

For the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

THE FUNERAL OF A GENERAL OFFICER.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE FUNERAL OF GENERAL
SIR CHARLES WYNDHAM.

It was a mournful pageant, despite the proud array,
As they bore away the veteran to his long home to-day,
The gleaming of the bayonets, the slow and martial tread,
And the muffled drums sad beating with marches for the dead.
Old England's noble soldiery passed gallantly before,
With the dull and heavy cannons in the stately guise of war,
While the minute guns were rolling from the distant citadel,
A requiem for the warrior who had fought the battle well.
There was glory in the music that floated in the air;
The green, and scarlet uniform, the proud plumes waving there.—
But there came a narrow coffin, and the heavy pall beneath,
Though by quick life surrounded, lay the wasted spoil of death—
What now to him was martial strife—the pride and pomp that gleamed
Near that pale, shrouded sleeper, all hollow mockery seemed.
No—hush the pealing music, and let the bright sword rust,
And hide that steed's caparisons, his rider now is dust.
See how the long procession in stately phalanx go,—
We have the outward semblance—where is the soul of woe.—
A ruler and a general, he died a lonely man,
And thus laid down his pilgrimage, frail as when life began.
There in that narrow prison, the moveless relics lie,
No thunder sound can wake him now of war's artillery.

THE BATTLES OF 1812-15.

I.

In order to present to the readers of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW the official reports of the actions of the war of 1812-15, as well as to notice the services of the Canadian soldiers and seamen engaged therein, it is expedient that the course of the events should be followed as closely as possible, and as the "Naval Operations" have already been published in the third Volume of the REVIEW, the succeeding paper will be devoted to those hard fought actions in which the Canadian Militia soldiers achieved a reputation inferior to none in the military annals of the British Empire.

It is hardly possible to conceive a situation more beset by embarrassment than that of the puny colony stretching from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the shores of Lake Superior on the occasion of the declaration of war by the President of the United States on the 18th June, 1812.

With a frontier of over one thousand miles in length to defend, vulnerable in many vital points, with a sparse population isolated locally and without available or ready means of communication between the various settlements, the task of opposing a nation numbering seven millions of inhabi-

tants with a population barely exceeding five hundred thousand, unarmed and without resources was the problem presented to the Canadian leaders and people; and the triumphant issue of the contest to which they were committed is the answer to those who doubt the capabilities of British North America to hold her own in any future contest which the interests of the empire may demand.

Four thousand two hundred British troops of all arms represented the assistance England vouchsafed to those who were to fight her battles on this continent. In 1812 not a company of militia was embodied and it was with extreme difficulty that arms could be procured for a very small proportion indeed of the ready and willing hands prepared to use them.

Then as now the sentiments of loyalty and love of British connection which English political philosophers of the Goldwin Smith school and radicals cannot understand, rose superior to every consideration of personal safety or profit, and the Canadian backwoodsman left his axe in the tree and his plough in the furrow, hurrying to the front to take his place in the line of battle and in many cases to be engaged in deadly strife before the soldier's musket had been six hours in his hands.

Well may the country be proud of such heroes, and with perfect confidence may its statesmen wait with certainty the issues of any complications which may arise fully satisfied that at any moment the key note of British connection or the honor of the empire will send the whole population capable of bearing arms to the field, anxious to emulate the deeds of their fathers. The *Trent* difficulty, so called, furnished a memorable illustration of this spirit of the Canadian people, and those who know them intimately are satisfied that a similar cause would produce the same effect.

During the year 1811 the Government of the United States had been quietly concentrating troops and stores at points within easy distances of the Canadian frontier communication between Quebec and New York usually occupied a month; and, therefore, this difficulty of transmitting intelligence favored the accumulation of the means necessary for an invasion of Canada, not merely as the English Radical press has it, to annoy *Great Britain*, but to acquire a great and substantial advantage, far more valuable than any temporary humiliation could be—the permanent acquisition of this country.

For this purpose it was determined to move on Canada by the valley of Lake Champlain, by way of the Niagara frontier, and from Detroit. Of those lines the really important were the first and last, although the principal actions of the war were fought on the Niagara frontier, its acquisition at any time, either then or now, would not decide the fate of Canada, while a successful move-

ment on Montreal and the permanent establishment of an United States army at Detroit, in the early part of the campaign of 1812, would have been decisive of the fate of Canada; in the first place because it would cut off all succor from the seaboard, and secondly, it would have paralysed the operations of the Indian allies of Canada, a force that rendered great and important services during the war.

On the 18th June, 1812, the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States passed an act enabling the President to declare war against Great Britain and this was answered by a similar declaration on the part of the latter power, dated Oct. 13th, 1812. So thoroughly prepared were the people of the United States for this contest that General Hull commenced his march from Drayton in Ohio for Detroit on 1st day of June, 1812, eighteen days before the declaration of war, and on the 11th July he crossed the Detroit river with 2500 men to Sandwich, where he issued one of those laughable proclamations with which the United States Generals were wont to inspire their troops in those days. In order to make this movement valuable the British port at Amherstburg should have been captured; the fort consisted of four batteries connected by curtains flanking a deep ditch with a single interior line of picketing loop-holed for musketry; the buildings with the exception of the magazine was of wood, covered with pine shingles, and could be set on fire by a few shells. The garrison consisted of 200 men of the 1st Batt., 41st regiment, a very weak detachment of Newfoundland fencibles and a subaltern's command of Artillery.

The American army were unable to cross the river upward although they made three attempts to do so on the 18th, 19th and 20th of July and were repulsed in every one.

On the 17th July the port of Michilimackinac was captured without the loss of a man by Captain Roberts with forty-five men of the 10th Royal Veteran Battalion, two hundred voyageurs and militia and about two hundred and fifty Indians. As this position virtually gave the British command of the Lakes Huron, Superior and Michigan, and the whole country in rear of Detroit, General Hull's safety was at once compromised and his powers of offence destroyed; this piece of strategy was due to the greatest soldier and statesman engaged in this contest, Major General Sir Isaac Brock, Lieut. Governor of Upper Canada.

The Indians under their great chief Tecumseh had surprised and cut to pieces a detachment of two hundred men, and Major Van Horne at the River Raisin, thirty six miles from Detroit, captured the mail and a large quantity of provisions. On the 3rd July, Lieut. Frederic Rolette (a French Canadian of Quebec) in command of the armed vessel, General Hunter, with eight of his men in a canoe captured the American arm-