

damage to her opponent were it not for the serious defects in her armament. She was one of the contract, or as they were called *coffin* brigs from the faults of their construction, being crank, unsteady, and constructed of so slight materials as to frequently incur condemnation after the first cruise, that is if they returned in safety which was not always the case; the pitiful economy of the day had manned them with an ineffective crew who were not trained to the great guns because it would cause an expenditure of ammunition—hence the defects were unknown till the hour of trial arrived and the results as detailed.

THE FAREWELL TO KING THEODORE.

(From "Starnes' Captive Missionary.")

The order that we should quit the camp without delay. We were quite willing to obey this behest had not two of the chiefs, who were friendly disposed towards us, unsolicited sent a message to their master that we were both to leave without a parting interview. Certainly we had no desire to encounter once more the ash-coloured countenance and vengeance flashing eye of Theodore. The chiefs knew that perfectly well, and to forestall that sad catastrophe, which they anticipated the commander-in-chief of the British forces would visit with a retributive vengeance, they took every precaution to avert it. Two or three messages flew forwards and backwards from the king to his white captives, and at last the order came that his Majesty would see Mr. Rassam and no one else. Our friend, in full diplomatic uniform, and surrounded by a whole concourse of chiefs and royal domestics, hurried on to Fahla, whilst the other seven captives and Mrs. Rosenthal, who was a semi-prisoner and always associated with us, which was not the case with the rest, were driven along a path that lay at the foot of serrated cliffs and shivered rocks that were literally crowded with spectators. King Theodore, we were told, was not two hundred yards from the spot where he stood. This startled us. Go on—stop—to the right, to the left, were the contradictory commands that hissed in whispering notes along the line formed by the captives and their guards. He mimed in by dizzy precipices and lofty rocks, the frowning countenance of the king in front, and the anxious and expectant gaze of numerous guards in the rear, we resolved not to risk the peril of an unguarded step till we positively knew what course to pursue. Pale and trembling we waited the issue of the next few minutes. The clatter of shields and the glitter of spears made me turn to the right, and to my amazement I beheld Theodore threading his way between huge blocks towards the path where we were standing. Instantly we all fell prostrate on the ground and saluted him. He looked flushed, distracted and wild. When close to me, and I was the fifth in the rear, his fiery gaze lighted for a moment on me, and then, in a smooth, soft tone, he said—"How are you? Good bye." It was the sweetest Amen to which I had ever listened—the most rapturous sentence that ever greeted my ears. It was said that at the very moment when he dismissed Mr. Rassam his hand grasped a gun, evidently with the design of discharging it at his white captives. Had he done so, the group of

musketeers by whom he was surrounded would have followed his example. Impelled by an invisible power, the weapon with the rapidity of the lightning's flash, dropped out of his hold; and Divine mercy, not Theodore's clemency, saved us from a violent death. Slowly and solemnly we marched on our way. There was no haste or hurry, which might have aroused the tyrant's wrath, and brought the executioner upon us, but the measured tramp of men who reluctantly leave a spot where they would willingly linger. Once, however, beyond the hated camp, we accelerated our steps, and did not halt till we were in sight of our liberators' closely ranged conical tents. Evening had already set in, and dark shades shrouded every object from our view. On we rapidly strode. Suddenly we heard a challenge. They were Indian pickets. They saluted us in tones of evident pleasure. We advanced. The hum of voices became more distinct. There was a shout, a cheer, and a hurrah! A clear melodious voice resounded far above the hum and murmur of the wide-stretching lines; it was from its accents the voice of an officer: and the message it conveyed was affecting, solemn, and significant—"God has heard his people's prayer, and disposed King Theodore to let his prisoners go."

NAVAL AND MILITARY.

MILITARY BAD CHARACTERS.—The Commission on Courts Martial have presented or are about to present, their report, and we (*Broad Arrow*) understand that punishment by dismissal is strongly recommended as the only practical means of improving the morale of the army. Putting aside the fearful expense of supporting close upon 4,000 men and providing them with prison accommodation, nothing would have a better effect amongst soldiers themselves than ridding them at once and forever of the black sheep with whom they are now forced to associate. Useless as soldiers, mischievous as bad examples, and expensive as prisoners, why do we retain them? To make dismissal the terror of the offenders would be a reform easily effected. The objection that a man would be liable to dismissal at the caprice of his colonel might at once be got over by making it necessary that to be dismissed a man must be in prison, to which place he must have been committed, not on the dictum of an irresponsible officer, but by the sentence of a properly constituted court. Some years ago when great difficulty was experienced in keeping the army up to its established complement, there may have been some excuse for the hesitation of the authorities to let go the men they had once caught, however bad their characters might be; but now that recruits are plentiful, that the supply exceeds the demand, that the non-existence of dismissal as a punishment prevents respectable young men from entering the army, and that these same *mauvaises sujets* cost the country £30,000 pounds a year, surely the time has arrived for a little salutary reform.

There is no truth in the report that the *Victory* (Nelson's ship) is to be dismantled and removed from her present moorings to the ordinary in the Portsmouth harbour. The only change to be made will be that she will no longer carry the flag of the Commander-in-Chief, or have the flagship's crew and staff on board of her. She will be open to the inspection of visitors as before, and her fittings will be undisturbed.

The intention of the government to have all wrought iron gun carriages for naval guns constructed at Chatham in future instead of at Woolwich, as at present, will have the effect of reducing the Army Estimates; but a corresponding increase, and more than a corresponding increase, of the Navy Estimates will necessarily take place, consequent upon their being two establishments for two halves of the work, instead of one for the whole. Thus remarks the *Broad Arrow*, the total expenses of the country will be greater, although the Army Estimates will be less. Another disadvantage will attend this change—namely, that instead of the naval gun-carriages and land gun-carriages being, as nearly as consistent with their varying uses, identical, there will be a prospect of the patterns diverging more and more from each other. Mr. Cardwell and Mr. Childers appear to be engaged in a rivalry as to which will show the greatest reduction in his forthcoming estimates; and the thrusting of the naval gun-carriages out of the Woolwich expenditure may be simply a return for the refusal of the Admiralty to supply marines for the assistance of the New Zealand colonists, in accordance with a suggestion said to have been made on the ground of army economy by the War Office. It will not do, however, for us to forget that patriotism consists in striving for the good of the country rather than for the credit of any one department of the State.

The report of the Joint Committee on American Ordnance, which is now published in full, embodies statements, which, as the *N. Y. Tribune* says, "are at once indisputable and essentially incredible." It is evident that American Artillery is behind that of any other great nation. The Committee condemn the Rodman, the Parrott, and Dahlgren guns alike, and recommend that a new gun, constructed upon the same principle as the English Armstrong gun, shall be adopted. They also recommend a more efficient system of harbour defence. It is stated in the report that during the operations upon Morris Island, 22 large guns was the greatest number mounted at one time, yet 50 in all burst during the siege, as is shown by the evidence of Gen. Gilmore. In the attack on Fort Fisher, all the Parrott guns in the fleet burst, according to the report of Admiral Porter. By the bursting of five of these guns at the first bombardment, 45 persons were killed and wounded by the projectiles from the enemy's guns during the attack.

THE BULLET THAT KILLED LORD NELSON.—Captain R. B. Henderson, of the Forty-sixth Middlesex Rifle Volunteers in England, writes to the *London Telegraph* that the bullet which killed Lord Nelson at Trafalgar, "exists as an honoured treasure in the possession of Her Majesty Queen Victoria," to whom it was presented by Captain Henderson's mother many years ago. The Captain adds:—"After Lord Nelson had died in the arms of Captain Hardy and Dr. Beatty, (afterwards Sir William Beatty), the latter extracted the fatal bullet and gave it to Captain Hardy, who had it set in precious stones, and enclosed in a crystal case and outer shell of gold in the shape of a walnut. Hardy at his death, gave it back to my grandfather, Sir William Beatty; and several years ago, when its existence became known, the British Museum was anxious to purchase it, but Her Majesty having expressed a desire to have it, the relic was sent to her."