

**THE FREE LANCES: A
ROMANCE OF THE
MEXICAN VALLEY, VOL. I**

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The free lances: a romance of the Mexican valley, Vol. I by Mayne Reid

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MAYNE REID

**THE FREE LANCES: A
ROMANCE OF THE
MEXICAN VALLEY, VOL. I**

THE FREE LANCES.

A ROMANCE OF THE MEXICAN VALLEY.

BY
CAPTAIN MAYNE REID.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
REMINGTON & CO.,
134 NEW BOND STREET.

1881.

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THE FREE LANCES.

CHAPTER I.

VOLUNTEERS FOR TEXAS.

“**T**'LL go!”

This laconism came from the lips of a young man who was walking along the Levee of New Orleans. Just before giving utterance to it he had made a sudden stop, facing a dead wall, enlivened,

however, by a larger poster, on which were printed, in conspicuous letters, the words—

“VOLUNTEERS FOR TEXAS!”

Underneath, in smaller type, was a proclamation setting forth the treachery of Santa Anna and the whole Mexican nation, recalling in strong terms the massacre of Fanning, the butchery of Alamo, and other like atrocities; ending in an appeal to all patriots and lovers of freedom to arm, take the field, and fight against the tyrant of Mexico and his myrmidons.

“I’ll go!” said the young man, after a glance given to the printed statement; then, more deliberately re-reading them, he repeated the words with an emphasis that told of his being in earnest.

The poster also gave intimation of a meeting to be held the same evening at a certain *rendezvous* in Poydras Street.

He who read only lingered to make note of

the address, which was the name of a noted *café*. Having done this, he was turning to continue his walk when his path was barred by a specimen of humanity, who stood full six foot six in a pair of alligator leather boots, on the *banquette* by his side.

"So ye're goin', air ye?" was the half interrogative speech that proceeded from the individual thus confronting him.

"What's that to you?" bluntly demanded the young fellow, his temper a little ruffled by what appeared an impertinent obstruction on the part of some swaggering bully.

"More'n you may think for, young 'un," answered the booted Colossus, still standing square in the way; "more'n you may think for, seein' it's through me that bit o' paper's been put up on that ere wall."

"You're a bill-sticker, I suppose?" sneeringly retorted the "young 'un".