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Continued from week to week, the **NEW STORY**,
"THE TWO WIVES OF THE KING."
TRANSLATED FOR THE "SATURDAY READER" FROM
THE FRENCH OF PAUL FEVAL.

NATIONAL DEFENCE.

THAT exuberant and effective display of patriotism, so recently manifested by the citizen-soldiery of Canada, a display whose stern and practical purport our invaders learnt in the bitter lessons of Lime Ridge in the western, and Eccles' Corners in the eastern section of the Province—induces us to lay before our readers a few observations on a question which now holds an important place among the public topics of the day, viz: National Defence.

It is not necessary, in treating of such a subject, that we should enter into, even were we capable of doing so, the discussion of the abstruse questions which are involved in great military defensive combinations—such as Napoleon carried out in his campaign of the hundred days—such as were illustrated by General Lee, in his long and glorious defence of the Confederate capital. Those of our readers who desire to study war and the dry details of strategy, will find ample sources of gratification in the pages of Baron Jomini and Marmont, worthy pupils of the school wherein the principal teacher was the great Napoleon.

That the Fenian invasion would terminate in ignominious defeat, was a result which even a child might have foreseen; but although such a finale was to be expected, there can be no reasonable room to doubt, that had our preparations been delayed, our volunteers unorganised, our authorities less on the alert, these men from the other side of the frontier would have been able to effect much damage of property, and, perhaps, destruction of life, before being effectually hurled across our borders. We have suffered enough already; valuable lives have been sacrificed; business has felt a severe shock; property has been destroyed, and the country been put to great expense. Yet what would those misfortunes be, in comparison to the overwhelming calamity of having had these freebooters for even a fortnight in the country—men who would have carried out the lessons of Sherman in Georgia, and Sheridan in Virginia, and have left our fertile and populous frontiers howling and depopulated wildernesses. Let us thank Heaven that matters are no worse, and let the past serve as a warning for the future. The idea of a number of men, without the prestige of an executive government, without the flimsy advantage of having been accorded belligerent rights, possessing no commissariat, and very few of the minor agencies of war, attempting to conquer, and then hold, a Province so vast in extent and so united in sentiment as Canada, is sheer madness. There are very few instances in the modern history of the world where, even in the case of nations, one country has been able to subdue and permanent-

ly retain possession of another. Of course we have the example of Poland, as an exception to this statement; but it ought to be remembered that Poland, rent asunder and weakened by centuries of internal dissension, could be expected to offer no effective resistance to her partition by the three despotisms of Russia, Austria and Prussia. Nevertheless, the tremendous struggles which the Poles have frequently made to regain their independence, unseconded as they have been by the powers of western Europe, show plainly and conclusively that it is no easy task even for three of the greatest European military powers to keep her in unquestioning subjection. It may be said, "What about the Confederate States?" The answer is very easy. These states were not overcome by superior valour on the part of the North, but by the persistent and lavish employment of the unlimited resources which the latter possessed, in men, money and the machinery of war. A country that possesses no sea-board like Poland, or a sea-board heremetically blockaded like that of the Southern States, can scarcely hope to prosper in a protracted conflict with a stronger power; still he would be a reckless political prophet who would dare to say that the spirit of nationality in either of these nations is so completely crushed, that it will never again arise to try the issue of another conflict.

But as a set-off against the case of Poland and the Southern States, we have that of Mexico, a country hardly civilized, split into factions, and inapt at war, maintaining a desperate, and not unsuccessful resistance against the trained troops of the man of *coup d'état*, the Fenian of the Tuilleries.

It is generally supposed that, strategically speaking, Canada would prove a country very difficult of defence. But such is not in reality the case. No doubt our frontier is an extended one—and the confederation of the colonies will make it more lengthy still; at the same time it should be borne in mind that it is not necessary to provide for the defence of every part of our boundary line; an army as large as that of Xerxes could not do it, nor could a host even more numerous than that of the Persian king attack us simultaneously on every portion of the frontier. Our readers know that in every battle-field, as well as on every national boundary line, there are certain strategic points or "keys," on the possession of which the victory depends. Those points on our frontier have only to be carefully protected by well constructed fortifications, and to be defended by bodies of troops armed in the best manner, and proportionate in number to those which an enemy might reasonably be expected to bring to bear upon any particular point, and then we might await the result with confidence. We think that after the late experience we have had, the Government of Canada should stimulate to the utmost the organisation of volunteer companies in all of our frontier towns; for the inhabitants on the Lines possess this advantage over those in the interior, that they are thoroughly familiar with the country, and with all the entrances through which an enemy could penetrate across our border. And there is this other consideration, that the frontier men, liable to be the first to be attacked, and having much to lose, would always be on the alert, and, in case of invasion, would make a desperate resistance, and so hold an enemy at bay until our railways poured in reinforcements. We think, therefore, that our authorities would do well if they at once took the most effective measures possible to create a chain of volunteer companies along the entire Frontier.

We would also suggest, as an important element in national defence, the organization, both

in town and country, of our young men, for the purpose of perfecting themselves in drill, and particularly in the use of the rifle. In a wooded country like ours, where there are so many natural defences, a comparatively small body of men, each of whom was an adept at the rifle, could give a good account of themselves, even if opposed to a body ten times their number. Look at the influence of rifled small arms at Alma and Inkermann and Solferino, and it will be seen that they are destined to exert a vast influence in the great battles of the future.

An able journal, the *Montreal Gazette*, has lately made a suggestion to the effect that our Government should consider the importance of protecting the peace of the Frontier by a body of mounted police, composed of men who know the localities. The idea is a good one. In the American war, both parties made use of mounted infantry—men who could fight on horseback as well as on foot. By means of such a force, composed of 9000 men, suddenly thrown by Sheridan on the extreme right of the Petersburg defences, he won the battle of Five Forks, and finished the siege at a blow. Here is what Marshal Marmont says of such men as the troops in question:

"There is a fourth kind of mounted troops, whose institution is of very ancient date, and which has, in some unaccountable manner, undergone a complete perversion: I refer to dragoons. Originally they were nothing but mounted infantry; they ought always to have retained that character. As such, dragoons might render immense service in thousands of circumstances; in detachments, for surprises; in retrograde movements, and especially in pursuits. But in accordance with the object of their institution they should be mounted on horses too small for a formation in line, otherwise the intrigues and pretensions of their colonels will soon convert them into cavalry, and they will become bad infantry and bad cavalry."

"There is, I repeat, no more useful institution than that of dragoons, but then they must not be diverted from their right use. Their horses should be small, as I have already stated; their harness and the equipment of both men and horses should be solely calculated for the easy and rapid service of real infantry, armed with good muskets and bayonets, and well provided with ammunition. Dragoons, in fact, should be clothed and shod so as to be able to march with facility."

We must now finish, by saying that, with a properly trained volunteer force, with our strategic points properly fortified and manned, with the empire at our back, her fleets to keep open the highway by the St. Lawrence in summer, and the frosts and snows by our arctic winter to oppose an impassable barrier to the advance by a foe at that season—with strong hearts, and with right and justice on our side, the people of Canada need never fear the triumph of an enemy, no matter from what quarter or in what guise he make his appearance.

MUSICAL.

A MATEUR MUSICAL SOCIETIES.—Too much importance cannot be attached to the benefits to be derived both artistically and socially from the existence of these Societies, not only in our cities and larger towns, but also in our villages, and indeed wherever it is possible to get material together for the performance of either concerted vocal or instrumental music. It is a fact, probably but little felt in proportion to its importance, that the gift of music is pos-