

was fearful in the extreme; by day wandering groups trying to pick up grain from defiled sources, and then, as evening approached, men, women and children descending the large village well, or rather reservoir, and there passing the hivelong night, watching their little vessels as, drop by drop, water trickled into them from the exhausted springs, hoping that they might be able to take safely to their homes in the morning the treasure which now had become more precious than gold. Deeds of violence could not be altogether suppressed; yet, on the whole, it was marvellous with what patience and submission this long period of calamity was endured—such pining want, personal anguish, cattle dying from thirst in the fields, the little heirlooms of jewels and silver and golden ornaments parted with the wail of famishing children, and yet no jacquerie, no fanatical outburst against their rulers, in whose truth they still trusted.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editor does not hold himself responsible for individual expressions of opinion in communications addressed to the "VOLUNTEER REVIEW."

MITRAILLE.

(LETTER NO. 6.)

Pursuing the subject of the manner in which the Press sustains its high calling, here is a specimen taken from a respectable Western Canadian newspaper, of the loosely constructed balderdash, which, for the sake of sensationalism, however unsavory, editors will substitute for careful statements of plain facts, and, in such a case for reprobation also, of offensive scandal.

"England is having its 'Beecher scandal.' It is the divinity that doth hedge about a queen, and not a divinity of a divine which is attacked. A Mr. Laird Robinson has printed, and is privately circulating, a pamphlet which is said to contain charges of a most revolting description against Victoria, with names and dates. The Duke of Athole closed the bridge of Dunkeld, and exacted toll. Robinson resisted, got judgment from arbitrators, tried to have the Government prosecute the Duke for \$150,000 he had obtained wrongfully from tolls, but the Government wouldn't. Robinson says this is because the Duchess of Athole declared that 'if they dare meddle with us about those horrid accounts, I will let the cat out of the bag.' Like the 'John Brown' scandal, however, it will probably die out if let alone. The 'John Brown' scandal was started and kept alive by vain, jealous noblemen of the Queen's suite who did not wish to take orders from her through her confidential servant."

In reference also to the coinage and introduction into current use, with as much complacency as if they were stamped with the usage of good society, (the only law which the English language really obeys) of words only redolent of a crude and vulgar pedantry, permit me to

hold up to discountenance the word "loan," used as a verb, and the detestable verb "donate," of American invention. And any should think it superfluous to utter a few words of warning to the Canadian Press, against the debasing influences of that of the United States, let them remember, how throughout the war, the accounts of great battles were vulgarised by the perpetual use of the vile terms, "whipped," "badly whipped," in recounting the fate of armies.

There are no chapters in Macaulay more intensely interesting than those in which, descending from the old ideal of historical dignity, he illustrates history by minute analysis of the domestic influences which go farther to mould a nation than its greatest traditions of glory.

So to the student of the temper of the times, who hails with satisfaction, every sign of the growing tendency of the human mind to emancipate itself from the trammels of what is hollow and unsound in conventionalism, few subjects are so trivial as to be of no importance. Straws show which way the wind blows. So that even the "Fashions" may afford a text, and the following extract will repay, not only perusal, but thought:—

"However much I should like to give my readers an insight into the coming spring fashions, it is quite impossible, as yet, to do so. Judging from what happened since the fall of the Imperial ruler of fashion there is no possibility of any radical change. When nothing was in fashion but what the Empress's fancy adopted for the time being, fashions were, as that fancy, extremely variable. It is now quite different; fashions, being the result of collective tastes, have a chance of longer duration, when they are once becoming and convenient. Such is the case for tunics. After their first year of vogue, everybody predicted most regretfully indeed their downfall; but so many people were afflicted with their disgrace, that reprieve after reprieve ensued, and they are still very fashionable, individual caprice being no more capable to prevail against a host. From this state of things results also the extreme variety of fashions, which is far greater than it ever was. Fashion, like France, is now truly a Republic, no more an empire, and will as likely remain so. Let us all, to whom economy is an object, be thankful for this form of Government, which allows us to wear out thoroughly our dresses without looking antiquated and ridiculous for that."

The unreasonable way permitted to adventitious social position is marvellous to the independent mind and nation, discretion, and high principle, its effect is very mischievous. That the Ex Empress is amiable, and even capable of heroism, few will wish to deny; but that the frivolity and extravagance which have characterized her long autocracy of the empire of fashion

have been very baneful, is still clearer. Believed of the incubus of "individual caprices" in high places, natural individual independence hastens to assert itself, and, we are told that "the variety of fashions is greater than it ever was." This, it may be said, is a very small matter, but it is still one of the many indications of the present day, that the minds of men (and of women) are daily becoming less disposed to yield a blind acquiescence to the arbitrary assumptions of conventional orthodoxy.

Every one will have observed with pleasure the reinstatement of Lt. Col. Geo. Dennison in his rank. Observing further in the *Globe*, the mention of a rumor of his possible appointment to the Adjutant Generalship, I will state that he is another of the three to whom I alluded in a former communication.

Some twelve years ago I lost my baggage for more than a week on the Great Northern Railway, owing to the utter want of system prevailing in the matter of luggage, I took the trouble to write to the authorities of that line describing and recommending the American plan. At last, after this interval, appears the following paragraph in the *Mail*.—

"The Midland Railroad, one of the largest corporations in England, contemplates adopting the American plan of checking baggage."

Very correctly surely did Carlyle describe the inhabitants of the United Kingdom as so many "millions of people, principally fools." However, the old lady, with many yawns and stretches, is waking up by degrees.

The Tichborne scoundrel has at last got his deserts it seems—not quite certainly, because hanging would be far too decent a death for a villain who, in addition to his other infamies deliberately concocts a lying story to the detriment of a woman's honor.

I see some mention of a threatened application for a new trial. What a farce! If application were made to kick Dr. Kenealy out of the Bar, it would be a satisfaction to right minded men.

FRANK THURER

THE SURGEONCY OF "A" BATTERY.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

DEAR SIR—In remarking on the dismissal of Dr. O. S. Strango, from the surgery of "A" Battery, I would be distinctly understood as doing so without reference to any political party whatever, and, therefore, will try to enunciate my views on this, and kindred matters, without bringing politics in any way into it. Of course I hold my own views political, and I should consider myself unworthy of holding I.M. commissions could I not exhibit them in their place and at the proper time.

Of course I hold, as every loyal subject should, that the Queen (represented by the Minister of Militia, who advises Her Majesty