia, Chatham, and Windsor would be watched by detachments, and London would be covered by a strong body of troops. The flank would require to be zealously looked to, both from the direction of Buffalo, where a strong detachment would protect, or, if need be, destroy the Welland Canal, and from the danger of an expeditionary force landing from Lake Huron. The stores for the immediate supply of the army might be collected at Paris, Brantford and Guelph, in which direction the army would retreat in the event of being outnumbered, or of its flanks being turned. A second line, taken up with reference to the ground, would cover the shorter communication between Toronto and Collingwood, in which case the left flank of the army would rest on Lake Ontario.

These suppositions in regard to preparations for hostilities presuppose that communications with England are open, and that stores, and possibly reinforcements are arriving to assist in the defence of the Dominion; but operations, if but on a minor scale, are not impossible, especially as against the western portion of Ontario, when the lower portion of the St. Lawrence is still closed with ice. Even as regards Lower Canada, and at a time when communications were far more difficult than they are at present, Arnold's expedition against Quebec showed that winter operations were possible; whilst it must not be forgotten that the net work of railways concentrating on our frontier might enable an army to be assembled without great hardships and in a condition to commence a campaign, before the waters of the St. Lawrence had broken through their ice barriers. Under these circumstances the means for the equipment of a considerable force ought to be in the possession of the military authorities of the Dominion. These equipments cannot be rapidly extemporized; the perfection of modern arms prevents them from being manufactured except by skilled workmen and by means of the best machinery, whilst their ammunition is equally difficult to make. Canada should, therefore, have supplies of the

material of war which cannot be procured on her own soil, in considerable excess of the strength of her active militia. Economy in uniforms, in transport, in engineering works, may be practised, but a sufficiency of arms and ammunition is requisite for the security of the country.

To sum up the military needs of the Dominion, many of which are doubtless met. First, a small force so organized as that it may serve as a nucleus for one much larger, to be raised in the event of war. This condition includes and pre-supposes instructed officers and non-commissioned officers for this small force.

Secondly, carefully prepared organization on paper of the reserves.

Thirdly, full information and accurate details on all points connected with the defence of the country, to be collected by the divisional staff, and systematized at head-quarters.

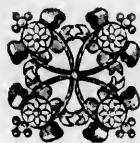
Fourthly, supplies of arms and ammunition for about 100,000 men.

Whilst last, but not least, a maritime organization for the inland waters. This last condition is of vital importance; the more the map of the country is studied, the more does its defence appear to depend on the superiority of her naval force acting on the St. Lawrence, and at all events on the most eastern of the great lakes.

In conclusion I would urge those to whom the people of this great country look for leadership, to whatever political party they may belong, to build up with the nation's growth a sound system of defensive organization. The system need not be expensive, the great point being that money should not be wasted, that time should be economized by careful previous organization, and that matters which might be foreseen and provided for in peace time, should not be left to be hurriedly, excitedly and extravagantly performed on a prospect of hostilities. The defence of Canada depends on the possibility of holding certain strategical positions, and on the maintenance of her means of communication with England. Her strength lies in her vigorous, manly, and orderly population, peculiarly fitted by character and habits of life for sustained and patriotic efforts.

Her weakness consists in her length of frontier, and in the narrowness of the cultivated district. The forests which close her in on the north, could give no shelter to a beaten army, and no retreat to a flying population. Mountainous districts have enabled small nations to withstand far superior numbers, but, as in Switzerland, the Tyrol, and even among the Atlas Mountains, these mountains contained vallies, capable of supplying food, whereas the Canadian forests are desert and uninhabitable.

A sound system of defence, on which a military organization may be based is the ground-work of national security. This system Canada partially possesses, and I have little doubt but that in the hands of her patriotic statesmen, assisted by the able officer placed by H. R. H., the Commander-in-chief, at the disposal of the Dominion Government it will be improved and perfected.



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