

eral northerly direction for about thirty-five miles, empties itself into Lake Ontario. About four miles from Lake Erie the river is divided by Grand Island, the main channel running between the Canadian shore and the island. At the foot of Grand Island lies Navy Island, on the Canadian side, it being about fifteen miles from Lake Erie, and about one and a half miles above the Falls. From the Falls to Queenston, some seven or eight miles, the river flows rapidly between perpendicular banks some 250 feet high; at Queenston the banks diminish to some sixty feet in height, and the river flows smoothly for eight miles into Lake Ontario. Two miles from the Falls is the Suspension Bridge, the only means of crossing between Chippewa and Queenston.

The Welland Canal, which connects Lakes Erie and Ontario, runs from Port Colborne on Lake Erie, distant about seventeen miles from Fort Erie, northerly through the villages of Welland, Port Robinson and Thorold, to St. Catharines, and thence to Port Dalhousie on Lake Ontario, following a course nearly parallel to the Niagara River, and at an average distance of about thirteen miles from it. The Welland Canal running from the west at right angles to the Niagara River, intersects the canal at Welland, and empties into the Niagara at Chippewa just above the Falls. It will be seen from this that there is a square section of country enclosed between the Welland Canal and the Niagara River, and Lake Erie and the Welland River. It may here be mentioned that the Welland River is navigable from where it intersects the canal to its mouth. Between Port Robinson and the Niagara River there are only three bridges on the Welland River—two, the railway and the carriage road bridges, side by side at Chippewa, and the other four miles up at a place called Montrose.

The section of country which has just been described was the scene of the whole operations of the Fenian and Canadian forces and is very well intersected with railways. First there is the old Buffalo and Lake Huron Road, now called the Grand Trunk Railway, which connects with the Great Western at Paris and runs through Port Colborne along the lake shore to Fort Erie; Second, the Welland Railway which unites Lakes Erie and Ontario, running from Port Dalhousie along the Welland Canal to Port Colborne; and lastly, the Erie and Ontario Railway, just finished, which runs from Fort Erie along the bank of the Niagara River to the town of Niagara on Lake Ontario.

It should be remembered that only a few miles of the Niagara frontier between Fort Erie and the bridge was open to attack. Grand Island, for a long distance, covered the Canadian shore from a crossing, for the following reason: The Island is sparsely settled, and there is no harbour and no vessels ever lying on the Canadian side of it, consequently an enemy must come round the lower end of it, between there and the Falls, a distance of some two miles, or else cross above, between it and Fort Erie, a space of some four miles. This peculiar conformation of the river in reality gives only six miles available for crossing, out of some twenty miles in length.

THE CROSSING OF THE FENIANS.

During the last two or three days of May, 1866, the telegraphic despatches brought rumours of bodies of men moving northward along the various railroads leading to the lake borders. These men travelled, for the greater part, unarmed; and, if interrogated as to their destination, stated that they were going to California to work in the mines.

When they stated this intention while moving northward, they had some colour for their statements; but, when they continued the story after turning eastward from Cleveland, towards Buffalo, the impudence of the falsehood was unparalleled. On the 31st May, it was reported that large numbers of these men, whom no one doubted were Fenians, had arrived in Buffalo and had left there for some unknown point; but that it was supposed they had gone further east.

This information led to a belief that the design of the Fenians was to effect a crossing on the St. Lawrence or in the Eastern Townships, and not at Fort Erie. There were many, however, who were not deceived by this. It had long been anticipated by those who took the trouble to think upon the matter, and by those who, contrary to the general opinion, believed that the Fenians intended to attack Canada, that Fort Erie would be the first and most likely place to be attacked. There were many reasons on which to ground such a belief. In the first place, it was absolutely necessary that the movement should be conducted with the greatest celerity and secrecy; and, it was therefore impossible to concentrate a large number of men in a country place or a small town without attracting a great deal of attention, and without experiencing a great difficulty in feeding them. In a large city on the other hand, like Buffalo, 2 or 3,000 men could be easily accommodated, without any difficulty as to food, and without, to any great extent, inconveniencing the inhabitants, or even attracting their attention. Their numbers could be more carefully concealed, and their movements could not be so easily interfered with. In Buffalo there were more resident Fenians than in any of the border cities; and the immense amount of shipping in the harbours of Buffalo and Blackrock, rendered it easy for the Fenians to procure the means of effecting a crossing, while the enormous amount of trade which is continually going on there, the active movements, hither and thither, of numberless canal boats, tugs, schooners and steamers, employed on legitimate business, rendered it almost impossible for the United States authorities to search out and discover which particular boat, or set of boats, was engaged to carry over the Fenians.

Again: there were no Canadian or regular forces in Fort Erie or within 50 miles of it; and, the chance of taking it and pushing on and destroying the Welland Canal was a prospect that appealed strongly to their feelings. The destruction of the Welland Canal; or, at least, the suspension of traffic on it for a time, would be an enormous injury to Canada and her trade, while it would be a great advantage to Buffalo, inasmuch as the whole trade, or the greater part of what now finds its way to the sea by the Welland Canal, would be diverted to Buffalo, and through the Erie Canal to Albany and New York.

(To be continued.)

FRENCH AND PRUSSIAN ARMIES.

The following statistics will give an idea of the comparative strength of the French and Prussian armies. The French army in active service is classified as follows:—

Staff	1,773
Infantry	252,652
Cavalry	62,798
Artillery	39,883
Engineers	7,486
Gendarmes	24,535
Troops of the Administration	15,066
Total	404,192

This force is divided into seven army corps, commanded as follows:

Headquarters.	Commanders.
1. Paris	Marshal Canrobert.
2. Lille	General De D'Admirault.
3. Nancy	Marshal Bazaine.
4. Lyons	Gen. Count Palikao.
5. Tours	Marshal d'Hilliers.
6. Toulouse	General de Goyon.
7. Algiers	Marshal McMahon.

The regular reserve consists also of 400,000 men. In addition to these eight or nine hundred thousand soldiers there is the *Garde Mobile*, numbering 500,000 men fully drilled, who can be made available for active duty in a very short time.

The standing army of Prussia, or rather of the North Germanic Confederation, numbers about 450,000 men. In case of emergency this force very quickly can be doubled. The commander in chief of the army and navy is the King. The chief of the staff is General de Moltke. The regular army is divided into eleven corps or divisions, with the following commanders:—

Headquarters.	Commanders.
1—Königsberg	General de Manteuffel
2—Stettin	Prince Frederick William
3—Berlin	Prince Frederick Charles
4—Magdebourg	General d'Alvensleben
5—Posen	General de Steinmetz
6—Breslau	General de Tümping
7—Münster	General de Zistrow
8—Coblenz	General de Bittenfeld
9—Schleswig	General de Manstein
10—Hanover	General de Voigts-Rhetz
11—Cassel	General de Plouski

The French naval force consists of 72,446 men. There are two admirals, C. Rigault de Genouilly and F. T. Trehouart; 6 active vice admirals, and 30 active counter admirals. The fleet on the 1st of January was composed as follows:—

Description	Number.	Guns.
Screw steamers, iron clad	55	1032
Screw steamers, non-iron clad	233	1618
Wheel steamers	51	116
Sailing vessels	100	914
Total	439	4,680

Besides these, there are 8 screw steamers, iron-clad, with 68 guns, and 23 non iron-clad, with 144 guns, building.

The Prussian navy is comparatively small, but its ships, though few, are constructed in the best manner and of the best material. The following table presents a view of the strength of the fleet:—

Description.	Number.	Guns.
Iron clads	4	49
Frigates and Corvettes	9	102
Gunboats	23	54
Yacht	1	2
Paddle corvettes	3	15
Sailing vessels	59	315
Total	99	637

The Darien surveying expedition is a failure, and the Nipsic, after coaling and provisioning at Aspinwall, and obtaining the men she was in quest of, has gone to San Blas. Capt. Selfridge expresses his entire want of confidence in any practical route for a canal across the Isthmus except in vicinity of the Panama Railway. The Nyack, after making a thorough survey of the Savana River, proceeded by the Bayano or Chepo. In the Savana River no impediments were found in the shape of rocks, snags or sand banks, and a considerable depth of water was maintained for 20 miles from its mouth. The Nyack had not crossed the bar of the Bayano, but she came up to Panama on 15th for mails and supplies. She returned to the scene of her labors, which is only distant from there about four hours.