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25.11.82

Ketcheson

Lorne Pierce

## THE STEAMER 'CAROLINE.'



IN laying before the public a narrative of events which occurred more than twenty-five years ago, I can hardly make sure it will be acceptable to any reader, as the interest must more or less have passed away; but it has this in its favour, that it is not a hacknied subject, nor am I aware that anyone has attempted a description of the capture and destruction of the steamer 'Caroline' except Sir Francis Bond Head, and then only cursorily, in his narrative of events during his administration as Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada. Now, as the 'Caroline' will live in history, it seems a duty on my part to give a faithful and authentic account of an event which has been much exaggerated and misrepresented.

When the account first reached England, it was reported that a vessel had been sent over the Falls of Niagara burning, and with 160 human beings on board. This remaining uncontradicted, was believed for some time, and I, of course, looked upon as a monster in human shape; whilst the truth was, in my anxiety to ascertain there was not a living soul on board before we turned the vessel adrift, that I very nearly sacrificed my own life in the endeavour to prove this, as will be seen hereafter.

I shall, therefore, take upon myself to draw up an account of the transaction in its true colours, which coming from me, the principal actor in the drama, will carry with it a stamp of authenticity which will perhaps be its greatest value. I shall also embrace this opportunity of making public a correspondence which I have carried on with the heads of departments of Her Majesty's Government, with the hope of obtaining some indemnity for the very severe pecuniary losses I have sustained in being obliged to abandon a country which contained all my wealth and all my hopes; for, had I remained in Canada up to

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