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CANADA: THE FENIAN RAID AND THE COLONIAL OFFICE.

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[CONCLUDED.]

These measures were by no means premature. At noon on the 25th, a few hours after they were completed, a body of Fenians to the number of 200, anticipating no serious resistance, crossed the frontier line at the run, advancing toward Eccles Hill, which they hoped to find unoccupied; about 350 more remaining in reserve just within American territory. As the leading files entered Canada, the farmers and volunteers opened a fire which killed one Fenian and wounded others more or less severely. The fire was returned both by the reserve from American territory and by the attacking column, which last, however, scattered like a shell at the first discharge, and instead of advancing sought shelter in groups, some behind houses, some behind the stone fences, and a desultory firing was kept up between the two lines for some hours. At 6 p.m., Col. Smith, who had meanwhile arrived with twenty six troopers of the Montreal Cavalry and a company of the Victoria Rifles from Montreal, ordered a general advance, the immediate effect of which was to drive the Fenians from their lurking places in ludicrous terror to the shelter of the woods on the American side, the runaways dropping arms and accoutrements, and everything that could hinder them in their flight. They had indeed received such a fright that all idea of a renewed advance at the same point was at an end.

The moral effect was however very noticeable in another quarter. On the 26th May, a body of 250 Fenians entered Canada in front of Huntingdon, and intrenched themselves with their backs close to American territory. On the 27th they were attacked by the "Huntingdon Borderers," a fine corps of frontier farmers, commanded by that good soldier Lieut. Colonel McEachren, supported by one company of the 69th, the whole under Lieut. Colonel Bagot of the 69th. If the Fenians had stood their ground they might have inflicted considerable loss on the assailants; but, cowed as they were by the moral effect of the failure of their comrades at Eccles Hill, after delivering two wild volleys the ran like frightened sheep across the frontier to the shelter of

the woods beyond, throwing away rifles, packs, belts, and overcoats.

"The war" was ended, although several thousand armed raggamuffins had come up calling themselves Fenians, and hoping to share in the plunder of Canada. Finding, however, the cat had not jumped in the proper direction, these worthy creatures loafed about for some days, to the annoyance and alarm of the American frontier inhabitants, and were at length persuaded by the authorities kindly to accept a free passage by railroad back to their homes.

It is gratifying to learn from all sources that the discipline and alacrity of the Canadian volunteers would have been a credit to the troops of any nation; and it is fortunate that the officer in chief command of the troops was one in whom, from their long previous acquaintance, the colonial levies had learnt to place the fullest confidence. Lieutenant-General the Hon. James Lindsay had the experience of former raids to guide him, and it is the merest justice to say that no measures were omitted on this occasion which local knowledge, directed by military ability of no common order, could dictate.

In 1866 it happened to a friend of our own, a lady, to be travelling from New York to Niagara, just at the time when the Fenians were making their first invasion at Niagara, and in front of Montreal. On arriving at Albany she found the people in wild excitement. Parties of Fenians, escorted and cheered by the populace, constantly passed along the streets on their way to the railway station. At the hotels, the waiters, and chambermaids, all of them Irish, seemed to regard the wants of travellers as far too subsidiary for their attention at a moment when after so many centuries of oppression, the sun of liberty was breaking over the green hills of Erin. Our friend's party being English, were subjected not only to black looks but to positive insolence from those enlightened patriots. The most absurd stories obtained implicit belief; and in the public room of the hotel, an American, who had been walking upon and down the apartment in an excited manner, stopped suddenly in front of our friend, and addressed her nasally, without any preface, jerked forth the words, "Splendid news, marm, from the war." "Indeed, sir," was the reply; "what war do you refer to?" "The Fenian war, marm; the Fenians have taken Kingston with 500 regular troops, and are marching on Ottawa and Montreal!"

Such reports, mixed freely with "cock-tails" and "moral suasion," worked up the lower orders to a state of bibulous enthusiasm, in which the plunder of Canada

presented an object of attraction highly desirable in itself, and involving no great amount of danger to the patriot skin. Every train to Canada carried many carloads of Fenians and their sympathising friends. Along the whole line from Albany to Niagara, at all the junctions whence side lines lead off to the Canadian frontier, detachments of these heroes walked off the trains into the arms of crowds of admiring citizens, who seemed to have voted themselves *en permanence* for the purpose of *operations*. So long as Fenian successes obtained credit, the cry was "still they come." but when the fiasco, both east and west, could no longer be concealed, the cooling down process was very rapid indeed.

Albany was, in the scenes and feeling above described, only a type of every other town in the State of New York; and if the Fenians had obtained any successes either in 1866 or in 1870, the American people would have taken the bit between the teeth and would have slipped out of the hand of their driver, as France, we learn from high authority, has done now.

Although we may conclude that Canada has seen the last of Fenian raids; and though, doubtless, the English Cabinet may adduce the present condition of Europe as a plausible reason for concentrating our military force as far as possible at the heart of the empire; we yet hold the circumstances of Canada to be so exceptional, that the troops serving in that colony should be left there until the necessity of withdrawing them shall be apparent, in which case they may be regarded as being at the distance of fifteen days from our shores. We are convinced that the Canadian people would not only cheerfully acquiesce in that necessity when it arises, but that they would respond with alacrity to any call that England might make upon them in common with other colonies, to contribute their quota on just and equitable conditions towards the armies of the Empire.

The anti-colonial party have sought to persuade Canada to leave us, on the pretence that she would be greatly more prosperous as a State of the American Union than in her present dependent condition she can hope to become.

On the other hand, they have endeavored to enlist the feelings of English people against the connection on the ground that Canada lays a heavy tax on the produce of British industry.

We propose to examine these arguments *seriatim*.

First, As to the prospective advantage to Canada of joining the Union.