

It was late when I awoke, and then the shrill blast of bugles, the clanging of arms, the hoarse sound of voices, the ringing of bells, and the occasional galloping past of a horseman, led me to imagine, amid the darkness I have described, that that which had been apprehended was actually in the course of execution. A reference to my watch, preceded by an announcement that breakfast had been sometime waiting for me, satisfied me that, according to the calendar, it was no longer night, but ought to have been broad day. I made a hasty toilette, swallowed a cup of coffee, and then sallied forth, marvelling as I walked at the strange and unusual darkness, to that part of the city whence the chief sounds of commotion seemed to prevail. It was nearly twelve o'clock, when, following the Rue Bonsecours from the neighbourhood of the Bishop's Church, I reached a corner of the Rue Notre Dame, and yet there was no change in the deep gloom of the atmosphere. Bodies of dark forms, which were soon discovered to be regular troops, were to be seen posted at various distances along the main streets, which, moreover, were filled with small knots of the inhabitants conversing earnestly in a low tone. Parties of Volunteers were also busied in entering the houses of such of the French Canadians as were suspected, and securing what arms and ammunition were to be found in them. All seemed intent on the fulfilment of some assigned duty. But the most imposing part of this lugubrious spectacle was in the Place d'Armes, which seemed to be the principal theatre of interest. Here the Artillery were drawn up with lighted matches, the muzzles of their guns facing the Catholic Cathedral, the *bourelonnement* of the bells of which had summoned the people to mass as usual, and among these a number of individuals of influence and high standing in the city, whom having been included in the list of those denounced by the Chief Magistrate, it was intended to seize as they issued from the sacred edifice. The guns were on the ground to awe down any attempt at rescue on the part of the people.

It was impossible to witness this part of the military demonstration without being forcibly impressed with a sense of the anomalous that spring from circumstances. The scrupulous respect that is, at all times, exacted from British soldiers towards the ceremonies of the Catholic Church, and particularly to that of the procession of the Host, is too well known to need comment. The uncovering of the head, if not absolutely the bending of the knee, to that which not only they look upon as a species of idol, but those who compel them to the act regard in the same light, has ever been most rigorously enforced from officers serving in whatever country, subject to the dominion of England, the Roman Catholic religion prevails. In Malta, Sicily, Jersey, Guernsey, and Canada, the observance of this respect has ever been most emphatically enjoined, and there has been an instance, nay, if I mistake not there have been instances, where officers have been dismissed the service for refusing to pay an homage which their conscience deemed unwarrantable. How far this is just or politic or necessary, it is not my intention here to inquire; but, I repeat, it was impossible to behold those troops, who had been tutored to look with awe and veneration upon the ceremonies of the Romish Church—that Church in many individual cases their own—now obeying the order which had been given them, and pointing the muzzles of their loaded guns towards the very temple which contained the symbols they had been taught to regard with veneration, without feeling how completely a soldier is the creature of the circumstances which surround him, the plaything of Fate, and the changling of the hour.

When the service was concluded, the arrests were made, much it will be presumed, to the dismay of those who perceived that their designs were discovered, and by one o'clock numerous persons, including those who had been taken from their own residences, were lodged, on that and the following day, in the goal of Montreal. Confidence had in the meantime been, in a great degree, restored, for Sir John Colborne, under whose orders the troops were thus summarily acting, had reached Montreal about nine o'clock that morning. He had left Quebec some hours after myself, in the John Bull steamer, and having met the St. George, bearing despatches to him conveying the important intelligence of the threatened outbreak, caused all possible exertion to be made to reach the destination where his presence was so much required.

As the second Rebellion, although occurring at different points of the frontier, was not of very long duration, and can be comprised in a few pages, it may not be inappropriate here to introduce a *resumé* of the whole, and in the order in which the several risings took place.

While the proceedings to which I have just alluded were going on in Montreal, the standard of revolt was raised at Beauharnois, Laprairie, and Lacadie, and that at an hour which renders it even more probable that the attempt was to have been made in Montreal on the night of Saturday, when it was known Sir John Colborne would be absent. At La Tortue, a hamlet distant a few miles from Laprairie, a body of the rebels attacked the different loyalists of

the neighborhood, and among others the house of a respectable farmer named Vitty. Another farmer—Walker—had only shortly before taken refuge with him, and he assisted in defending the house. Walker was killed, and Vitty would in all probability have met with a similar fate, had it not fortunately happened that a party of the 7th Hussars, stationed at Laprairie, were made acquainted with what was going on in the neighbourhood of La Tortue by those who had been fortunate enough to make their escape. They galloped up to the scene of action, and succeeded in dispersing the rebels with the loss of two of the latter. Vitty, though nearly exhausted from the effects of five wounds, they found alive, and transported to Montreal, where he subsequently recovered. The widow of the unfortunate Walker was also conveyed across the river to Montreal, which she entered with every mark of distraction on her countenance, and carrying in her arms a child, which, like herself, was spotted over with the blood of the murdered man.

At Beauharnois, about two o'clock the same night (Saturday,) for it scarcely could be called morning, an armed force of rebels—four hundred in number—attacked the house of Mr. Ellice, the proprietor of that Seignior, making prisoners Messrs. Brown, Norval and Ross. Mrs. Ellice and a Miss Balfour who was with her at the time, were entrusted to the Curé of Beauharnois, by whom they were treated with all possible respect. The insurgents then moved on to Chateauguay, which had been fixed on as their Head Quarters.

The most interesting occurrence, however, took place on the following day (Sunday,) at Caughnawaga, about seven miles from Laprairie, and picturesquely situated on the St. Lawrence. While the Indians, who principally inhabit this village, were attending their morning service utterly ignorant of the rebellion that had commenced, a squaw who had gone into the woods in search of a stray cow, fancied as she approached a particular spot that she perceived the glimmering of arms. She looked more closely, and with that keenness of glance for which the Indian is remarkable, when she discovered that her impression was correct, for she now distinctly saw several men moving cautiously among the trees, while others were lying down apparently in ambush. With characteristic presence of mind, she affected not to have seen anything extraordinary, but continued her way, diverging gradually from the party, yet seemingly in search of some lost object. In this manner she continued to make such a circuit, brought her at once near the church, and out of, entered the whom she had so opportunely discovered. She that threatened building and apprized the Indians of the presence of a muscular fellow of about five feet high, a young Chief—a tall and muscular fellow of about five feet and twenty—volunteered to take upon himself the direction of the party, and armed themselves with what weapons could be found. These being quickly collected, and the warriors again assembled, the Chief led them to a spot where he placed them all in ambush, with the exception of four men with whom he advanced to that part of the wood where the concealed rebels were lying. As he approached, they became revealed to him, and accosting the person who seemed to be, and was, their leader, demanded to know why an armed force was thus concealed so near the village. "This is my answer" replied the leader presenting a pistol at the Chief's breast. In an instant the Indian dashed the weapon aside, and took the man firmly by the collar of his coat, pealing forth at the same time the astounding war-whoop which brought the warriors he had secreted, bounding and with fierce yells to his side. The terrified rebels lost all power of resistance, and suffering themselves to be disarmed and made prisoners to the number of seventy-five—were bound tightly with cords—tumbled into boats, and conveyed to Montreal where, of course, they were instantly imprisoned. Very few of the Indians, who were moreover inferior in point of number, were armed with any other weapons than their knives. The heroic young Chief, whom I saw, and who naturally exulted in the success of his exploit, offered to bring in the scalp of every rebel in his neighborhood, if Sir John Colborne would but give him authority to do so.

On the 5th of November (a fitting day for the apprehension of conspirators), numerous other arrests took place in Montreal, and the 24th Regiment, with several guns, were pushed forward to Laprairie, preparatory to a grand movement of the whole of the disposable force, intended by Sir John to be made upon Napierville, near St. Johns, on Lake Champlain, where the main body of the rebels—nearly four thousand strong, were known to be concentrated. The 71st Regiment and the main body of the 7th Hussars followed the next day. During these operations, the enemy made an attack, not far from Napierville, upon the weak militia force stationed near Odelltown, which was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor,* Inspecting Field Officer on that frontier, but they were repulsed in a very gallant manner.

On the 7th, the Grenadier Guards, who had been hastily sent for on the Sunday preceding, reached Montreal from Quebec, bringing with them a prisoner of some note who had been delivered into their custody at Three Rivers.

*The principal among these were Messrs. Denis B. Viger, now, or very recently, President of the Executive Council; his brother, Louis M. Viger, Louis H. Lafontaine, Francis H. Desrochers; John Donaghy; &c. &c. &c. and the whole number of prisoners held for high treason in the goal of Montreal, between the 4th of November 1837, and the 25th of January, 1839, amounted to not less than one thousand two hundred and eighty three persons. Of the parties we have named above, all were liberated after a detention of a few weeks in prison, with the exception of Denis B. Viger, who remains in confinement until May 13th, 1840, when he was released by Mr. Poulett Thomson.

*This officer has since been killed in Scinde.