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THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

BY WILLIAM PITTMAN LETT.

"Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade—
Noble Six Hundred!"—Tennyson.

The word was given like flash of light;
Leaped forth six hundred weapons bright,
On Balaklava's bloody height,
In battle's proud array.
Six hundred sprits, brave and true
As o'er the reeking sabre drew,
To heroism's full stature grew
On that eventful day.

What boated they the cannon's sound,
The iron shower that plough'd the ground
And hurled fell destruction round,
And death, on every side:
Knee touching knee, they stood arrayed
In stately line, as on parade:
Each waves aloft his glittering blade,
And down the gorge they ride.

Like thunderbolt, that stunning dash
Of heroism, grand and rash,
Fell on the foe with shock and crash,
Dread as the crack of doom!
Like frostwork riven by bursting shell,
The Russian host before it fell,
And high the mounds of slaughter swell—
Their monumental tomb.

The battery on the height they gain,
The goal is won; the gory plain
Is choked with heaps of ghastly slain.
As backward, up the slope,
The fated squadron, with a cheer,
Held on their valourous career,
Loud o'er the clangour, wild and clear,
Hang out that knell of hope.

On, on they sped, that gallant band!
Well had they kept the bold command.
Through hosts of foemen, sword in hand,
The vallant remnant strode.
On, o'er the carnage-numbered track,
Mid smoke and blood—death, grim and black,
Marked the heroic pathway back—
The brave survivors rode.

Oh! 'twas a memorable day,
Never, since old Thermopylae
Shed patriotism's immortal ray
Of glory o'er all time,
Has such a light of valour shone,
Has such a deed of fame been done,
Has such a laurel-wreath been won
By bravery sublime.

Ottawa, February 22nd, 1868.

The English papers publish with great satisfaction a Fenian riddle that has just been concocted. The problem is, "My first, when he makes my second, calls himself my whole," and the solution is *Patriot*.

[For THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW.]

THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1754-64.

A just appreciation of military enterprise is necessary to the sequence of historical events, and this is more especially felt to be the case in comparing the relative position of British power on this continent with the dimensions it had attained in the year 1764. It is at all times an invidious task to review military operations, especially when long periods have elapsed since they were undertaken, as a large mass of oral and other evidence necessary to elucidate the cause of failure or success must, as a matter of course, have perished and been irrecoverably lost. At the same time, the reviewer has the advantage of being able to weigh all the circumstances without the deadening influences of passion and prejudice, satisfied that the dissemination of truth will cast more lustre over the achievements of his countrymen than the most elaborated fictions, and, by rendering full justice to the gallantry, patriotism, and statesmanlike abilities of his country's opponents and rivals, enhance the value of those achievements by which all North America was reduced under British rule.

A great writer, recently passed away, has well remarked that "as the greedy British hand seized the Canadas, it let fall the United States out of its grasp;" thus announcing, consciously or otherwise, the well understood political axiom of the impossibility of retaining the two great natural divisions of the North American continent under one system of social polity. The attempt of the French monarch in 1754 to extend his domination over all North America ended in 1764 by the total annihilation of his power, and eleven years afterwards the empire Great Britain had founded on the ruins was rudely torn asunder, so that of all her vast possessions the recently acquired French colony was all that remained. "History repeats itself," and it has left in this instance sufficient landmarks to shew the course events must necessarily follow. Nationality is no mere sentiment—the growth of a day,—nor is that system of social polity by

which the destinies of a people are influenced a mere matter of legislation so much as of geographical position.

A review of the events by which the eastern portion of North America came into the possession of Great Britain will shew the operations of those laws of political science already pointed out, as well as illustrate the causes which culminated in the independence of the United States. At the date of the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, 1748, the French possessions in North America extended from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi. The provisions of that truce (for it was little better) left the respective boundaries so thoroughly ill defined that the foundations of innumerable quarrels was the immediate consequence. From the date of the treaty, the Governor General of New France contended that the boundaries of the French Empire in America were the western slopes of the Alleghany Mountains, and they prepared, by a chain of forts commencing at the mouth of the Niagara River (head of Lake Ontario) and ending at the mouth of the Mississippi, to make good their claims. This course of proceeding would have confined the English settlements to a narrow strip along the coast, and was the more grievous inasmuch as Cape Breton and Acadia (the former conquered during the late war by the valour of the colonists, the latter held by England since the Peace of Utrecht, in 1713,) were both given up to France by the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle.

The successful establishment of French pretension would have placed the English colonies in a net of which it may be said that it was only necessary to draw both ends tight and drive them into the sea. It is evident that if the French possessed a naval power fit to contest the sovereignty of the seas with Great Britain, the policy attempted to be carried out would be eminently successful. Having complete control of all the Great Lakes, she endeavoured to secure in the then state of mechanical appliances the communication with the Mississippi by occupying the only available strategical line by military force, and her persistence in a policy so decidedly aggressive undoubtedly