

of that confidence we should have in our energy and resources, by telling us that the prospect before us is practically a hopeless one—that there is no use undertaking public works for our defence—no use in organizing, training, and arming our militia—that all attempts to hold our own would be fruitless on account of our inability to bring sufficient able-bodied men in the field to cope with the force to which we might be opposed. Why, sir, is it by such a tone as that, that you can keep up the spirit of the people for the defence of the country, by telling us that four millions of British subjects could offer no resistance whatever, even when backed by the power of England, against the United States or the greatest military nation on earth? I assert that even were we to be put in the unfortunate position of Denmark, ninety-nine out of every hundred of our population would be prepared to make a stand, hopeless though it might be for them, and to resist until the last foot of ground was wrested from us. (Hear, hear.) But if England, in case of war, should, for the first time in her history, decline to come to the aid of her colonies, future generations would not glory in the name of being Englishmen, as the past had such just reason to do. Sure I am, however, that we should occupy no hopeless or isolated position. It is in order that the observations of my honorable friend the member for Hochelaga may in some respect be counteracted, that I would yet trespass upon the indulgence of the House for a few minutes more on this head. We know that in modern warfare, if you can erect certain works which will compel an enemy to sit down before them, so as to prevent him from making progress into the country, you may by such means defend it for many months. I do not know what the scheme of the defence commissioners may be. But it is well known that they express the conviction that by the construction of certain works at various points, the manning of which is quite within the compass of our power, we can arrest the progress of an invader for many months, we can compel him to expend and exhaust his strength before these works, and we could throw embarrassments in his way such as would take an invading force many months to overcome. Because honorable members must remember that it is impossible to have more than a six months' campaign in this country. And supposing you were to erect works

before which an enemy was compelled to sit down in the month of May, it would take him fully three months before he could bring up his supplies and siege train and protect his communications, and by the time he was ready to make a determined attack, he would be overtaken by winter, be compelled to raise the siege and go into winter quarters. In truth our winters are our safeguard and defence. Such, at any rate, is the opinion of military men. During six months only are military operations practicable in this country, and thus whatever is done one season has to be abandoned on the approach of winter and begun again the following spring. If therefore we can only, by manning certain salient points in the country, prevent the progress of invasion, we are safe. Sudden conquest would be impossible—delay and impediments are everything. Every one knows the history of the celebrated lines of Torres Vedras, which extended thirty miles, and by means of which the invasion with which Napoleon terrified Europe was first rolled back. These lines were defended by but a small number of men, and they compelled Napoleon to retire before them. Then, on this continent we have the experience of Richmond, which has forced the army of General Grant to become a mere corps of observation, and of Charleston which has fallen at last, but after what delay and at what cost! Going to the Crimea, we see Sebastopol defying for months and months the joint efforts of England and France. If we therefore can keep the invader from our doors for a certain number of months, our Canadian winter will do the rest, whilst English ships would be engaged in harassing their coasts and in the destruction of American commerce in every sea. I, therefore, entreat those who are disposed to take a desponding view of the question to consider these things. An aggressive warfare in this country is one thing, and a defensive warfare another, and a very different. (Hear, hear.) Our country is well adapted for defensive purposes, and it is next to impossible to subdue us. The badness of our roads, the difficulties presented by our winters, our deep, broad and unfordable rivers, and the means we could establish for keeping an enemy in check at certain points for the necessary time, would enable us to resist the United States with all their power and resources. No man can have a greater appreciation of the enormous re-