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BIBLICAL STANZAS.

THE CREATION.

FIRST DAY.

When Jehovah came down from above,
And created a new world to love,
All shapeless lay Nature asleep,
And Darkness enveloped the deep.

O'er the waters his spirit then moved,
And in mercy the gloom disapproved,
And he lifted his voice in his might,
And, commanding, said "Let there be light!"

The darkness retired abashed,
And the dazzling rays instantly flashed,
And upon the young Earth as it stood
The Almighty exclaimed "It is good!"

And the light from the darkness was riven,
And the Day for employment was given,
And the Night, when by darkness oppress'd,
Was allotted for Nature to rest.

Oh! how should each bosom vibrate,
With love to the donor of fate,
Who has thus blest our eyes with the light,
And ordained that we sleep through the night!

SECOND DAY.

Then the Lord call'd a Firmament forth,
From the east, west and south, and the north,
Where the gases of life should be found,
And the waters to keep within bound.

The fat had scarcely gone forth
When the firmament danced o'er the earth,
Dividing the waters in twain,
And breaking of life without pain.

Expansive and high it arose,
As the glories of ether disclose,—
While softly its currents are driven,
"And God called the firmament Heaven."

Then how should the human race prize
This gift, as the beautiful skies
Are beaming with lustre and love,
To draw our affections above!

THIRD DAY.

And the fiat was issued again,
Commanding the tide to remain
In the hollows of earth, and to be—
Henceforth and forever—the Sea.

And he caused the dry land to appear,
And the rivers their courses to steer,
And he look'd on the land and the flood,
And with pleasure perceived "it was good."

It was then the Almighty inclined
Each tree should bud forth in its kind,
And while some with green herbage abound,
The others with fruit should be crown'd.

And he gave to each beautiful scene
Its ever-enduring green;
And each plant and each shrub in the land,
Sprang forth to obey his command.

And when, as the Lord had decreed,
Each brought forth its fruit or its seed,
He gazed on the plain and the wood,
And again he declared "it was good!"

Then still let the Christian rejoice,
And lift up to heaven his voice,
In praise, that his God hath unfurl'd
To his view such a beautiful world.

(To be concluded in our next.)

(WRITTEN FOR THE LOYALIST.)

TRUST NOT TO SMILES.

The smiles may on the brow be shining,
Like ivy round a ruin twining,
They but portend more sure decay;
And oft, like flow'rs bright that bloom
Above the corpse-concealing tomb,
They hide a heart to grief a prey;
Trust not to smiles, still brightest fly
The lightnings in a sable sky.

CLEOFAS.

(WRITTEN FOR THE LOYALIST.)

THE INDIAN WARRIOR.

The Indian at the stake is tied—
There is courage in his eye;
And a smile has wreath'd his lip of pride,
As he speaks thus tauntingly.

"See you this hand? 'Twas this that slow
Your great, your boasted chief,
He fell as summer rain-drops do,
Or like you wither'd leaf."

Behold, his scalp is at my belt,
'Twas as he turn'd to flee,
The deadly blow this hatchet dealt,—
This hatchet swung by me.
Now torture, for thy greatest shame!
Those red-hot irons ply,—
Your coward hearts are nerved to kill,
And mine is nerved to die.

CLEOFAS.

THE DESERTERS.

A TALE OF CRIME, FOUNDED ON FACT.
(BY THE EDITOR.)

INTRODUCTION.

"Truth," says the proverb, "is stranger than fiction;" and never does this appear more palpable to my senses than when I ruminates upon the strange occurrences I am about to relate. Let not the reader suppose that I have undertaken the task with a view to bring our army into disrepute—to detract from the fame of the noble and gallant fellows who wound through the mountain-passes of India, "neath a tropical sun and galling fire, and storm'd the heretofore impregnable fortress of Seringapatam—who fought their way on shore at Alexandria, breast-deep, as they were, in the sea, in spite of the tremendous broadsides of the French;—where they raised a monument of fame imperishable as the Pyramids, cemented by the life-blood of their veteran chief, and gave the aspiring Corsican a foretaste of his fate,—who, half-famished as they were, on the plains of Corunna wafted the spirit of their brave commander to Heaven on the pinions of victory,—who at Vimiera, Basaco, Feutes de Honore, Talavera, Salamanca, Vittoria, Nivelle, Pyrenees, and Toulouse earned untarnished and ever-enduring laurels,—and who finally, at Waterloo, subdued and utterly overthrew the scourge of Europe, who would, had he triumphed, have ridden rough-shod over our national independence and individual liberties. No! there is not an individual breathing who is more willing to do honour to the name of a British soldier than the writer of these pages. But it is much to be regretted that however high the character of our troops may stand collectively, the recruiting sergeants are not instructed to pay the same attention, and scrutinize with so much nicety the moral as they must the physical man, and in war time, when recruits are so much in request, provided a soldier does his duty in the field, but few enquiries are made touching his private conduct. If any of my readers question this assertion I need only direct his attention to the history of the events which occurred subsequent to the storming of Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo.

But whatever may have been the crimes of some of the Peninsular Campaigners, and their cotemporaries, the British Government could not distinguish them from others who were really deserving, and upon their discharge conferred pensions upon them, according to the terms of their servitude, or the wounds they had received, with that maternal solicitude for her old servants for which she has long been distinguished, and which we sincerely hope she may never abandon. Long did those veterans rejoice in the return of "quarter day," until in 1830 the cry was raised for parliamentary reform, and in an unlucky hour (we mean for the pensioners) the Whigs came into office. That party had said so much about "Reform and Retrenchment" that they thought it was now really necessary to do something to keep up appearances; but like most other statesmen instead of beginning with the rich, who were able to afford a reduction of salary, they attempted to lower the amount of the Pension expenditure by commencing with the recipients for four years' pay and a hundred acres each of wild land in one of the Colonies. Although the Ministry knew the character of the men in whose way they threw the temptation,—that most of them were debilitated in constitution, had never been inured to that species of toil necessary to overcome the difficulties of a back-woodsman's life, and that their habits acquired in the army had made them improvident, reckless and dissipated, while many of them from long servitude in India were totally unable to stand the rigours of a North American winter;—although they knew also that they were for the most part ignorant of all that a back-settler should know, yet they sent the veterans who for the space of twenty years had fought their country's battles on the continent of Europe, in Egypt, in India and in America, to spend the same for which they commuted in the lowest haunts of the sea-ports of the North American Colonies, or to linger out a wretched existence in a place so un congenial as the back-woods. A more cold blooded piece of heartless cruelty was never perpetrated, and it would be long ere the deep stain can be washed from the proud escutcheon of the empire.

There can be no doubt but this Whiggish measure was beneficial to England in one sense of the word, for many who were wild and reckless in their youth, and whose habits had not improved by the example set before them by their fellow soldiers in active service, and had degenerated since their discharge into blacklegs and guzzlers of the lowest description, eagerly embraced proposals which held forth once more the prospects of adventure, gilded over as they were by the offer of four year's pay in hand. So while many who commuted and emigrated were not worse than common—i. e. men addicted to no vice but drinking a little

* It is worthy of remark that Napoleon met the British in person but thrice. He was defeated by Abercrombie at the "Battle of the Pyramids," repulsed by Sir Sydney Smith at Acre, and conquered by his great rival at Waterloo!

too free, and swearing a little too frequently—an undue proportion came from the lowest dens of the great metropolis. Not to speak of the vicious portion of this class of emigrants who came to our shores in the spring and autumn of 1832, the miserable fate that awaited the more innocent portion is too well known to require a detailed relation, and we shall content ourselves with recording a brief sketch. The commutation-money was paid in three instalments, one before they left England, another upon their having landed in the colony to which they were destined, and the other was to be withheld until they had selected their lands, made a clearing, and built a log-house. The first instalment was generally spent in the outfit, in treating their friends and old comrades before starting, and in "grog," as they expressed it, to "cheer the monotony of the voyage," and upon their landing few of them had a copper left. To "goa-farming" was out of the question without money, and while they danced attendance upon the colonial officials authorized to pay them the second instalment, the cheapness of rum, when compared with the price of that article in Great Britain caused them to spend their days and nights in debauchery, and to this the idle time hanging upon their hands also contributed. Much of the second instalment was therefore spent in anticipation before it was received. Next came the travelling to and from the seaports and the country—the journeys to the "hash" to select the lots, and the moving into some log-tavern in the neighbourhood, where the pensioner, and his family if he had one, were wont to reside in too close a proximity to rum, until a clearing was made and a shanty erected on the chosen soil. These expenses—exclusive of the improvements—generally exhausted the second instalment, and the improvements, and provisions necessary for the first winter exhausted the third and last instalment of the commutation money. The spring of 1833 then witnessed many of these discarded veterans in the remote and almost inaccessible recesses of the back-woods, unaccustomed to labour, ignorant alike of agriculture and domestic economy, with a miserable half-furn shed hut to live in; and a few acres of cleared land it is true, but without the means to plant, and without provisions to sustain life until a crop, if planted, would grow to perfection; and worse than all, without any further claims on the Government. What could they do in this crisis but abandon land, which was sometimes mortgaged to the accommodating tavern-keeper for a few weeks board and lodgings, and rum; or by others sold to the keen speculator, and the money recklessly expended as they sought to drown their sorrows in the burning glass. Many of the poor wretches died of intemperance, cursing in their latest moments the Government which had abandoned and deceived them. Not a few of them perished by exposure to the cold on the following winter. Others were compelled to linger out a wretched old age as servants to more fortunate settlers, receiving for such servitude barely sufficient food to sustain nature, and the cast off rags of their employers to cover their shrivelled limbs. Some few of those who had been in the Cavalry service obtained situations at taverns as hostlers; but scarcely one out of fifty stuck by their land.

It is well known that out of the thousands of unhappy victims whom the Whigs, by specious promises, induced thus to abandon their homes and their means of living, a large proportion landed at Quebec, and settled—or rather selected the lands whereon to starve—in Lower Canada. The author of the following sketches was an eye-witness of their recklessness, their misery and their sufferings, and has attempted to describe several scenes which actually occurred. Indeed the characters are all drawn from life, although the incidents are thrown together with some slight alteration, that they might not mar the effect of the plot.

* About the time the foregoing introduction was penned the following memorial was transmitted from the commuted pensioners in Canada, to His Grace the Duke of Wellington, which we copy from the *Quebec Gazette*; and that paper very properly states that "agreement or no agreement, it is not consistent with the established character of the British Government and nation, that its old and meritorious servants, should be reduced to beg their bread in a strange land."

"To the Most Noble, His Grace Field Marshal the DUKE OF WELLINGTON, K. G., G. C. B., Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, &c., &c.

"The Petition of the undersigned Commuted Pensioners from Her Majesty's Regular Army:

"HUMBLY SHEWETH:

"That at an unfortunate moment, and without duly considering how or by what means they were to obtain a livelihood in their latter days, they gave up their pensions, in 1832, and emigrated to Canada, to them an unfortunate change. They have been in receipt of 4 l. 2s. per day until about this period last year; but, alas! even that sum, small as it was, they are now deprived of, the loss of which has reduced them to the very lowest stage of indigence; some of whom are at this very inclement season of the year begging a sustenance from house to house.

"Your Petitioners have served their country long and faithfully; some upwards of twenty four years, and that chiefly under Your Grace's command, both in Portugal, Spain, and France. They have proved to Marshals Messena, South and Marmont, as well as to all Europe, that they were British Soldiers. They have borne hunger, cold and fatigue, without a murmur; their bodies have been pierced through by the bullets of the enemy of England, and still, should their services be required, old and infirm as no doubt they are, their hearts are willing to serve their country."

"Wherefore, your Petitioners do most humbly and

* Reference to the Rebellion of 1837—8, their services were then required and cheerfully given.

CHAPTER I.

In which the Reader is introduced to some of the principal actors in the drama.

Let the reader imagine a settlement of some ten or dozen years standing, in a retired and thickly-wooded country, some eight or ten miles distant from the Post road to the Kennebec, and the river Chaudiere, County of Nouvelle Beauce, Lower Canada: and some 50 or 60 miles south of Quebec. Although in close proximity to tracts of land settled by the French, yet the Township, or Parish of—we must give it a name!—the Parish of *Vamping* then (a name which not to be found on Bouchette's map of Canada) was settled by a mixed population of English, Irish, and Scotch; in short it was one of the "old country" settlements, so-called. *Vamping* is pleasantly situated, upon a branch of the Chaudiere; it is a lovely and romantic stream, which bursting from the mountains of Thetford, after leaping from precipice to precipice and turning innumerable nooks amid the silent recesses of the forest where no sounds are heard but its own murmurs, the roaring of its cascades, and the stealthy tread of the red-deer, it at length winds gently through the valley of *Vamping*; and although too insignificant to admit of aquatic exercises, yet is highly valued by the inhabitants for its plentiful supply of delicious trout.

It was on one Sunday afternoon, in the month of July, 1833, that a mournful cavalcade was seen moving slowly along at a point near the spot where the stream emerges from the dark forest, which here is thick, swampy, and as impenetrable as the Indian Jungle. When the road approaches to within about a quarter of a mile from the stream, it turns to the left, sweeping the base of a steep promontory, while the angle on the right, betwixt the road and the stream, is a piece of wet land, cleared but not cultivated. The promontory on the left consists of a huge mass of sand, rising gently from the road at first, and terminating in a steep rugged bluff, on the declivity of which scarcely a vestige of vegetation is to be seen. The cavalcade approached this spot slowly, the bars which closed an entrance were removed, they turned off the road into a little grass-covered slope immediately below the naked bluff, where stood an open grave; for at the period we have named there existed no place of worship in *Vamping*—although visited occasionally by a missionary—and the inhabitants had selected this romantic and solitary spot for their place of sepulture.

The funeral party arranged themselves around the grave, a prayer was offered up in a broad Scotch dialect, by a veteran Presbyterian—one of the first settlers—the coffin was lowered, and two or three of the by-standers began slowly and cautiously to shovel in the sand. The dimensions of the coffin showed that the inmate had not arrived to years of maturity, but this was set beyond a doubt by an inscription rudely carved upon the lid of the plain pine coffin, which ran as follows:—

"Mary Coate,
Aged ninety years."

A tall, dark-featured man, who might have seen some fifty summers, occupied a position at the head of the grave, as chief mourner; but he evinced no emotion—except a visible compression and occasional twitching of the lips; it required not the second glance to convince the observer that he was not wrought upon by grief, but by some evil passion lurking within, as though he was angry at his will having been thwarted. But if the father of the deceased (for in that relation he stood to her) mourned her not, she did not, nevertheless, sink into the grave unregretted. There was at least one heart present which mourned her loss sincerely, and the noise of the first shovel-full of sand upon the coffin—gently as it was lowered—brought forth a shriek so shrill, so thrilling, and which at the same time bespoke such utter wretchedness, that tears started from many a manly eye. All eyes were instantly directed towards the spot from whence it emanated, and there in the back ground was seen a fair-haired girl, whose age could not have exceeded sixteen years, now fainting, but supported in the arms of two young men, while a young woman of tall stature and handsome figure stepped up to her, took hold of her clenched spasmodic hands, and began to chafe her temples. In a few moments the fainting fair one recovered her consciousness, when clasping her hands in bitter agony earnestly implore Your Grace in behalf of themselves and their unfortunate comrades to look to them now in their old age and time of need. They beseech you, their noble Governor, for humanity's sake to take their case into your most gracious consideration, and intercede with Her Majesty's Government for them so that they may even be restored to the eleemosynary allowance which they have been in the receipt of, or that some means of support may be given them.

"Your Petitioners make this their humble supplication with exalted hopes that Your Excellency will not see the Old Soldiers, who have spent their strength in the service and who have served under Your command and in many a hard fought battle, sink into the grave in absolute want.

"And Your Petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

"Signed by several Commuted Pensioners, Sergeants and Privates, whose ages are generally from 56 to 68 years of age, and length of service from 18 to 27 years.

This memorial, it is to be hoped, produced the desired effect, for shortly after advertisements from the Commissariat Department were issued, calling upon all commuted pensioners in the North American Colonies to report themselves, and it is a comfort to reflect that something will shortly be done for the survivors.