

SECOND SKIRMISH AND REPULSE.

Shortly after 4 p.m., and while the volunteers and others were enjoying the crackers and butter which Mr. Landsberg and others had kindly sent down from Frelighsburg, shots were being fired from the brow of the American hill, opposite and near Vincent's house, where the Fenian reserve was first halted. A stir was evident among the enemy in the houses, while their comrades up the road, having been reinforced by 100 men of the 4th New York Irish, under Major Moore, determined upon making a demonstration and attack to extricate their companions, to the number of about 80, who were virtually prisoners in the houses on the lines. They opened a heavy fire from their concealed position, and fairly raked the base of Eccles Hill. The imprisoned Fenians were in a critical position, and also opened a furious fire upon the Canadians, under cover of which, and that of Moore's veterans, they expected to be able to retreat up the hill in safety. Major Moore moved a portion of his men through the wood and opposite the right flank of Eccles Hill, while they moved down from the woods a small breech-loading field-piece, which was being got into position, and with which they purposed to attack the volunteer camp. To frustrate any attempt at flanking, Colonel Smith strengthened the picket line to the right, and at the same time despatched Captain Muir's troop of cavalry to patrol between the extreme of the picket line and Pigeon Hill, distant nearly two miles, but close to the boundary line, and thus guard the roads from the States, and protect our right flank against surprise. In this way the troop were of great service, and efficiently did they perform their dangerous duty.

In the meantime, firing was kept up for nearly half an hour with great spirit on both sides, and for the time sounded like the commencement of a battle. The shooting was at long ranges, and certain it is that none of the Canadians were hurt, as the Fenian bullets fell short, with the exception of those coming from the houses, which they invariably fired either too high or too low. A few of the enemy were slightly wounded. The long range of the Snider rifles rather staggered the Fenians, who, notwithstanding their being urged forward to the attack by Major Moore, refused, veterans though the most of the 4th Irish were, to quit their cover in the woods. They had, during the few hours that they had been in view of Eccles Hill, been inspired with a great respect for the red-coats and their rifles, and a nearer acquaintance they did not intend to seek. On the contrary they openly refused to obey orders, and in small squads fell back upon Hubbard's Corner, where their commander, about 6 o'clock p.m.,