

QUEBEC, DECEMBER 13.

Narrative of the loss of the Ship Norval, Capt. McKechie, off St. Anne's River, below Cape Chat, on the 14th November, 1808.

The Norval was loaded by Mr. Mure of this place Merchant, with near 16,000 bushels of wheat for Lisbon, and sailed from hence on the evening of Monday the 14th November, in company with the Brig Charlotte, Captain Cornfoot, for Jamaica. On the morning of the 16th the Pilot was discharged between Green Island and Bic, the Charlotte Bill in company, and also the Ship Oughton, Capt. Baird, bound to Greenock; they proceeded with the wind at S. W. and next day fell in with the Ship Aurora, Capt. McKie, bound to Greenock, which with the two other vessels already mentioned, out sailed the Norval, in the course of the day, and were not again seen from her. About nine o'clock in the morning of the 18th, a violent gale came on, by degrees, from the S. E. which varied to E. S. E. and then to N. E. when it blew very hard, accompanied with fleet and thick weather, the sea running high and the Ship laying too, under a close reefed main top-sail, the cargo shifted soon after, and gave the vessel a considerable list to port; the pump was founded, and fourteen inches of water found in the well, which was soon pumped dry, but the vessel lay over so much, that a great deal of the water could not get to the pumps, and Capt. McKechie was confident she had sprung a leak; a good deal of wheat came from the pumps, and they were in consequence hoisted up and one of them tinned to prevent the wheat getting into it; the Mate and Carpenter both examined the well and found one place by which the wheat got in, which they secured and the pumps were put back into their place. The Ship was now wore to the Southward, the gale increasing, and the sea running mountains high; the cargo again shifted, and gave the vessel a very considerable heel to starboard; on founding, the leak was found to have greatly increased, there being three feet water in the hold; the pumps very soon choked and became useless. An attempt was then made to run before the wind, the mizen-mast and main-top-sail yard having been previously cut away to ease the ship, but she would not obey the helm, owing to the heel. All hands then set about throwing wheat in bags, overboard from the after run, in hopes of getting at the leak, which they had discovered to be under the starboard quarter; but they soon found the water had got three feet above the denage, and the pumps being useless, nothing remained but to bail with buckets through the cabin scuttle, and thereby to endeavour to keep the ship afloat; until they got nearer the land; the leak gained fast upon them, and they soon left off bailing, the man at the helm having given notice that he had got the ship's head to the land; upon which, four hands were placed at the wheel, to keep her if possible in that direction, which they did for near three quarters of an hour, when she broached too, and ever after drifted about as the waves directed lying like a log on the water, with the lee cabin window under. They remained in this state, until about two o'clock in the morning of the 19th, when the wind became less violent, the sea however, still running very high; every effort was again made to get the ship before the wind, but to no purpose. About ten in the forenoon, the tackles were fixed to the long boat with intention to abandon the ship, but in the attempt to hoist her out she was beat to pieces by the violent motion. At twelve, the weather became moderate and the yawl was lowered from the stern into which Capt. McKechie, the 1st and 2d Mate, Carpenter, Boatswain and seven others embarked, leaving five on board which Capt. McKechie wished to take with him but was overruled by numbers; and the boat pushed off; this proved a lucky circumstance there being little doubt but the whole would have perished, the boat being fully laden although those in her, had neither provisions or clothes excepting what they wore. They quitted the ship full six leagues from the land, and got to St. Anne's river below Cape Chat, in about four hours, where they found two small houses, occupied by three brothers named McMillan, a lame man named La Vielle, with the mother, wife and sister of the elder McMillan, all of whom received them with the utmost kindness, and hospitality; and the men immediately went off with Mr. Stewart the mate, in their own fishing boat in search of the ship, which they reached about six o'clock, and found the five men left behind, who had made a raft of spars and hencoops, but had got themselves into a state to make little use of it. Mr. Stewart took them into the boat with all the clothes he could find, in the cabin and fleerage, and also two quarters of beef, two carcasses of mutton, and some bread, with which he got safe to his shipmates at one o'clock in the morning of the 20th. Next day the weather was clear and nothing could be seen of the ship, wherefore they are confident the must have gone down in the night; the more so as when Mr. Stewart left her she had three or four planks of the main deck under water. Capt. McKechie having received a hurt in his leg, could not leave St. Anne's until Monday the 21st, when with the second mate, a mulatto passenger, and Daniel McMillan as a pilot, he came off in the small boat, Mr. Stewart and the others having gone by land in the morning—they rowed all day, and the following night, until seven in the morning, when they hauled up the boat (as they conceived) into a place of safety, and made a fire in the wood at a little distance, where they remained until next morning. When they went to the place where they left the boat, they found to their great disappointment, that it had been dashed to pieces by the surf, and a part of her lay on the beach at a small distance. They returned to the fire and remained all that day and next night, during which the mate and his party joined them and soon after went on. The hurt on Capt. McKechie's leg was so painful that he could not accompany them, but followed slowly in the course of the day along the beach till he reached Mr. Fraser's at Matane, where he was hospitably received. Here he remained four days—the mate and his party also remained two days at Matane, one night at the house of a person named Harris and afterwards at Mr. Fraser's until they proceeded on their journey—Capt. McKechie and the second mate followed two days after,

having left the mulatto passenger at Matane; they overtook the mate at Father Point, where they again stopped four days at the houses of Mr. Ross the father and his three sons all pilots where they were comfortably lodged and hospitably treated. From thence Capt. McKechie and the second mate got to Mr. Trudelle's at Rimouski, who not only received and treated them with great hospitality in his house, but insisted on their taking provisions along with them. The mate and others had passed two days before, and received very hospitable and kind treatment from the Parish Priest—next night they slept at a Madame Petit's and thence got to Trois Pistoles, where they procured several carioles, and the mate, carpenter, boatswain and cabin boy got to Quebec on the 8th inst. Capt. McKechie, the second mate and four of the crew arrived on the 12th.

Next to Divine Providence, Capt. McKechie and his crew are indebted to the humanity of the poor people at St. Anne's river, for their preservation, who not contented with sharing liberally their winter stock of provisions (consisting of fish and potatoes,) with the unfortunate sufferers, conducted them to Father Point, a distance of thirty six leagues without fee or reward; which they positively refused to receive when offered by Capt. McKechie.

Capt. McKechie and his officers have authorized the writer of this narrative, to express gratitude to these good people as well as to Mr. Fraser of Matane, the Pilots at Father Point, Mr. Trudelle of Rimouski, and the parish Priest of Rimouski, Mr. Le Courtois, who in addition to hospitably lodging and victualling the mate and his party and paying a man to conduct them, offered Capt. McKechie what money he had which he had not however occasion to accept, having got a supply at Father Point. Captain McKechie expresses much gratitude for the kind treatment he met with every where, on the way, and in the last instance at the house of Mr. Francois Bernier at Cape St. Ignace, where he lodged the night before his arrival in Town.

About 2 leagues above Matane, the mate found on the beach, a barrel of pork marked W R* in ink, or black paint, which did not appear to have been long in the water. Mr. Stewart the mate of the Norval, brought accounts of the Schooner Juno, Capt. Plante belonging to the King's Posts, being wrecked about five leagues above Cape Chat and one boy drowned.

* It appears by reference to the Custom-House, that the Brig William, Capt. Adams, was cleared for Newfoundland on the 1st November, having on board, 42 barrels of pork, marked W R.

DECEMBER 22.

On Saturday night, the 17th instant, a fire was discovered in an out house occupied by a Mr. Johnson in Fabrique street. The fire had made such progress before it was discovered, that it was then impossible to subdue it. The flames next communicated to two buildings, the property of Mr. Robert Ritchie, Taylor, which were also consumed. Their further progress was, however, fortunately stopped, by the exertions of the inhabitants and military encouraged by the example of the his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor and other persons of the first distinction. The conduct of the military, in general, is deserving of the highest praise, and strongly evinces the advantage of men accustomed to order and obedience: It is principally to their early attendance at the fire, that its ravages have not been much more extensive.

The loss in buildings has not been very considerable; but we are sorry to learn, that some of the inhabitants in the vicinity of the conflagration, have suffered materially in their effects, many of which have been carried off and not returned. This is entirely to be attributed to want of regulations for the removal of property exposed to danger; and the proprietors themselves are not exempt from blame. Persons of all descriptions are suffered to enter the houses, to assist in removing effects; whereas, it is not impracticable for the proprietors to place confidential persons at the entries of their houses, with orders to prevent, by force if necessary, the admission of any, excepting those whose characters are not liable to suspicion: such, it is always to be hoped, will be found in abundance, to assist their fellow citizens in danger; and even on the most pressing occasions, the loss of time if any, which might occur, would be compensated by a greater regularity, and a smaller injury to the articles removed, than by the present method. Places of deposit might easily be pointed out by the person at the door; and confidential persons might also be placed over these deposits if necessary.

But, when to the desire to assist those in distress, is added the consideration that the principal inducement to those incendiary attempts which lately created so much alarm in this Province must be the probability of obtaining plunder during the conflagration, it is hoped, that the zeal and public spirit which the citizens have already shewn on similar occasions, will induce them to adopt such means as will furnish a body of men, properly equipped for the purpose, which will always be ready, to join the neighbours, on the breaking out of a fire, for the assistance of those whose situations may expose them to danger, either in their persons or effects; and thereby effectually prevent the introduction into the houses, of persons on whom no reliance can be placed, and the consequent security of effects removed. We could point out a variety of circumstances, relative to this object; but we refrain, from a conviction that there are others whose experience enables them to do it, much better, and with greater propriety.

We have not heard how the fire commenced: Indeed, we believe it has not been discovered to any certainty; and we observe with regret, that there are strong suspicions that an attempt was made to set fire to Ritchie's house, about the time the fire at his shop was got under: A straw bed in the garret was discovered on fire, at that time, with a quantity of old chairs piled on it, without an apparent possibility of the fire having been communicated by sparks from the conflagration. We would not create alarm; but we think it our duty to communicate this circumstance as it happened, and which we consider as established on sufficient testimony. But whether it have been really the act of some incendiary or not, so long as there is a probability of plunder being obtained, so long will there be a probability

of the attempts of incendiaries; nor is it difficult to persuade ourselves, that those who plunder their fellow citizens under such circumstances, would find any compunction in setting fire to their houses in order to have an opportunity of obtaining that plunder. The only compunction which such beings feel, is at the sight of the gallows; which, we believe, is the punishment in both cases.

SAVANNAH, DECEMBER 14.

In the Schooner Citizen, Capt. Moore, from Cape Francois, whose arrival we mentioned in a former paper, came passenger, (among several others) M. MAGNYTOT, the Colonial Prefect of St. Domingo (the same gentleman who is mentioned in the subsequent extract from a New-York paper) and who, we are informed by a gentleman passenger in the Citizen, was compelled by force to leave the Colony—General Rochambeau since the month of October it appears had taken a dislike to the presence of M. MAGNYTOT, who during his residence in the colony had uniformly endeavoured to repress the dilapidations of the General and his adherents, and consequently became the subject of Rochambeau's implacable resentment; and who, after having every obstacle thrown in his way that could obstruct or embarrass the exercise of his functions as Colonial Prefect, eventually found himself forced to leave the colony, or remain at the hazard of his life, which was rumoured to be in danger. It was not until after attacks so arbitrary, against a man possessing the confidence of the French government, that Rochambeau completely laid aside the mask; which he did, not only by continuing his outrages upon the prefect, but by publicly disregarding the *arretes* of the First Consul, and of public opinion, in placing at the head of the administration, a man, who possessed alike the abhorrence and contempt both of the French and American commerce. This ordonnance *pro tem.* it is reported on good authority, has proceeded to sign bills of Exchange on the public treasury of France for the Colonial Prefect; a power, which we understand the Prefect has not delegated to him; and which of course, is an important piece of information to the commerce of this country, in order to secure it against imposition from this quarter.

Capt. Moore, of the Citizen, also brought with him 12 prisoners belonging to the English marine, which were put on board of him by Rochambeau, with orders to deliver them to commodore Loring, cruising off the Cape; but not meeting with him, or any other English vessel, on his arrival, he delivered them to the British Vice-Consul in this city.

NEW-YORK, NOVEMBER 7.

FRENCH CIVILITY.

On the 4th inst. the armed French Schooner Ocean, commanded by Capt. Fournier, was boarded by a Pilot of this port 6 or 8 miles off at sea, the Hook bearing W. by N.—The Captain of the Schooner immediately commenced an abusive attack on the Pilot, because he had not been boarded the day before when he was off the Island. The Pilot, conceiving himself treated with much insult, observed, that he would not take charge of the Schooner if the Captain continued to abuse him—to which the Captain replied, that he might do as he pleased, it was a matter of indifference to him; the Pilot then left the Schooner; one of the French officers at the same time making several attempts to strike James Malcom, who was in the Pilot boat's yawl; immediately after the Pilot's return to the Pilot boat, a shot was fired at him from a swivel on board the Schooner. The Pilot then, to prevent being fired at, again returned to the Schooner, found them under arms; and informed the Captain, that if he would treat him better, he would take charge of the Schooner; to which the Captain appeared to assent, but when the Pilot directed his boat-keeper to return with the yawl to the Pilot boat and leave him on board the Schooner, the Captain insisted upon their return with the yawl. The boat-keepers, however, conceiving that they ought to obey the orders of the Pilot, refused to return; the Captain then ordered his armed men to fire upon the yawl, which was then under the Schooner's quarter, the Frenchmen then ran on the quarter deck, pointed a swivel at the yawl, and prepared to fire, on which the Pilot ordered the yawl along side again, when James Malcom was violently seized by four armed men, forced on board the Schooner, and put in irons by the Captain's express directions, who declared he would keep him in that situation until he could deliver him up to the French Consul.—Malcom had been confined about twenty or thirty minutes, when (the Pilot refusing to take charge of the Schooner unless he was liberated) the Captain ordered his irons to be taken off, and permitted him to leave the Schooner.—It is worthy of remark, that Malcom had given no provocation whatever to these lawless wretches; and that he is a man who sustains a very high character for his integrity, industry and urbanity.

BOSTON, DECEMBER 27.

The British Ship Hawk, Capt. Knight, from Demerara for Portsmouth, foundered in lat. 32, lon. 66. the crew, &c. proceeded in the boat to a Baltimore schooner. All the persons immediately jumped on board, except three passengers, a gentleman, his wife and child. The gentleman handed his child on board, when the boat, not being made fast, drifted off. It was 8 o'clock in the evening, and very dark. The unfortunate parents were never seen afterwards. The child was a fine boy, about 11 months old. A Mr. Howell, at St. Martins, where the Baltimore schooner proceeded, adopted the child.

HALIFAX, JANUARY 21.

A letter from St. Lucia of a late date says, "Three French prizes have been made here; they entered, not knowing that the Island had been taken from the French. One of them has 419 slaves on board.—The whole are valued at 40,000 sterling."