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For the Volunteer Review.

THE MUSTERING OF THE VOLUNTEERS OF CANADA.

BY WILLIAM PITTMAN LETT.

Hark! 'tis a sound unwonted
 In this land of peace. Excited men
 Run to and fro; on every hand,
 In serried phalanx firm, behold
 Our dauntless Volunteers, as with
 A mighty rush they rise in arms,
 And with the swell of patriotism
 Inborn, thro' to the scene of strife!
 A savage foe, with fell intent
 And murderous ire, had dared
 With foot profane to desecrate
 Our soil, which never yet had been
 Polluted with the festering touch
 Of foul invasion's tread, that did not
 Bring responsive to the sound,
 In battle-garb arrayed,
 The patriot defenders of our flag
 To meet the foeman bravely in the pass!
 From East and West, from North and South,
 With fearless tread and glancing steel,
 Our country's native chivalry rose
 At the hasty summons, armed
 For the right, in patriotism strong!
 And some went forth with lofty step—
 With sinewy arm and beaming eye—
 Who never more, in peace or war,
 Again will answer to the bugle's call.
 For home, for liberty and fireside
 They fell, fronting the miscreant foe.
 Peace to their gallant manes; they
 Slumber well 'neath the green turf.
 Calm be their hallowed hero sleep;
 The guardian spirit of the land
 Bends o'er their honored resting-place,
 And drops a tear above the noble dead.
 And Ottawa's valiant hearts among
 That stalwart host ranked well.
 They, with their brothers on the battle-path,
 Came at the "double" to the warning
 sound.
 As from a mountain-height,
 The echo from a trumpet blast
 Responsive swells, they leaped
 Into war-harness at their country's call.
 And marched with steady step
 And eye of fire, to fill the space
 Allotted on the borders of the land
 For Canada's bold sons to take their stand.

O, 'twas a glorious sight! those noble bands
 Of patriots mustering at the call
 To arms! The world's history,
 Traced in gorgeous blazonry,
 With deathless pictures of renown,
 On its brightest page shows not
 A record nobler, grander, or more brave.
 When glorious deeds employ the tongue
 Of Fame—when patriotic abnegation
 Finds its echo in the mighty heart
 Of nations in the dim future,
 Loud 'mongst the swelling anthems
 Of the famous past will sound
 The noble mustering of our Volunteers!
 Ottawa, Feb. 1, 1867.

CONTRARY TO THE CUSTOMS.

I am, for my own part, an individual of Spartan virtue and the strictest morals. If I picked up a purse of money in the street to-morrow, I am almost certain that I should advertise it in the newspapers. If I took somebody else's portmanteau home with me in place of my own, I should at once propose to myself to return it to its original proprietor without any consideration respecting the relative value of the two.

Still, as the moral philosopher observed who ate the sucking-pig which was sent as a present to his friend, 'One must stop somewhere;' and there is a limit even to my notions of what should be expected of an honest man. I condemn but cannot help extenuating the conduct of that paterfamilias who, upon the troublesome question of allowance of luggage, describes his party as 'seven first-class passengers,' when three of the same are infants, and pay no fares. The poor fellow reasons (I hope and believe) somewhat after the following fashion: 'The railway authorities permit little children to travel free; that permission is absurd unless they permit their baggage to travel free also, these iron cots are their private property; my own portmanteau has been partially usurped by certain heterogeneous garments of ridiculously small dimensions; this bag, which I am always instructed to "see to," and carry in my hand so carefully, and which clicks as I move, as though there were something frangible in it, must certainly belong to them, and should be conveyed gratis.

Moreover, I was not asked how many tickets I had procured, but how many persons were travelling with me.'

This last exculpation I consider to be a reprehensible quibble; but if paterfamilias sticks solely to his first notion of the semi-generous manner in which the railway authorities behave in regard to infants, and practically reforms their half-measures—in spite of themselves—by giving a whole effect to them—that man has then my sympathy, though not perhaps my admiration. I confess I am not able to look upon a public company as upon a private individual. I have not imagination enough—my weakness arises from that, I think—to identify a Board with a human Being. I cannot detect that feeling of shame within me when I mulct an association of directors, which I should entertain if I took an article of value, or indeed any article, out of the coat-pocket of a single member of that body. I smoke in contravention of by-laws. I give money to luggage-porters, with a tacit understanding that I shall in return for it enjoy certain immunities, in spite of the particular requests to the contrary that are addressed to me in print at every station, and of the 'Certain Dismissal' which is threatened so inexorably to the recipients.

With these little flaws in my otherwise immaculate moral character, it is not to be expected that I should entertain a servile respect for Her Majesty's Revenue laws; that I should religiously observe those Duties which are not so much natural as Customary. I do smuggle a little, when an opportunity offers itself, and that's the honest truth. In addition to the pecuniary saving, which is not inconsiderable in articles such as lace and tobacco, there is a considerable charm in defeating an organized system, in setting at nought a whole army of individuals that has been expressly levied for my discomfiture. Besides, if the worst comes to the worst, if a smuggler falls into the hands of a revenue-officer, he cannot be put to death, nor even transported for life: the risk of fine or imprisonment is of course considerable, but not more than sufficiently great to enhance the excitement. I had done a little in velvets, and made insignificant ventures of silk and jewellery more than once before I tried my first grand coup in laces, but I felt upon that occasion, I confess, excessively nervous.

It was autumn, and I was crossing the Channel to Dover amid a crowd of returning tourists, almost all of whom were dreadfully inconvenienced by a strong westerly wind. *TOT HOMINES, TOT SENTENTIE*, was never proved to be so false a proverb before. Numerous as the company was, it was all of one