

LOSS OF THE NORWEGIAN, OCEAN STEAMSHIP.

The Proprietor of this paper was enabled last week, under peculiar circumstances, to give an effective and faithful picture of the Norwegian on the rocks at low water. The telegram since received from the captain and published below, confirms to the minutest particular the picturesque sketch supplied by our special artist, from special information, and printed in last week's Canadian Illustrated News. This is the telegram referred to:

CAPTAIN MCMASTER'S REPORT.

Aspey Bay, C. B., June 16.

Telegram to Messrs. H. & A. Allan:

Yesterday blowing a heavy gale from eastward and heavy sea. Ship settled down aft. The sea is at high water up to the spar deck as far as mainmast. Part of the cargo above hold is dry. To-day the weather is moderate. Boats and crew are employed in transporting the baggage to the Humane Society Building a short distance westward of the North-East light, where the passengers are comfortably housed, under the care of the Governor.

The ship's company remain by the wreck, and are employed in saving the cargo. If the gales continue to blow, the ship will eventually break up. Exertions are being made to save everything possible.

The depth of water round the ship is 10 fathoms abreast mainmast, 5 main mast, 4 1/2 bridge, and 3 1/2 foremast; forward dry at low water. A large rock amidship, bulging her up.

(Signed,) CAPT. MCMASTER.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLAND.

'St. Paul's Island lies in the main entrance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, between the south-west extreme of Newfoundland and the north extreme of Cape Breton Island. It is nearly three miles long by one mile broad. Its north-east point is a small attached islet, (although it does not appear as such from the sea,) which is separated by a very narrow channel from a peninsula between 300 and 400 feet high, which, together with the isthmus is so precipitous as to be nearly inaccessible. The remaining greater part of the island, which is also steep and precipitous towards the sea, has two parallel ranges of hills, that on the eastern coast being the highest, and attaining an elevation of 450 feet. The island has two coves—one called Trinity, the other Atlantic—which are nearly a mile from its south-west extremity, the first being on the Gulf side and the other on that which is towards the Atlantic, as its name implies. They afford the only shelter for boats, and the only good landing on the island, which is easier of ascent from them than at any other part. The island is partially wooded with dwarf and scrubby spruce trees, useless excepting for fuel. The only inhabitants are two men, in charge of a depot of provisions for the relief of shipwrecked persons, supported by the government of New Brunswick.

These men reside on the north point of Trinity cove, where there is a dwelling house and store. Off Trinity and Atlantic coves small fishing schooners anchor, with the wind off shore, in ten or twelve fathoms, at the distance of two cables from the rocks. Beyond half a mile from shore, the water becomes extremely deep, so that there is little or no warning by the lead in approaching this island in foggy weather. On this account, says Admiral Bayfield, from whom we derive our information, although so bold and high, it is extremely dangerous, and many shipwrecks have taken place upon its shores, attended with a most melancholy sacrifice of human life. Two light-houses stand on St. Paul's Island. Both lights are elevated 140 feet above the level of the sea, and when the weather is clear they may be seen from a distance of 18 miles. In fogs a bell is sounded and a gun is fired every four hours from the light-house on the south-west point. A boat is kept on the island.

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W. A. FERGUSON.

Hamilton, April 7th, 1863.

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THE CANADIAN Illustrated News.

HAMILTON, JUNE 27, 1863.

LOSS OF OCEAN STEAMSHIPS.

WHEN a great disaster attracts notice to the question of, how to preserve life and property in ocean steamships, the appalling catastrophe serves the purpose about as well, but nothing better than a 'dry goods' advertisement in flaming letters, serves the silkmerecer and linen draper, a day or two.

While the ships are making safe passages, and owners and agents are adding pile upon pile to their money—in Britain, not in Canada—while political parties in office, and opposition out of office, are distracting the public ear with their bedlam of false pretences (Britain as well as Canada is in the memory, while these words drop on the paper,) there have been men patiently, earnestly, eagerly, with the zeal of martyrs, evolving out of the arcana of the profound natural laws, a magnetic sentinel to warn the mariner of the fact that his steamship was under the negative influence of an island or headland, though in the fog he might not see the objects, upon the shores of which his ship was swerving out of her proper course.

We can answer for one, who expended the pecuniary savings of half a life time and valuable time through several years, on experiments which he believed to have resulted in his being enabled to show a sea captain the magnetic conditions of his iron ship; to determine from those conditions at what time the positive magnetism of the ship, derived from atmospheric fogs, was in action to draw the island or headland towards her, but herself going towards the more substantial object which refused to move. A sailor in a small boat gets ashore from his ship in harbour by pulling a line which is fastened to the wharf. He seemingly would pull the wharf to him, but it not coming, he and the boat go to it. So in iron ships, magnetized as they usually are by the electric cloud called a fog, or mist, in which they are enveloped, they would draw the island or headland to them if it would move; but it cannot move, and so the ship swerves from her course towards the island or the headland, and becomes a wreck.

Letters to convey information on this great question of life and death, to the British Board of Admiralty have resulted in an acknowledgment of their receipt; nothing more. Some have not been answered, and so lately as May, 1863, a letter to another high department in the British Government was simply acknowledged, with the intimation that it was placed among others for consideration.

The writer of these letters, and of the present remarks, having come to Canada, worn both in mind and body, and with cause to be disgusted with the apathy of political authorities, and sordid men of commerce, if ever a man self-sacrificed to the public good had cause to be disgusted, sought, after a respite of eighteen months, to communicate with the Canadian government on the subject of determining by scientific apparatus, and enabling captains and officers to read the fact alongside their compass, when, and in what direction the iron steamship was going astray.

Early in 1860, the Provincial parliament having then moved to Quebec, he obtained an interview with the Postmaster General, the Hon. Sidney Smith, and named the subject. That minister requested him not to moot it publicly just then, as the question of subsidy to the Ocean Steamship Com-

pany was coming on in parliament, and any public discussion of steamship wrecks would be detrimental to the interests of the Canadian line. The writer sought other interviews, but could not get the Postmaster General to listen. He sought interviews with the Premier of that time, Mr. John A. Macdonald, but never succeeded in getting within speaking reach.

Some months afterwards he made his way to Mr. Edmonstone, of Messrs. Edmonstone, Allans & Co., part proprietors and agents of the Ocean Steamships at Montreal. He introduced the subject of placing the ship captains and officers in possession of the means of knowing when their ship was swerving out of the true course; and, after proceeding about a minute, had said: 'seven years ago, just after the Orion swerved from her course on the passage from Liverpool to Glasgow, and went ashore in a thin fog at Port Patrick, I called the ship captains of Liverpool, and adjusters of ships' compasses together by advertisement, and—' Mr. Edmonstone listened to no more, but curtly exclaimed, 'Many things have happened since seven years ago!' and walked away, talking with Captain Crawford, nautical superintendent of the Ocean Steamship line.

True, many things have happened since seven years before 1860. And since that brief and unsatisfactory conversation with Mr. Edmonstone, head of the Ocean Steamship Company, five of their best ships, all under the command of well-trained and efficient officers, have been wrecked. Mr. Hugh Allan was then in England, but in the face of such continuous, general, universal apathy, in Britain, Canada, everywhere, the enthusiast felt himself extinguished on that subject. He ceased to renew the question until the present year, when of two letters to official departments in England, one at the end of three months, remains unanswered, and the receipt of the other has been simply acknowledged.

The Birkenhead, with a British regiment on board, the soldiers meeting death like heroes, as they were, preferring to sink with the quietly subsiding ship, and yield the boats to the women and children; that iron steamship swerved out of her proper course. The Orion at Port Patrick swerved, and the officers saw her going on shore broadside, contrary to all laws of motion known to them. They were not believed; were tried before a criminal court for culpable negligence and sent to the penitentiary.—But the present writer believed them, and made experiments, and endeavored, unsuccessfully, to attract the notice of Liverpool captains and ship-owners to the magnetic enigma.

The Great Britain iron steamship, swerving from her true course into Dundrum Bay was another instance. But the unscientific rabble of wealthy merchants and ship-owners, who assemble on the Exchange flags at Liverpool, solved that mystery by the easy assertion, which cost them nothing and only damaged the reputation of Captain Hoskins, that the Great Britain went into Dundrum Bay through negligence. And yet the steersmen kept on the proper course by compass, while the ship, in swerving, must have turned at nearly right angles from the course as indicated by compass.

The Ava, from Calcutta to Ceylon, on passage from India to England, swerved from her true course, and was wrecked at Trincomalee, against all navigating law, but in obedience to the electric laws. Even in the river Thames, iron steamboats have repeatedly swerved, and run upon certain of the piers of Waterloo Bridge, in certain electric conditions of weather, while wooden boats, not so aptly managed in the river currents as the fast iron boats, could be retained on an even course easily.

The seven ships of the Montreal Ocean Steamship Company which have been lost, (for names and dates of the wrecks, see Canadian Illustrated News, June 20, 1863) have

gone astray when their officers believed them to be elsewhere than where they were. In some cases ocean currents, unknown to navigators, have been assumed as the cause of drifting them ashore. And an accusation of negligence being convenient to the common multitude, whether that multitude be the rabble of wealthy ease and ignorance, or the rabble of toiling poverty and ignorance, the assumption of negligence is conveniently made and does not cost anything. It does not incur the trouble of deep thought, sleepless nights, brain racking days, or costly experiments, such as the Editor of this paper has often thanklessly incurred to save property and human life. It only costs the lives of two or three hundred persons now and again; the Marine Insurances pay for the slips.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

MILITARY ORGANIZATION.—The Editor has received a communication from the Quartermaster General of Her Majesty's Forces in Canada, for which special courtesy he returns thanks. He has also received a letter from a nobleman, now in England, formerly Secretary of State for the Colonies, and more recently Secretary of State for India, which with that from the Quartermaster General, will be embodied in articles on the Defences of Canada in next number of the Canadian Illustrated News.

LANCASHIRE EMIGRANTS.—The Editor has an article in type, but crowded out of this issue, on the wrong done to the Lancashire operatives by Mr. John A. Macdonald, political leader of opposition, and others, in the interest of party strategy and strife, by spreading a report that free grants of land would be made to these unhappy people. If provision were made to place them on land ultimately to be their own, and the same with ten thousand immigrants yearly, or twenty thousand, the land, seed, and implements and food to be paid for in future years, an addition to Provincial debt for such a purpose would be an investment at once patriotic, humane, and wisely provident. It would be a measure of true public economy. But to induce those people to come here to perish of hunger, where there is no poor-law to save them alive, without such or any provision for their employment or sustenance, is cruelty. It is an atrocious crime.

THE GRAVE OF JANE M'CREA.—Many relations of the bereaved lover of Jane M'Crea are still living in Canada. On receipt of Mr. Johnson's poem we wrote to one of them to give the narrative in writing which we heard in conversation at Brockville two years ago; but the contested elections have probably absorbed his attention.

Mr. Johnson accompanied the verses with the following statement. They will be found on page 80.

During the war of 1777, Miss Jane M'Crea was engaged to be married to a young British officer. The old house in which she lived is still standing, now in the heart of the town of Fort Edward, then in the woods, and a short distance from the fort. Her lover, fearing she might fall into the hands of unfriendly savages, sent a party of Indians to convey her to him in Canada. About a mile above the fort stood a large pine tree, from whose base flowed a spring; here they halted with their captive, as they supposed her to be, for the nature of their mission had not been explained, when a quarrel arose, respecting the division of the reward; and the chief, supposing her to be merely a prisoner of war, murdered her, carried her scalp and presented it to the lover. The young officer's feelings on this occasion can only be imagined. It is said that he was never afterwards seen to smile. He was killed in battle, and buried by the seaside, about three years after the tragic death of Miss M'Crea. The tree has been cut down, but the spring still gushes in its purity. The following was pinned at her grave, on a piece of wood, cut from the stump of the 'Jane M'Crea tree.' See verses, page 80.

EMILY, (Guelph,) E.M., (Hamilton); both of you write beautifully. The Editor will decide by next week.

A. G., (Hamilton)—This is a young poet taking the first flight. Flutter onward, little bird; higher, farther, higher yet! The Editor will print your lines.

H. W., (Fergus)—Your tender regard for your mother will, in our eyes, obliterate some literary defects. Your verses will be printed; but they are suited for a religious periodical rather than this.

Mr. B., (near Paris)—Your benevolence is strong, your idealism feeble: you are not a poet.

Sophia, Will, and other enthusiasts will not be overlooked.