



# THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

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## THE YEOMANRY OF CANADA.

### A SONG FOR THE "GOOD TIME COMING."

(By the Editor of the Guelph Herald.)

The yeomanry of Canada have learned a loving creed—  
 That men should dwell in amity, and brothers  
 be at need,  
 They covet no man's heritage, their neighbor's  
 rights esteem;  
 They love all real men, and the land that line  
 the lakes between.

The yeomanry of Canada, the vanguard of the  
 host,  
 That bear aloft the meteor flag, must know to  
 guard their post;  
 Should puerile pastimes be their care in lea-  
 guered land who bide?  
 The rifle-range their play-ground is, the rifle  
 prize their pride.

The yeomanry of Canada no lust of conquest  
 fires.  
 They arm to tend their loved homes, the  
 green graves of their sires;  
 By every hearth a rifle hangs, and trained his  
 arms to wield,  
 A patriot of the olden type is guarding every  
 field.

The yeomanry of Canada, who challenge  
 their choice?  
 If vigilance eternal be of liberty the price—  
 If hearts resolved, without the aid of hands  
 prepared are naught—  
 Should they not choose, who would be free, all  
 warfare to be taught?

The yeomanry of Canada, how should they in  
 the fight?  
 Is there no vantage ground for men who battle  
 for the right?  
 By breach and brake, and barricade, by trench  
 and tree they stand,  
 They garrison the forest glades, they battle-  
 ment the land.

The yeomanry of Canada, who fears that they  
 may fail  
 To crush the lawless Helot horde who cause-  
 lessly assail?  
 Up for your country and your kin! Up, in your  
 father's might!  
 Strike for your homes and household gods and  
 God defend the right!

For the Volunteer Review.

## RANDOM THOUGHTS ON RIFLE SHOOTING.

BY AN OLD VOLUNTEER.

I.

THE old chronicler, Philip de Comines, enthusiastically calls "the race of bowmen" of England "the flower of the archers of the world;" and the Chronicles of Froissart are replete with instances of their prowess and skill: as, for instance, when he tells us of the battle of Poitiers, he says that the "English archers were of infinite service to their army, for they shot so thickly and so well that the French did not know which way to turn themselves to avoid their arrows." What the ancestors were, so are the descendants; for I believe it to be an indisputable fact that England now produces the best long range rifle shots in the world. To the excellency of their shooting, and its consequent destructiveness, we have the testimony of both friend and foe. General Todleben, the celebrated defender of Sebastopol, in his account of the battle of the Alma, informs us that "the English, firing with great precision, hit as they pleased, officers, artillerymen and horses;" while Kinglake, in narrating the events of the same battle in his own picturesque way, thus speaks of one of those dense Russian columns which were opposed to the British army: "Those who wielded it were unable to make its strength tell against clusters of English lads, who stood facing it merrily, and teasing it with rifle balls;" and in juxtaposition to this picture, to show how history repeats itself, and how national characteristics are perpetuated, let us place this companion one of Michelet, of the battle of Agincourt, fought 500 years before: "The French, unable to advance or retreat, served only as a vast target to the unerring English arrows, which never ceased to rain down on the deep array."

I have prefaced the few remarks that I shall have to make on the subject of rifle-shooting with the above pregnant instances of ancient and modern record, showing how some of the famous battles of the world have been won; not by the largest masses, but by those who, having the superior weapon, knew from practice and experience how to use it to the best advantage. For it is beyond controversy that while the old English long-bow was the most formidable weapon

of offense of ancient times, and those who used it were the best marksmen of the world, thoroughly instructed in its use by a system of compulsory training which accorded well with the national tastes; so do I believe that in the modern English rifle (now converted into a breech-loader) we have the very best weapon that can be placed in a soldier's hands, and whose capabilities he is taught to develop to the utmost, by a careful and systematic course of marksmanship instruction—a system, which an able writer commends in the following words: "None of the exercises learnt with so much skill will always be performed in moments of trial, but the actual results will invariably be proportioned to the general excellence of discipline previously attained. The only way, in short, of securing good average efficiency is to practice for peculiar excellence. The practical result will, of course, fall short of the specimen exhibitions, but its value will be in a direct ratio to the proficiency so acquired. The nearer our troops are brought, as a body, to the class of first rate shots by practice at home, the more formidable will they be as a body against any enemy in the field. It may be quite true that in the heat of an action a soldier will not think of "judging distance," or sighting his rifle, or perhaps, of recurring to any of the little directions which he has learnt on parade, but it is equally true that the training he has received will produce its effect, although mechanically, and that his firing will be infinitely more effective than that of a man who has had no training at all."

Rifle-shooting, like the old practice, with the long-bow, seems to commend itself particularly to the tastes and character of the British men. It accords well with their sturdy independence of character, and that love of manly amusement and out-door sports, which is a passion with them and a marvel to other nations. Wimbledon has now become a national as well as an annual fête. Looked forward to by thousands with eager anticipation, and participated in by all classes with a heartiness and a zest that shows how deeply it has rooted itself in national favor, it is now only second in interest to the Derby Day, the great English saturnalia. Taking place at midsummer, it is an open-air pastime, performed under summer suns and bright skies, where peer and commoner meet on equal ground to contend for "the victor's crown which is to be run for, not without dust and heat;" and as there is no royal road to bull-eyes and long scores, it is only he who, by long and patient practice, has fitted himself to win the race, that can ever reach the goal.