

Willcox

# THE SENTINEL.

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### CUTTING OUT.

The Spitfire. A Tale of the Sea.

By CAPT. CHAMBER, R. N.

Captain Chamber's new novel, which we welcome with pleasure, under the above title, is better than "a tale of the sea"—it is a tale both of the sea and the land; a "mingled yarn," though not of good and ill, for both wool and warp are good in their respective ways, and form together a tissue that will last as long as any of the gallant workman's manufactures of a similar kind that have yet proceeded from the literary loom.

The tale is a wild one, not connected with any great degree of art, or carried out with much care or consistency. Sailor-like, the author dashes at all that his fancy pictures as feasible for the purposes of excitement and variety.

Referring to the Naval annals of 1801, we find it simply recorded that "on the 21st July of that year, the boats commanded by Lts. Keith, Maxwell, and Woodley Losack,—of the Doris, 36, Charles Brisbane—the Beaulieu, 50, S. Poyuz—and the Uranie, 26, W. H. Gage, captured, by boarding, La Chevette 20, French and Spanish Fleet." Of this exploit, Captain Chamber has given a sketch that will gratify every true sailor.

"On the 20th of July, the boats of the Doris and Beaulieu left their ships, equipped for a desperate service; and such was the ardour of the men employed, that they strove one division against the other to near the corvette. In this effort to be first, the regularity which would better have been preserved by a little less enthusiasm, and a little more discretion, was disturbed; the two divisions separated, and those left behind, for some reason or other turned round, and pulled back again; whilst those who had reached the entrance of the bay, not willing to meet a certain defeat by pushing alongside without the aid of their comrades, lay upon their oars awaiting their arrival. In this position they remained, until the first streak of daylight warned them of the necessity of returning; for to attempt the attack without the protection of darkness, was a madness none contemplated. With many a bitter curse against those who apparently had not done their utmost to reach the bay, the oars were again in motion, the boats discovered by the corvette, and any advantage derivable from a surprise evidently lost. Much useless recrimination took place.

In the mean time, the Frenchman were not slow to profit by the discovery. The corvette, about noon of the 21st, weighed, and ran further in under a strong battery, and there was moored. Some soldiers were embarked, her quarters were cleared, the guns loaded almost to the muzzles, and other precautions very gratifying to those on board the corvette, and very much the reverse to the attacking party, were taken. The more danger, the more honour; the greater difficulty, the greater merit. The Captain saw the corvette removed; but it did not for a second alter their determination; on the contrary, when the corvette in all the pride of security, by way of laughing at her enemies, hoisted an English ensign under a French one, the crew of the Doris gave three cheers, and became the more anxious to try their strength; nor did they care one straw for the additional force, in the shape of a large gunboat, which was placed at the entrance of the bay, to give timely notice of the approach, or the turning and twisting of the rammers, as the French artillery prepared the guns of the battery. The dark was anxiously expected, and when half-past nine came, the crew were in the boats, without waiting the usual summons. Again under the same leader, they left their ships; and with hearts and hands ready and willing, they approached the bay with more regularity than the preceding night. They mustered fifteen boats in all, containing two hundred and eighty officers and men—the Robust, a seventy-four, having added her barge and pinnace to the boats of the frigates.

On leaving the shore, a boat was discovered; and the Commander of the expedition, judging it proper to secure it, went himself with five others in chase, leaving the rest to wait his return, or slowly to progress towards the corvette as they had still a distance of six miles to pull before they arrived alongside of the enemy. Some time elapsed, and the commanding officer did not return. The next in command, Mr. Maxwell,\* who was a Lieutenant of the Beaulieu, thought it just as well to get close in shore in order to be ready for an attack when the commanding officer should return. The force was diminished to one hundred and eighty men; but never were there more resolute hearts than in those boats; and not one surpassed Albert, who, to the common brute courage inherent in most men, joined the honorable feelings of a man of high family. There was no cheering; this was a business of silence and secrecy, to creep on the enemy unawares, and to capture the vessel without bloodshed, by a surprise. As the muffled oars dipped silently in the water and the boats as silently approached the object of attack, many and many were the eyes which were uselessly turned in the direction of the other boats, the crews of which would have so materially assisted in the enterprise. But it was all in vain; the night was far spent; the corvette lay at anchor not a mile from the boats.

"Not a word was spoken; the seamen, as they rested on their oars, listened with intense anxiety to catch the sound of an oar; but time gradually elapsed; it was past midnight, and it wanted not more than two hours and a half to day-break. To delay was useless; to return foreign to the wishes of every man in the boats. The disparity of force was alarming; the determination of the men cheering. Maxwell now called the boats close together, and gave his instructions. It was a great risk for this officer to run; but he was confident of success. He knew the character of British Seamen, and began his short address in the manner most likely to animate them. "The more danger may lads," said he "the more honour." We must go on without the other boats. Thomson, Wilkinson, and Hervey, you are smart fore-topmen on board your own ship; let us see how quick you can be in loosing the corvette's fore-top-sail; you need not be nice in casting off the gasket—a sharp knife and an easy conscience is what you most require. Now do you hear, you three fellows; don't stand talking to those Frenchmen on the forecastle, we'll make them comfortable; your duty is on the fore-top-sail yard;—but let's see, you must pick out another?—Allow, Sir, said Albert, "to volunteer; I dare say I shan't be behind-hand."—"Well said," replied Maxwell; "What ship do you belong to?"—"The Doris," replied Albert.—"I shan't forget you, my lad;—what's your name?"—"Mortimer, Sir."—"A devilish good name, too. Now listen—in the Beaulieu boats you are to board on the starboard bow. Neville," he continued, addressing the officer who commanded the Uranie's boats, "you, with your own ship's boats, the one from the Robust, and the remaining one of the Doris will board on the larboard bow; and Burke," said he "you must make up in your boat for the loss of the other five belonging to your ship, which seems to have taken a long time to chase one boat; mind, two of your men will cut the cables—there's no use for any long-winded yarn about this business. There she is, at present a French corvette; I am in hopes before two o'clock she will be clear of the anchorage, with an English Commanding officer, get into your stations in two divisions, and stand by, directly we are discovered, to give way like British seamen, who are resolved to succeed in the enterprise."

The boats soon backed into their stations; and the word being given to give way, lustily, but quietly, the gallant fellows advanced to the attack. It was a little after one o'clock when the corvette was distinguished. The French, who expected the attack, had been equally vigilant; every preparation had been made; three hundred and thirty nine men were on board of her; the guns had been loaded to the muzzles; and the confidence that they could protect their vessel from every boat attack was general throughout the crew and the soldiers on board of her. They now saw the enemy advancing, and prepared to give them a warm reception. As a matter of caution—not that any doubt existed in the mind of the Commander of the corvette, as to the hostile intentions of the boats—he hailed them. It was answered by Maxwell, calling out to his brave companions—"Now then, my lads!" then dashed the oars in the water. The silence was broken by the cheers, which were heard far from the scene of action, whilst the animating words from each officer, as they said, "Give way, my jolly dogs!—hurrah for the first on board!"—was all that was requisite to make every man feel the importance of his best endeavours; and it seemed as if all hearts had felt the appeal, for each boat's crew, no longer tenacious about a discovery, bent their backs and gave way with all their strength. No sooner was this done, than the contents of a broadside came in amongst them. The grape and canister-shot fell like hail around them; and the water was dashed into the boats by the round shot, which came bounding along duck & drake fashion. The discharge, enough to have checked the advance of any foe, was received with a loud cheer—"Now's your time, lads, to get on board before they can load again; give way," said Maxwell, as he stood up in his boat, and the words were re-echoed by Neville and Burke, who imitating their leader, stood up and cheered their men.

In the meantime, the French soldiers opened a steady, well-directed fire, with musketry from the shore; whilst the troops who had been embarked were not slow to imitate so good an example. Between each shot might be heard—"Give way—give way."—whilst a loud dash of the oars was heard on board the corvette. Each boat pulled to the station allotted her; and the boat pulled to the simultaneous rush to board. Crews made one at all points, presented a brilliant front of loading pikes, backed up by the small armed men, whilst those armed with tomahawks slashed away bravely to defend their ship. Every exertion was made to overcome this resistance, but without effect. The boats' crews were driven back, in spite of their clinging like cats to the ropes, and fighting like devils to gain the decks; whilst the French, who saw the first attempt of their enemies checked, gave a cheer of defiance, and actually boarded the boats. Never, since man to man opened single warfare, was more desperate bravery exhibited on both sides. The Frenchmen, who had so gallantly followed up their success, never returned to their ship; a struggle ensued, and the intruders thrown overboard. The fire-arms of the English were now perfectly useless and abandoned; but, with their cutlasses only, they again endeavoured to board; again the Frenchmen bravely opposed them. But the assailant is ever more desperate than the assailed. Undaunted by the furious fire from shore and ship—undismayed by the forest of pikes which bristled round her bows—unappalled by the frequent death wounds dealt with savage ferocity from the boarding pikes, the British seamen, unused to a reverse, again and again made the desperate assault, and finally established a landing on the forecastle. "Hurrah for the first aloft," was heard from Mortimer, who, sweeping his cutlass to clear his way, jumped upon the rigging, dropped his cutlass on the deck, and springing aloft, was soon to lay out on the fore-top-sail yard. Here he found another precaution had been taken.

All the gear was stopped up along the yard—a second, the sharp knife reminded that advantage;—the foot-ropes fell; he was the first on the yard! nay, so expeditiously was this effected, and so well did the seaman stationed to loose the sail obey their orders, that in the small space of three minutes, from the gaining the first footing on deck, the French corvette, known as the Chevette, had her three topsails and courses cut adrift, and the sails hung down for sheeting home. The noise of the falling sails sounded more dreadful in the ears of the French than the rattling of small arms, or the clash of the tomahawks. They felt they were prisoners; for they knew, that once removed from the batteries, they had no confidence to bear up against their assailants. The first tremor of fear, which was manifested by one of the crew of the Chevette jumping overboard, ran like an electric spark through all the rest. They threw down their arms, and jumped overboard, endeavouring to reach the shore; whilst the sight or the canvass animated the English, who rushed toward the quarter-deck, and notwithstanding the gallant opposition of some, who disdained to fly, succeeded in capturing it. The French still hoped to retrieve their disgrace. From the main deck, they opened a harassing fire of musketry; but the cables were cut, the ship under canvas—an English seaman, named Henry Walcanas—an English seaman, named Henry Walcanas, was at the helm, and in spite of his wounds, he stood true to his post, and was the first to call out with a steady voice—"She goes a-head now, Sir, for she answers her helm." Then was the cheer of victory heard!—and those below, who still vainly clung to a last hope, finding that hope gone, surrendered and ceased firing.

The firing from the shore, which was now confined to the large guns, put down the light air of wind which was favouring the prize, and she now became much harassed by the batteries; but she was a prize, and little did the crews of the different boats heed the Turkish salutes, which came well directed toward them. On the forecastle was John Brown, the boatswain of the Beaulieu. He had escaped by a miracle;—the boat in which he had been placed, finding how desperate the case was forward on the first attack, dropped under the quarter-deck, and Brown led the way to board, establishing a landing in the quarter gallery; but here all proceeding was impeded—the door had been barricaded up, and the boatswain kicked in vain, until finding all attempts fruitless, he clambered up to the taffrail, and got upon the quarter deck. At this moment, he saw the landing was made good in the forecastle, and he knew that the boatswain's station was there. Sweeping his cutlass under his head, he roared out—"Make a line there you d—d parlez-vous!" and rushing there he took his "call out," and at every order gave the regular pipe, as if he had been on board his own ship, the Beaulieu. As the shot came his own ship, the Beaulieu. As the shot came, Max-fax, and Willis was severely wounded, Maxwell called another man to come to the helm; but the answer came from Albert, who, standing close to the Quartermaster said—"I can assist him, Sir." Again a light breeze sprang up, the sails were trimmed, the Chevette was fast drawing from the land, when the six boats which had been absent returned, and Maxwell relinquished the command. Great was the satisfaction of the different Captains at the result of this gallant enterprise; warmly indeed were the seamen welcomed by their messmates; and many were the tears shed over their fallen friends. The slaughter had been proportionate to the resistance—eleven had been killed, and fifty-seven wounded; whilst on board of the Chevette eighty-five had been killed, and 57 wounded.

The great, the brilliant exploit above mentioned, found praise from every lip. It was a daring, well-planned, well executed attack, and only inferior to the cutting out of the Hermione. Albert had embarked in stirring times; Nelson's fame was high; the navy was the bulwark of the nation; every action worthy of record found a poet ready to embrace its fame; the song passed from ship to ship, from forecastle to forecastle; and when the thorough-bred seaman talked over their fun on shore, and twisted the long yarn of strange adventures on a Saturday night, then it was that the song went round, in which the great deeds of our profession were recorded, and the young and the old, the grave and the gay, caught an enthusiasm from the words, and felt anxious to try their powers against the inveterate enemy of Great Britain."

TORONTO, June 17.—There has been important news during the past week from Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. The political excitement in the latter colony appears to have been much allayed in consequence of the appointment of Mr. Morris, one of the leading members of the Reform majority in the House of Assembly, to the office of Colonial Treasurer, accompanied with a seat in the Council. Mr. Morris has taken office apparently with the sanction of his political friends; and we accordingly find the Reform press supporting the Government, while the Tories are in bitter opposition. If Governor Prescott improve the advantage which he has gained by following his new Councilor's advice and by pursuing a policy that will give satisfaction to the people at large, we have little doubt that the same harmony will prevail in Newfoundland that has for some time happily existed in New Brunswick.

In Nova Scotia the aspect of political affairs is not so favourable. The address of the House of Assembly was not presented to Sir Colin Campbell was not presented to Her Majesty, owing to its having been transmitted informally; and it has further been reported that Lord John Russell approves of Sir Colin Campbell's conduct in conducting his government in direct opposition "to the well understood wishes and interests of the people." This however we cannot believe. The Government will hardly be insane enough to give the lie to all their despatches, and other manifestos lately promulgated in Canada, and which, on the assumption that they intend to support Sir Colin Campbell, must have been written designedly with a view of deceiving the people of the Canadas. We know by experience that Ministers of State are very cautious not to lessen the dignity of their Governors in the Colonies, and we can therefore readily imagine that Sir Colin Campbell has received a despatch that will enable him to boast that he has triumphed over the Assembly. We shall however look to practical results, not to unmeaning despatches. A new House of Assembly is about to be chosen in Nova Scotia, and it is quite likely that Lord John Russell will await the result of the elections, which Sir Colin Campbell has probably told him will turn in favour of the Tories, before he determines on his line of policy. If the people of Nova Scotia sustain their faithful Representatives in their noble stand in defence of their civil liberties, then we have no fear of opposition from Lord John Russell or the British Ministry. If, on the other hand, they should abandon them, they must be prepared for the degradation and slavery which will inevitably be the result. We shall watch the proceedings in Nova Scotia with intense interest, but without the slightest fear of the speedy triumph of the liberal party.

Emigrants.—Our Kingston correspondent gives a melancholy picture of the deplorable destitution of numbers of emigrants who have arrived in that place. They are reduced to the humiliating condition of begging from door to door for the common necessaries of life. Perhaps this picture may be, in some measure, exaggerated; but, putting the most favourable construction possible on their condition; it is a lamentable scene. It is one that must awaken the sympathies of the charitable and well disposed. We must arouse ourselves to some systematic exertion, and form some well arranged plan of softening the miseries of our deluded fellow countrymen. We say deluded, because we are aware that many who were in comparative comfort at home, were induced to leave the land of their birth by the chimerical prospects held out to them by itinerant emigration spouters, who no doubt were deputed to fill the blank made by the Bond Head policy, and raise the drooping spirits of the land jobbers. We ask, will the subscribers to the Rolpa Fund to forward the emigration scheme, come forward with the same alacrity to soften down the miseries they have been the voluntary promoters of, as they did when they contributed to that cursed fund? Our political societies will have a wide field this season to exercise their philanthropic designs. It is time they should be up and stirring. "A stitch in time saves nine." If exertion be not speedily made to give employment to those who need it, and wholesome food to those who want it, epidemic, the constant attendant of famine and want, will stalk over our land, and sweep thousands off in its devastating progress.—Toronto Mirror.

THE OUTRAGE UPON THE GREAT BRITAIN.—FURTHER PARTICULARS.  
The Oswego Palladium of Wednesday says,—Yesterday Lett and Dafeo underwent an examination before Justice Barnes, when Dafeo made a full confession of the transaction, the objects of which he declared was to burn the Great Britain, for the purpose of reviving the ill-feeling on the frontier between the two countries, for the purpose of promoting a revolution in Canada.—Lett and himself appear to be the only persons implicated in the transaction. It appears that in the trunk was deposited two jugs filled with a compound of Gum Copal, Venus Turpentine, Salt Petre, and other articles of a most combustible nature. Under the necks of the jugs was placed a bottle containing a pound of powder, with a fuse running from the powder to the outside of the trunk, which could be ignited at pleasure. The trunk was then closely packed with cotton batting. On the explosion but one of the jugs was broken, and the compound being badly prepared, did not produce the expected result. Other testimony having been obtained, corroborating in some measure the evidence of Dafeo, the prisoners were remanded to jail to await their trial at the Circuit Court to be held in this village on the fourth Tuesday of the present month.

MONTREAL, June 18.  
Now that the tide of Emigration has fairly set in upon us with a deep and rapid current which has not been experienced for some years back, it is most gratifying to find that there exists in both Provinces, but especially in Upper Canada, a disposition to receive the welcome strangers with a degree of hospitality as cordial, as it cannot fail to be productive of the best effects upon the general interests of the Country. We find that, in every quarter of the sister Province, exertions are made by all classes of the inhabitants, not only to conciliate the good will and friendship of the emigrant, but to render his new condition as little irksome as possible. A sincere and general desire seems to be entertained that emigrants should early become aware of the comparative superiority of these Provinces, as a field for what may be denominated the capital of labour, to the United States.

Not only so, but of the natural preference which ought at all times to be given by the British emigrant to a Colony of the Empire, where the civil and religious institutions of the Parent State are maintained in full force, and where his industry and enterprise, at the same time that they promote his own individual comfort and happiness, serve to enrich and strengthen in no ordinary degree, and by

an accelerated pace, the country of his birth with which the best feelings of his heart must ever be associated. While this is the case, it is equally gratifying to find, that the Executive Government of neither Province has been remiss in discharging the important duties which the circumstances of the case of imperatively demanded. We have already had occasion to allude, with sentiments of unequivocal approbation, to the active and practical efforts made by his Excellency the Governor General in providing, as much as possible, for the necessities of the destitute emigrants upon landing here, and in forwarding them to their destination in Upper Canada; while in that Province, as stated in the papers, instructions have been given to employ as many emigrants as possible upon the public works.

We learn that with this view the improvements in the River Trent have been recommenced—that the Welland Canal is to be repaired and widened—that a new road from Lake Ontario to Lake Huron, and another from London to Port Sarnia, are immediately to be commenced, if such has not already been actually the case. Now, if it is so, a more judicious and patriotic provision could not have been made for destitute but able-bodied emigrants, willing to earn their bread by honest industry. It is also evident that such a provision will be attended with the best effects upon the temper and moral character of the poor emigrant; that it will at once afford to him an asylum and the means of subsistence, and prevent him from becoming an idle and wandering pauper in the neighboring States, where he is looked upon with contempt and jealousy, and where, even if employed, he will be treated more like a slave than a freeman. The truth is, that while the Imperial Government continue to refuse to give aid to emigrants, or to devise some scheme for at once planting them in the wilderness immediately upon their arrival in the Colonies, some local public employment must always be provided for them; otherwise it appears clear to us as noon-day, that in a few years, these Provinces will become inundated with an idle, vagrant, and demoralized emigrant population, that will bring about a state of anarchy and confusion unexampled in Colonial history.

But we hope better things of the imperial Government; and trust that, if no aid be given to emigrants during the present session of Parliament, another year will not be permitted to pass, without something being effectually done towards establishing Emigration on a better and sounder foundation. But let it be remembered that any public assistance given to emigrants, must not be confined to the mother country. It must, in part at least meet them upon their arrival in the Colonies, and be of such a nature and extent, as will enable them at once to go upon unsettled lands; or to carve out for themselves, by laborious industry, the means of becoming at no distant period, permanent settlers and respectable members of society. Whatever may be expended with this view, will return double-fold into the lap of the Mother Country, in additional demands for her manufactures; and thus the policy, not less than the utility of a systematic plan of Emigration becomes every day more and more evident.

We are truly happy to find that the people of Upper Canada are exhibiting a very laudable and patriotic spirit on the subject of the barbarous destruction of Brock's Monument; and are determined that it shall forthwith be replaced. A meeting is to be held at Queenston, for the purpose of considering the best means of giving effect to the feeling which so generally prevails throughout the Province on this subject. It is stated in the Niagara Chronicle, that the engineer under whose superintendence the monument was constructed, has given it as his opinion, that the shattered column cannot long stand; and that it will be necessary to rebuild the testimonial on the foundation.

On the 4th inst. being the annual training day of the Upper Canada Militia, Colonel Sir Allen McNab addressed the Gore Battalions on the subject of the Monument; and in doing so remarked, that it was just twenty years ago that day, since the Militia formed very near the spot on which they then stood, and marched the same evening, under the command of Sir John Harvey, with the 49th and part of the 41st and 8th Regiments, and achieved a brilliant victory over an enemy four times their number at Stony Creek.

Resolutions having for their object the restoration of Brock's Monument, were then submitted and carried by acclamation. It was resolved that the officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates of the 3d and 12th Regiments of the Gore Militia could not permit the present opportunity to pass, without expressing in the strongest terms, their abhorrence of the attempt made to destroy the Monument erected to the memory of the gallant Sir Isaac Brock, on the Heights of Queenstown, an event unparalleled in the history of the civilized world; that from no persons or body of men, could the funds necessary for the reconstruction of the Monument be so properly derived as the Militia of Upper Canada; that in pursuance of this opinion, they cordially agreed to and recommended, that a subscription should be opened by the officers and men comprising the one hundred and twelve Regiments of Militia in Upper Canada, and that the quota subscribed should in no instance exceed one day's pay from each individual of every rank; that it be recommended that the commanding officer of regiments should open the necessary subscription lists; that the Adjutant General be requested to solicit the permission of His Excellency the Lieut. Governor for this purpose; and that the thanks of the meeting were due and cordially tendered to the Hon. George Moffatt and the people of Montreal, who so nobly came forward and offered their valuable aid towards carrying into successful operation the measures which those Resolutions were intended to effect.