

sary to place 6000 volunteers on active duty to oppose them.

But finding the Red River expedition had been delayed, the Fenian leaders postponed their intended invasion to the 22nd May, a week previous to which date the Red River troops, including the 60th Rifles from Ottawa, had reached but not yet quitted Toronto, en route to the north-west.

In the debate in the House of Lords on Lord Carnarvon's resolution in praise of the Canadian militia, it is to be regretted that the new Colonial Secretary should have taken a line of argument somewhat detracting from the services of that force. Lord Kimberley's words were:

"My second objection is, that however strong our feelings may be of the services performed by the volunteers, we must measure the occasion by what actually occurred; and considering that this was a raid of certain marauders in time of peace, who were driven back, after they had advanced a few hundred yards over the frontier, in a way as discreditable to them as it was creditable to the volunteers, it would be quite contrary to precedent that this House should by solemn declaration record its sense of the services of the troops and volunteers."

Lord Kimberley knows little of the peculiar blessings of the United States constitution, if he measures the gravity of the occasion when these bands of marauders crossed the Canadian frontier by the result; and he fails to do justice to the officer to whose judgment and promptitude of action, more than to any other circumstance, England and America are indebted for escape from a very serious difficulty.

The gravity of the occasion consisted in this, that several thousand Fenians were distributed at different points along the frontier, while more thousands were en route from different quarters. If the first party which crossed the line had been unopposed, and had been able therefore to occupy and intrench the strong position of Eccles Hill just within the Canadian frontier, it would have fallen to the lot of the Canadian volunteers to dislodge the enemy from a strong position, in place of defending it against him. The Canadians would not have been in a position to attack with prudence for at the least twenty-four hours, the news that the Fenian flag had been displayed unopposed on Canadian soil for twenty-four hours' communicated by telegraph to all parts of the Union, would have brought to the invaders a large accession of strength. The Fenians would have fought with confidence, as their backs would have been almost touching United States territory; and if the first attack on their position had not been completely successful, a storm of sympathy for "the war" would have swept over the Union, tens of thousands of filibusters would have entered Canada, and the United States executive would have been powerless to prevent a state of war between the two countries.

Fortunately the command of the Canadian frontier where the first collision took place was confided to Lieutenant Colonel Osborne Smith, formerly of the 39th Regiment, whose energy and ability in executing the same trust during the raid of 1866, gained for him the confidence of General Lind say, who then commanded the troops in Lower Canada, as well as that of the high spirited frontier farmers of whom the Canadian line of defence is composed.

When it appeared certain, from information that he received, that the Fenians were gathering on the frontier for the second

time, and that they were really in earnest, Colonel Smith, without waiting for orders from Ottawa, and sensible that every moment was precious, acted on his own responsibility, under one of the clauses of the new militia bill, by calling out all the frontier volunteer corps of his district for active duty. But as the distances the men would have to travel to their respective alarm-posts would render the concentration of the different battalions impossible under twenty-four hours from the time of despatching the orders, and as it was vitally important to forestall the enemy before they could obtain a footing on Canadian soil, he telegraphed to Lieutenant Colonel Chamberlin, the commander of the Missisquoi battalion—a gentleman who combines the occupation of a journalist with the attributes of a cool and daring soldier—to occupy the strong position of Eccles Hill with such of the armed residents as could be got together in anticipation of the muster of the volunteers.

In immediate response to Colonel Chamberlin's appeal, thirty-five yeomen of the frontier, carrying their own weapons, good marksmen, proceeded on the evening of the 24th May, under Mr. Asa Westover of Dunham, to take possession of the important hill; and this advance guard was reinforced during the night by one officer and twenty-five men, being the earliest arrivals of the volunteers at their place of assembly. The arrangements for the defence of the post having been personally made by Colonel Smith, to Colonel Chamberlin was left the honorable charge of keeping this gate of entrance into Canada against all comers.

(To be continued.)

CANADA.

The letters, of which the following are copies, appeared in the *Montreal Herald* of Saturday, 5th November, and Monday, 7th November, 1870, addressed to the Editor and were received by him, respectively, from Major-General George Napier, C.B., the officer commanding the Western District, Canada, in June, 1866, and Lieut.-Colonel Booker, commanding Volunteers at Ridgeway on the morning of Saturday, 2nd June, 1866:—

HONORS TO VOLUNTEERS.

ARMY AND NAVY CLUB,
LONDON, 21st Oct., 1870.

To the Editor of the MONTREAL HERALD:

SIR:—I have this day read your leading article of the 3rd instant about the decorations of the Order of St. Michael and St. George so deservedly bestowed upon Cols. W. Osborne Smith, McEachren, Chamberlin, and Fletcher, for their services during the recent Fenian raid, and I entirely agree with you in hoping that the same distinction may be conferred upon officers who also have served most gallantly in the Fenian invasion of 1866, and who fought so well at Ridgeway as they did.

I cannot, however, allow that Colonel Booker failed in utterly routing the Fenians because he did not receive the necessary support which had been promised him, as it is a well known fact that he left Port Colborne long before the hour named by Colonel Peacocke, and had it not been for the unfortunate alarm about cavalry he would have defeated them.

By some mistake—which I cannot account for—my despatch giving a detailed account of the operations against the Fenians was

never published, and, indeed a copy of it was never sent to the Governor, Lord Monck, and, consequently my opinion of the gallant conduct of the Volunteers at Ridgeway was not made public.

I regret it much, as had my despatch been published, I feel sure that many officers and men of the Volunteers—who as you say felt they were left most unfairly and unjustly almost under a cloud—would have seen that it really was not the case.

I trust, however, that the Imperial Government will decorate some of these officers for their gallant services, and I shall be very glad to see Colonel Booker's name amongst the recipients, as I never for one moment doubted his courage in the field, however much I regretted he did not completely beat the Fenians at Ridgeway.

I remain, Sir,

Your most obed't. serv't.,

GEORGE NAPIER,
Major-General.

HONORS TO VOLUNTEERS.

To the Editor of the MONTREAL HERALD:

SIR:—I have this morning read General Napier's letter, published by you in the *Montreal Herald*, and have to thank that officer very much for his good opinion of me, and of my services in the Volunteer Militia. No officer in Her Majesty's service has known me better, nor is the present the first time General Napier has been so good as to do me the honor of speaking well of me.

I beg leave, nevertheless, to call in question the accuracy of the General's information to the effect that "It is a well known fact that he (Col. Booker) left Port Colborne long before the hour named by Col. Peacocke."

The public of Canada have, to some extent, shared this impression with General Napier.

I have avoided discussion, preferring to leave the whole question to that stern arbiter of events—Time—to justify me with those whose good opinion and regard I care to possess. The General's letter compels me to reply.

If it were part of Col. Peacocke's plan that I should have left Port Colborne at a later hour than I did, his orders to that effect were not conveyed to me. The orders I received were imperative, viz: to leave Port Colborne on the morning of the 2nd of June, 1866, at 5 o'clock, if possible, but not later than 5.30 under any circumstances—rations or no rations. I took the orders down in writing from the words of Captain Akers, R.E., the staff officer sent by Colonel Peacocke to convey to me Colonel Peacocke's commands, as follows, viz: *Memo.* "Move not later than 5.30; 5, if bread be ready. Move to depot at Erie and wait till 7. If not communicated with before 7, move to Frenchman's Creek. If 'No' by telegraph, disembark at Ridgeway, and move to Stevensville at 9 to 9.30 a.m. Send pilot engine to communicate with Lt.-Col. Dennis at Erie, and with telegrams."

See Captain Akers' despatch to Colonel Lowry, 7th June, 1866, in *Canada Gazette* [official] in corroboration of the correctness of my memo. Captain Akers writes:—

"Colonel Peacocke was to move on Stevensville so as to arrive there about 9.30 a.m. Lt.-Col. Dennis to move along Rail way to Ridgeway as far as the state of the Railroad would permit, and march from thence to meet Col. Peacocke at Stevensville at the above hour—and Lt.-Col. Booker,