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H.M.S. 'VICTORIA' CATASTROPHE

PEN PICTURE BY S. G. L. CHAPLAIN, REV. M. TAILOR.

The following was read Before Kenilworth Lodge, No. 149, New Glasgow, N.S., at its Last Meeting, upon the Loss of H.M.S. Victoria, on 22nd June, 1893, and Ordered to be Published in the ANGLO-SAXON.

On a fine day and a calm sea the British Mediterranean Fleet commenced the usual manoeuvres deemed necessary for its efficiency in time of war. Upon the flagship's deck stood the Admiral, renowned in many a naval combat. With pardonable pride might he view the magnificent squadron under his command, as from many a deck waved the banner of St. George, floating in the gentle breeze.

Yet this was to be a day of mourning and disaster. To many an English home was to go the news, "father is dead," "brother is drowned." From many a faithful wife sitting outside the cottage door amongst the honey-suckle and the rose, was to be heard the bitter cry, "my husband! my husband! shall I never see thee more." The heart of many an English mother, listening, it may be, in the calm summer evening to the thrush's joyful song or the skylark's many notes, must be rent with the cry, "My brave sailor boy, I have longed for many a long day for thy return. Come back! come back! it cannot be that thou art dead." "Oh, tell me not that he is lost." But the cruel waves their victims take, from year to year new conquests make, until that blessed time shall be, when as it hath been promised, "There shall be no more sea."

As the sun declines on the fatal day the hour so full of agony for many a brave heart draws near. A signal for a manoeuvre is given. Whether there was want of judgment in the order given, or inefficiency in its execution, we cannot now tell, be that as it may, with a terrible crash the Camperdown strikes with terrific force the starboard side of the gallant vessel which bears our Sovereign's name, Victoria. There is no confusion. Let us rejoice, no confusion in Britain's navy in time of disaster or danger. Quick commands are given to close the bulkheads and as quickly do brave men, in the face of certain death, strive to perform their duty, but that requires many minutes for its performance; cannot be done in a moment. The minutes are fast passing away, and notwithstanding every effort it can be recognized that the vessel cannot be saved.

The last order of the Admiral then rings out over the ship, sounding like a death knell in the ears of many, "Let each man save himself the ship is lost." Not even then did the brave men leave their posts, but vainly tried to stem the flood of water pouring into their doomed vessel. All honor to the brave. Amidst her tears Britannia's heart beats quicker to know that her sons still can die doing their duty at the post of danger. Then comes the closing scene, the brave ship plunges then assumes an upright position. Thus poised in the air she hesitates turns completely over and sinks beneath the wave.

Many of her crew are seen struggling to save their lives, few alas escape. Two muffled sounds are heard as the boilers burst under water, an appropriate funeral volley for many a brave engineer, burnt to death at his post.

Yet this is not all; many unfortunate swimmers are caught in the blades of the screws and are torn to pieces, until the waters of the Blue Mediterranean are turned into crimson, the crimson of blood, aye, and that some of the best blood of Old England. The total loss was more than 400 souls, as many as fell in great Trafalgar's fight, when the naval power of France was broken, and England freed from invasion. But now no enemy is nigh. In time of peace, and in a calm sea, sinks one of England's largest ships—and the grave of the Victoria becomes the resting place of many a brave Englishman.

But though the nation now mourns a great calamity, yet deep down in the heart of every loyal Briton there is the proud, firm conviction that while there may have been indiscretion or temporary inefficiency on the part of the vessel herself, there certainly was no fear or panic on the part of either officers or men even in the face of extreme danger. This great disaster, terrible as it is in its great loss of life and money, will yet bring forth much precious fruit in the intense enthusiasm which it will create amongst our sailors for many generations yet to come—encouraging them to die like their comrades, firm and fearless in the discharge of duty. There is no doubt that the magnificent discipline and quiet heroism displayed by the officers and men of H. M. S. Victoria will have a lasting effect upon the British nation and people, because it shows that although England has exchanged her ancient wooden walls for the floating batteries of the present day, yet there remains throughout the British navy to-day as many hearts of oak as in the days of the proud old Victoria, the flagship of Admiral Nelson. It further shows that our sailors and marines are as ready as ever to die at the call of duty, and as willing as ever to carry into practice that grand old maxim, which like a soul-inspiring anthem thrills through the heart of every true-born Englishman, urging him on to deeds of valor and unflinching self-sacrifice, that maxim which formed the great commander's signal in his last fight for his country's freedom: "England expects that every man this day will do his duty."

So with hearts full of sorrow when we think of the dead, but with no sense of shame or distrust in the brave defenders of our shores, we still may take up the grand old refrain, and sing it solemnly with saddened voices, but purpose firm and faith unshaken. "Rule Britannia, Britannia Rules the Waves, Britons never, never, never shall be Slaves."

TO THE MEMORY

of the Devoted Seamen of H. M. S. Victoria, who were Lost off Tripoli, June, 1893.

All Britain mourns!
The hearts that but as yesterday beat high
With honest love of Country, home and God,
Lie pulseless, victims of a remorseless sea.
That ever and anon disputes most jealously
Our proud country's claim
As mistress of the seas.

Our brothers died
Not mid the clash of sabre, or the cannons roar;
But proudly as the Briton dies, aye, and loves
To die—at duty's post.
And call we these men dead?
They never die who build their hope on Christ,
The Saviour slain.
They rise, and we
May greet again our heroes.

Almighty God, our prayers we bring to Thee
That thou wouldst bless our Native land—
The widow and the fatherless are thine,
Do Thou protect. This lesson may we learn—
That we can live so that we may
Our noble brothers greet on the shore beyond
Where mysteries end.

New Glasgow, N.S., July 20, 1893.

A.S.D.

ENGLAND AROUSED!

FRANCE IS NOW TREADING ON DANGEROUS GROUND.

The French Propositions to Siam Arouse British Ire and she may yet have to reckon with Great Britain—Views of England's Newspapers.

London July 22.—The Bangkok correspondent of the "Times" says, concerning the terms of France's ultimatum:—Europe, and especially Great Britain, should know that this territorial demand represents 95,000 square miles. It includes the province that Burmah ceded to Siam on the condition that it never should be ceded to any other power, and 50,000 miles of north-eastern Siam, on which the French have never advanced. The demand for the evacuation of the left bank of the Mekong river proves that the Governor-General De Lanssens's statements regarding previous French possession of the tracts claimed are untrue.

The indemnity demanded simply represents France's previous claims and should satisfy the most grasping government. In fact, France demands the dismemberment and ruin of Siam, and, if these be denied, will make war upon and blockade the country with which her trade in 1892 amounted to £8,000, whilst the British trade, all carried in British bottoms, reached a value of over £500,000, in which the British subjects number 13,500, whilst the French subjects number 250. These French demands confirm what was stated from the outset, namely, France's attack on Siam is in reality directed against England, although that country has hitherto been loyal and friendly to her in Siamese affairs.

London, July 22.—The Paris correspondent of the "Times" says:—M. Develle, even if desirous of so doing, after seeing the Marquis of Dufferin, cannot modify his demands on Siam before the 48 hours allowed for Siam's answer to the ultimatum shall have expired. Then, however, French action will be irrevocably fixed. This makes it easier to express amicable opinions on the Marquis of Dufferin's return, the obvious result of which will be that the appointment of M. Decrisis, formerly ambassador to Austria, as ambassador to England, will be gazetted forthwith.

London, July 24.—The "Globe" says the flagrant French aggression is aimed at England. Siam is merely a pretext. Hence the duty of the British foreign office is one of extraordinary difficulty. England's place in the situation is paramount. Firmness is necessary, for doubtless France is counting upon the feebleness of the British counsels. She is not hungry for war nearer home than the Mekong River.

The "St. James Gazette" says: One thought conveyed by Siam's reply to the ultimatum is that she has suffered enough humiliation for a small power that has been unfortunate enough to get in the way of a bigger one. But France has gone forth to grab and to enforce her desires at the cannon's mouth. We can endure the pillage of Siam to the eighteenth parallel of latitude, but the pillage of Siam, China and Burmah to the twenty-third parallel is a different matter. We are afraid that Lord Roseberry (the British Foreign Minister) must let the governments at Bangkok and Paris know that this is going a trifle too far. Such

a check in the present temper of the French may have serious results.

The "Pall Mall Gazette" in an article headed 'Blackmail,' says: Siam has spoken with dignity and moderation. She gives up too much, but she does not for a moment recognize the other preposterous demands made upon her. In regard to these demands France must reckon with England. We must not hesitate to let our voice be heard. Lord Roseberry and Lord Dufferin, the British ambassador, must be alert, and M. Develle (French Foreign Minister) careful. If France cherishes the idea of bombarding Bangkok, let her remember that the English gunboats in Siamese waters could blow the French gunboats out of the water in half an hour. Let France pocket her blackmail and be content.

London, July 24.—The Bangkok correspondent of "The Daily Chronicle" telegraphs: The Siamese warships, which are anchored one mile from the French, are crowded with men ready for action. Their intention is, in case the French commence hostilities, to steam down and ram the French gunboats, attempt to board them in force, and attack the crews with fixed bayonets. The German gunboat "Wolf" has arrived.

ENGLISH OPINION.

London, July 24.—The "Times" publishes an editorial which, it is thought, expresses the general English opinion of the merits of the Franco-Siamese dispute. The "Times" says: "Siam's refusal to go beyond just and reasonable limits or to concede territory to which France never put in an effective claim until the other day, is no excuse for a measure of hostility, ostensibly directed against the Siamese, but really striking at the commerce of England and other countries having commercial relations with Siam."

Another Lodge in Quebec.

Monarch Lodge, No. 182, Hochelaga.

A new lodge of the Sons of England has been instituted at Hochelaga. The Supreme Grand Vice-President, Bro. J. A. Edwards, the District Deputies Bro. R. H. Bartholomew and Bro. E. Low, and a large number of past officers were among the brethren present. The usual routine was gone through, when twenty-seven candidates presented themselves for initiation. This ceremony being concluded to the great satisfaction of the candidates, Bro. J. A. Edwards, S. G. V. P., instituted Monarch Lodge, No. 182, assisted by the Rev. Bro. H. Taylor as chaplain. Seven candidates were proposed for the next meeting. There is every prospect of a good strong lodge in this locality.

The following officers were elected and subsequently installed by the District Deputy, Bro. E. Low:—Bro. Geo. Ineson, president; Bro. Alf. Parry, chaplain; Bro. Wm. Greenwood, treasurer; Bro. A. C. Heath, secretary; Bro. Reason, C. Ineson, Wheeler, C. Jowett, E. Bragger, Piddget, managing committee; Bro. J. Barnes, inner guard.

The members of Monarch Lodge thanked the city members for their attendance, which was replied to by Bro. E. Low, District Deputy; Bro. W. Taylor, grand chaplain, and Bro. J. A. Edwards, S. G. V. P., who, in one of his stirring addresses, advised patriotism to their country, and loyalty to the Queen and the society, and urged upon them the necessity of bringing in new members.

Bryson, Graham & Co.,

144, 146, 148, 150, 152, and 154,

SPARKS STREET, OTTAWA.

Are your "in the swim," if not, get there, as soon as you can. Follow the crowd to the Mammoth and secure your share while the good things are going, even such a stock as ours can't last for ever.

Saturday was a day of hustling and many lines were closed out.

This half price business is a taker—you take the goods—we take half their value in money and every body (except our neighboring merchants) takes pleasure.

Dress Goods for Half Price,
Half Price for Dress Goods
Dress Goods for Half Price
Half Price for Dress Goods.

BLANKETS, BLANKETS, BLANKETS, BOOTS AND SHOES.

Still the Bargain Tables are kept full. As fast as one line is sold out another takes its place.

Boots at Bargains,
Bargains in Boots,
Boots at Bargains,
Bargains in Boots.

If convenient kindly call early and save the crush of the afternoon trade.

BRYSON, GRAHAM & CO.,

144, 146, 148, 150, 152,

and 154 Sparks St.

Grocery Department, 33 and 35 O'Connor Street, will close at 6 p.m.