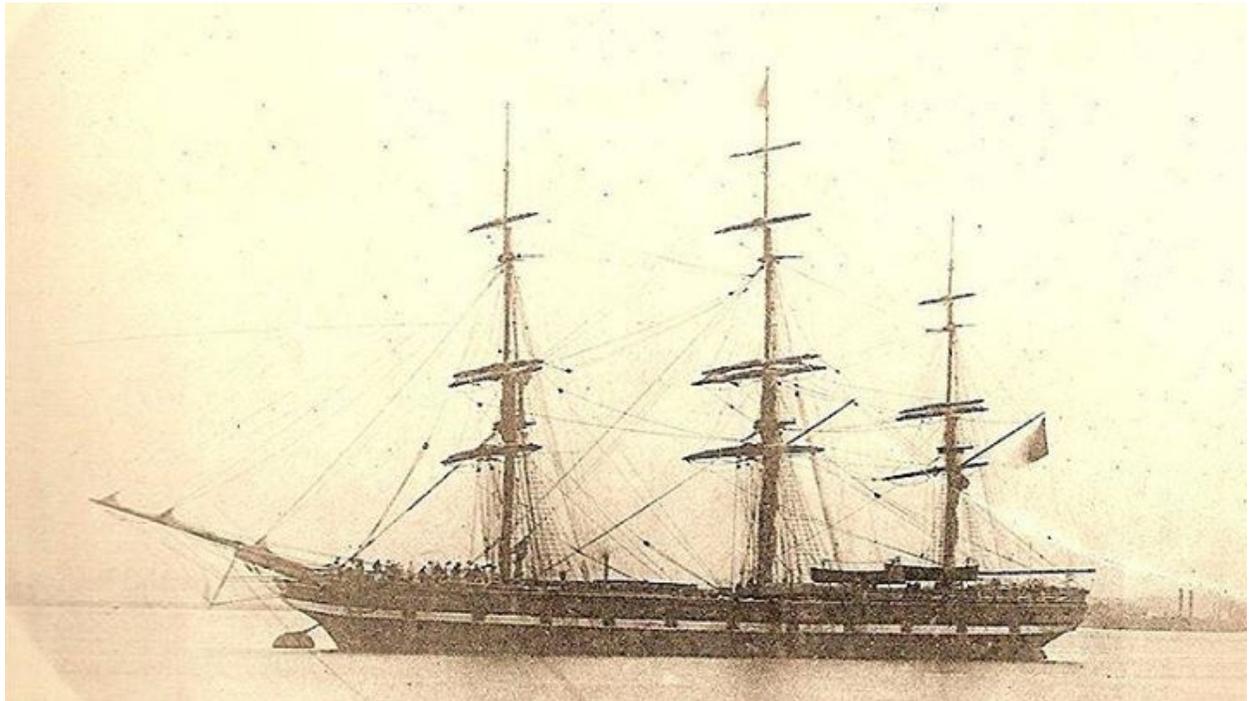


50 Articles of War

GEORGE SCOTT RAILTON

PREPARE TO RAM

The Christian Mission Magazine, March 1873



The Northfleet, a British ship remembered for its' disastrous sinking in the English Channel in January, 1873

The disaster which happened off Dungeness has become familiar to the people of the three kingdoms, and has drawn from them an all but universal expression of sorrow. But now that the first bitterness of the crushing blow is past, we are able to see other things in the sinking of the "Northfleet" besides the loss of hundreds of lives.

It is very easy, after a terrible accident has happened, to reason about the various causes which have given rise to it, and the means for preventing its repetition; but the fact is that, if we will have the nineteenth century speed and progress, we must and will have to bear these frequent and sudden outbreaks

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of the tremendous forces which we choose to employ. Our only resource, if we are to be fit to live amongst the present circumstances of civilization, is to get our souls saved, and do our Heavenly Father's will at railway speed.

The religious activity of Saint Paul's time even cannot nearly represent the duty of Christian men and Christian churches today. If St. Paul had had the assistance of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Packet Company, the Suez Canal and Mont Cenis Railway, he would have printed the idea of running the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, on the mind of every nation under heaven before he died.

Can we not see, even in the calamity before us, an image of the mighty power we might wield upon men if we were only thorough in our Christianity?

Whatever may be the facts in the present case, it is well known that a small steamer can run down, so as almost instantly to sink, a very much larger ship than itself.

And yet you, my dear brother, don't feel cut out for reaching respectable sinners, brutal sinners, hard-hearted sinners, as the case may be. You can come up to them, but you don't feel able to "tackle them." Have you tried "ramming," running them down? You may be very little, and they very big; you very weak, and they seemingly very strong; but depend upon it, He who promised you strength according to your day can enable you to overcome them, if you are determined to do it.

And you, little flock, be you ever so few, be you so insignificant that no one can see you from a distance, can be enabled to upset the largest community, the most powerful organization, in this land or any other. Can you doubt that the tears and agony and blood of Jesus are capable of producing as profound and general a sensation amongst your countrymen as the cries of these drowning people? It was not only the "Northfleet," it was English society which was "rammed" at Dungeness. It can be rammed again; will you do it?

How can it be done? We answer, By the full exercise of a great power acting within that which rams. Why don't you bring sinners down, my brother? Simply because you are not driven in upon them with the full power of the Holy Ghost.



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It is no question of your power, your talents, your attainments; it is a question of the work of the Holy Ghost in you and by you. If we may be God's rams, and won't, how can we escape the condemnation of resisting that Holy Spirit who can enable us both to will and to do the good pleasure of our Father?

Why does the society of Christian people seem to be so weak against the mighty forces of the foe? Simply because it is driven by the force of human reason, human authority, human habit, and not by the bare might of God. And yet God is with us, and His love and power are felt by us; our amens and hallelujahs go up from burning hearts. We perhaps think we are going ahead faster than most people; and so we probably are; yet the masses pass us unmoved, and do not bow to Jesus. Why? Because we won't let the Lord of Hosts exercise His power through us, by forcing us, as He wishes, into the center of every circle of men. It is not enough for us to have the Spirit; we must be filled, controlled and irresistibly impelled by it.

But there are many ways of ramming; the one comparatively easy and safe, the other less certain and far more dangerous. We don't recommend the clumsy government prow that ploughs up the sea, and makes ordinary steaming so much more difficult; but we do advocate the sharp, sword-like cut-water of the fast steamer. Some people think a determined assault upon a sinner can only be made by the bold, blunt threatening of death, judgment and hell. But God's first Christian ram, Peter, ran down three thousand people in a day, talking about God's promise. The first time he assaulted the Gentile world, it was with the news that whosoever believed in the Name of Jesus, should receive remission of sins. The Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word, and down they went.

Have you got the sword of the Spirit fitted into your bow, my brother? If you want to be mighty for God, you must be mighty in Scriptures. The Bible must shape and point your life, and you must be very loving to poor sinners. You know nothing cuts so deep as the wounds of a friend. If you want to run right into a man's heart, you must show him you are desperately in love with him. Some people are afraid of getting too much religion, lest it should unfit them for daily life. God certainly does require some of his vessels to be rams only, and He takes care of them; but as a rule trading steamers are successful whenever He uses them in this mode of warfare. You may work at every trade every day, and fill a very lowly station in life, yet God can use you to do wonders for Him, if you will let



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him do so. Have you ever suffered loss so far from being too thorough a Christian? Have you not suffered seriously every way through not being sufficiently thorough? Do you not find all your powers most active and efficient for every purpose when they are most influenced by your blessed Master, Christ?

The Christianity generally called for nowadays is a very "broad platform," – a kind of drifting Christianity, broadside on, carried by the popular current wherever best suits the devil. Is this to be our style of Christian life and Christian work? Nay, my brother; let us strike, body and soul, for Christianity, and on, with the sharp, hard line of the unchanging Word of God, to cut through everything it comes at. They say "it won't go nowadays;" but it has gone for eighteen centuries, and if we are faithful, God will let men see that it will succeed in the nineteenth century as well as in the first.

A "ramming" Christianity never unfitted any man for business, but it never can fit a man that has not a single eye. You may carry what cargo you have to carry; but to ram, with or without cargo, you must look right to Jesus all the time. And can't societies and organizations carry a sharp bow? Can they help having one, if all their members tend to the same point, and follow the one "First," – Jesus? What weakens the cause of Christ more than the variations and separations between Christian and Christian? The only way for us to be perfect is to be in one.

To "ram" together, and with the best effect, we must perfect our organization and discipline. Every person to their post and to their work; every person doing their part. Then the whole body will move on together, and be run with overwhelming force wherever God shall send it, and will have nothing "carried away," while it carries all before it.

Well, but you can't ram without risk, after all. Quite true; and shall we be such cowards as to run none if so, off with the uniform of Jesus at once?! Down with the cross, and away with the crown! An easy life and a deep perdition!

But to make the risk as small as possible.

Prepare to ram. Down with all your top spars, your pride and vanity, your fashionable dress, and fine, smooth, world-pleasing talk. Stow them all away, or,



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better still, heave them overboard. Make everything worth keeping fast. Be sure about your own salvation: be sure about the truth of whatever God has said. Don't trust to stand on your own feet when the shock comes, but swing on God's promises.

Then make up your mind to give up anything and everything but Jesus:

- ◆ Goodbye to old ideas and habits
- ◆ Goodbye all man's teachings and theories
- ◆ Goodbye worldly gain, worldly honor, pleasure, or advancement
- ◆ Goodbye parents, relatives, friends, companions, associations
- ◆ Goodbye leisure, ease comfort, health and strength
- ◆ Goodbye everything I like
- ◆ Goodbye liberty
- ◆ Goodbye my own will
- ◆ Goodbye to the present life.

I have no objection to any of you, and yet I am willing to give you all up, if necessary; for I will ram. So here goes for Jesus!

CRASH! HALLELUJAH!

Victory through the blood of the Lamb!

Down they must go! The world and sin are under my feet! Be assured that sinners must give in when Christians begin ramming. They never could stand it yet, and they never will. We fire at them, and think we fire very hard and hit well, too; in fact, we do send shots right in; but they are very often built in compartments, and can carry a deal away till they get the hole patched up again. But at the close quarters their compartments won't save them, for we can ram and ram and ram till every one of them is broke un upon; and there's enough love in Jesus to fill the greatest sinner in a very little time.

And society can't stand "ramming." See how they subscribed for poor Dr. Hessel, who had been unjustly arrested! Make them look at the very same Jesus they crucified, and they will give Him His due fast enough. Ah! yes, they'll have to look one day, and the world will sink, and the sun and stars will be knocked out of existence with that shock.



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Brethren, we haven't a minute to lose! It is a desperate case! We must ram! God help us!