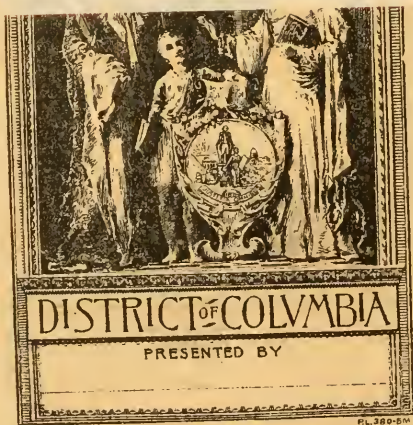




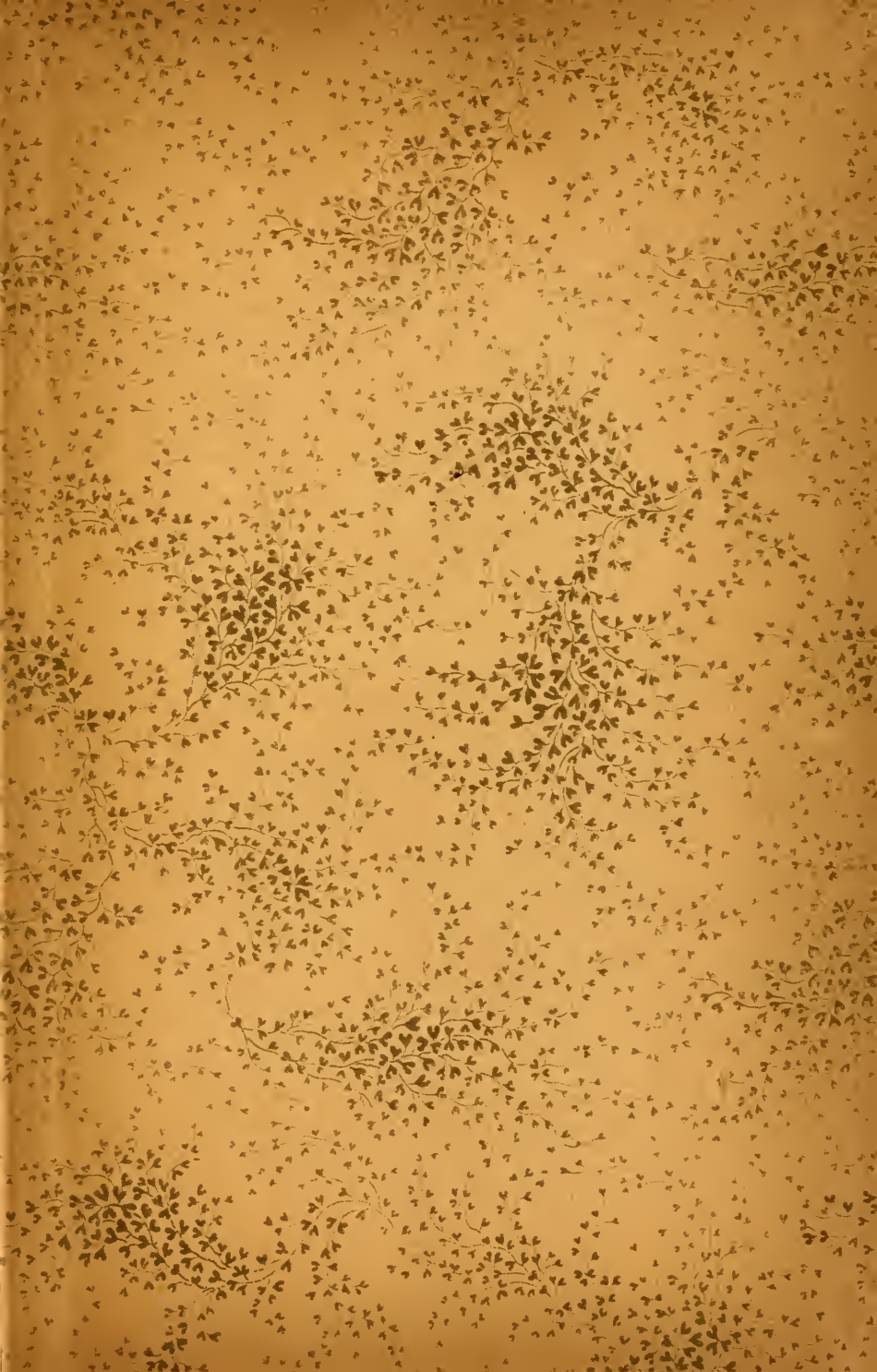
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THE YANKEE NAVY

By ^{the late} TOM MASSON

ILLUSTRATED



NEW YORK
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A Sea Fight in Revolutionary Times.

WITHDRAWN

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MILLIONS FOR TRIBUTE, BUT NOT ONE CENT FOR DEFENSE.

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THE YANKEE NAVY

CHAPTER I.

THE REVOLUTION.

Birth of the American Navy—Comparative English and American Forces—Operations of Privateers—John Paul Jones—Lake Champlain—Operations in British Waters—*Bonhomme Richard* and *Serapis*—American and British Losses.

THE battle of Lexington was fought on April 19, 1775, and the first treaty of peace with Great Britain was consummated on September 3, 1783. During this period the American Navy was born and cut its milk-teeth.

This baby was extremely restless from the time of his birth, kept everybody up night and day, and made endless trouble for his blood relations, who were very anxious to put him out of the way. In the end he cost them a lot of money and reputation. This baby was troubled with seasickness from the beginning, and not having anyone to train him, he just came up himself. But he proved to be a useful child and a good fighter.

In 1775, when this baby was born, every respectable farmer, mechanic, shoemaker and tradesman who didn't join the army, either commanded a privateer or shipped before the mast. A great proportion of them didn't know a capstan bar from a royal truck, and the commanders themselves had had little or no training. Most of them had been captains of merchant vessels, and Esek Hopkins, the first American Commodore,

had been a soldier. Congress developed the same traits then that it exhibits to-day, and made no systematic effort to establish a navy. There was no ranking system, and if a naval officer did anything signally brave, he was usually turned out of his ship to remain idle, or given a smaller one. The exasperating methods of Congress made a traitor of Benedict Arnold, one of the best soldiers in the American Army, who sulked, like Achilles, but to no good purpose.

When the British burned Falmouth (now Portland) on October 17, 1775, the nation was aroused, and a naval commission appointed. The character of this commission was changed constantly during the war. As soon as it got into working shape it was tampered with and reorganized, and the useful elements carefully removed. In consequence, whatever the navy did was done in spite of Congress.

The first flag was raised over an American warship in the winter of 1775-6 at Philadelphia. To this day there is some doubt about its design, but it was supposed to be a yellow silk flag, with a coiled rattlesnake, and underneath the motto, "Don't tread on me." On that occasion there were present Esek Hopkins, Commander-in-chief; Dudley Saltonstall, Abraham Whipple, Nicholas Biddle, John B. Hopkins, captains, and John Paul Jones, first lieutenant, who is said to have raised the flag. This is, however, a small matter. The most important thing about John Paul Jones is that he never hauled an American flag down.

At this time the American navy had eight men-of-war: the *Alfred*, the *Columbus*, the *Andrea Doria*, the *Cabot*, the *Reprisal*, *Hamden*, *Lexington*, *Providence*, and sixteen other vessels bought into the service—twenty-five in all, and



ESEK HOPKINS.
First Commodore of the United States Navy.

mounted 422 guns. The British navy had seventy-eight men-of-war stationed in American waters, mounting 2,078 guns. Put some rapid-fire guns on a steam yacht of to-day, go along the American coast and capture twenty-five lumber schooners as they come, of all sizes, place some old muzzle-loading twelve and eighteen pounders on their decks, and you will have something akin to the Revolutionary Navy. Such a navy, under fire of a modern battleship, would last only a few minutes. This navy during the war, in spite of the additions made, was nearly demolished, there being only two or three ships left to tell the tale. But with the aid of privateers, owned by individuals or the colonies, this navy captured 800 British vessels. When the war broke out nothing could have pleased the British merchants better, because they confidently predicted the complete annihilation of their formidable American competitors, but when they saw their own merchant vessels melting away before their eyes they sang a different tune. Most of the battles fought by the Americans were fought with implements captured from the British vessels.

The naval war of the American Revolution in reality lasted nearly ten years, from June 17, 1772, when the British schooner *Gaspé* was captured in Providence harbor by Abraham Whipple with sixty-four men armed with paving stones, to April 8, 1782, when the English ship *General Monk* surrendered to the American privateer *Hyder Ally*. The naval battles fought between these two dates would fill a good sized volume in itself, and though each is interesting enough, a recital of them would be monotonous. We shall content ourselves, therefore, with a brief sketch of the more important engagements.

The principal things the Continental Army lacked were guns, ammunition, clothes and money. In order to pamper the soldiers with luxuries of this sort, it was necessary to capture them from the enemy. So Commodore Esek Hopkins



JOHN BARRY.

sailed away in his fleet in February, 1776, to the Bahama Islands, and in March took New Providence and secured a hundred cannon and some valuable stores. On his return with these spoils, after taking two vessels, the British sloop-

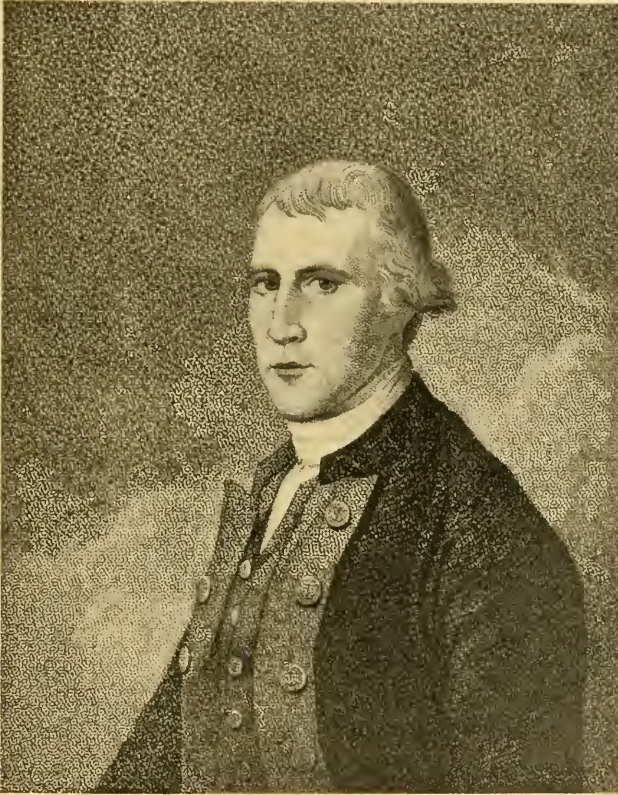
of-war *Glasgow* got mixed up with Commodore Hopkins's fleet, and after doing a lot of damage, succeeded in escaping. For this the Commodore was afterwards retired from the service. About this time Captain John Barry, in the *Lexington*, Captain Nicholas Biddle, in the *Andrea Doria*, Captain Elisha Hinman, in the *Cabot*, Captain Abraham Whipple, in the *Columbus*, and later in the *Andrea Doria*, made things lively for the British vessels. In the year 1776, 342 English merchant vessels were taken.

Perhaps the most valuable captures, attended as they were by such uniform success, were made by John Paul Jones. As first lieutenant he accompanied Commodore Hopkins on his voyage to New Providence, and upon his return he was placed in charge of the 12-gun brig *Providence*, and later, on October 10, 1776, he was promoted to the rank of captain. Cruising off Bermuda in the *Providence*, Jones mistook the British frigate *Soleboy* for a merchant vessel, and didn't discover his mistake until the latter was close aboard. Then followed a four hours' chase, when Jones suddenly put about, passing the *Soleboy* within gunshot before the Englishman could recover himself, and got away. This was one among many of the escapes of John Paul Jones, and is illustrative of the daring and successful qualities of American seamanship.

Not many weeks after this Captain Jones, in command of the *Alfred*, captured three British vessels off Block Island, and in one of them, the 10-gun transport *Mellish*, was discovered 10,000 British uniforms. It is needless to say that these were very welcome to our impoverished army. The next night Jones with his prizes was discovered by a British frigate, but by the clever use of false signals he succeeded in

saving them, only one vessel, a letter of marque, being captured.

Historians have rarely done justice to the services of our



NICHOLAS BIDDLE.

navy during the war of the Revolution. In addition to the government ships of war, hastily improvised and in great part recruited from the merchant vessels, the colonies fitted out

privateers of their own, aided in many instances by private citizens, and there can be no doubt that our success in the war could not have been accomplished except by the coöperation of these daring navigators. They kept the army supplied with arms, ammunition and clothing captured from the enemy, and many a time when the spirit of our troops was at the lowest ebb, some bold naval exploit served to revive their courage.

In the autumn of 1776 was fought the battle of Lake Champlain, on which so much depended. Sir Guy Carleton, who had been despatched from England for the purpose of opening up Lake Champlain, brought over three ships, which, having been taken apart, were put together again on the Lake, and augmented the British fleet with which it was intended to sweep the Americans from the water. The result was not, however, as the British had planned. On October 11, 1776, the American fleet under Benedict Arnold met the British fleet under Captain Pringle and a desperate battle was fought. The British fleet was superior, and was aided by savages stationed on shore. That night Arnold escaped with his fleet, and the next day the chase began, and Arnold was compelled to destroy his vessels. While the apparent temporary disadvantage was with our forces, Arnold's desperate resistance convinced the British that they had a determined enemy, and they were permanently thwarted in their attempt to break down the barriers between Canada and the United Colonies. Shortly afterward Sir Guy Carleton retired to his winter quarters.

From the British standpoint, the most annoying character in the Revolution was John Paul Jones. Jones was a Scotch-

man, and it seemed like the irony of fate that, as an American citizen (although not admitted to be such by the British), he



JOHN PAUL JONES.

should afterward return to his own native coast, like an avenging spirit. After his adventures on the American coast,

in which he made so many valuable additions to the American sea force, he proceeded to France, as a base of operations. Previous to his appearance off the shores of England, Captain Lambert Wickes, in the *Reprisal* and *Lexington*, and Captain Connygham, in the *Surprise* and *Revenge*, had played havoc with the English merchant marine, the latter on one occasion, with becoming modesty, actually disguising his vessel and fitting her out in a British port. But Paul Jones set a pace that has never been equaled. In the early part of 1778 he made his first circuit of the British Islands in the *Ranger*. During this voyage he captured the English *Drake*, a superior vessel, and terrorized the inhabitants along the coast. After this Jones was idle. Having proved himself the best captain in the service, it was natural that Congress should fail to provide him with a ship. At last, in February, 1779, he succeeded in getting the *Bonhomme Richard*, a condemned hulk that had formerly been an Indian trader. He put some guns on her decks, shipped a crew of all nations, that was afterwards reinforced by some American exchanged prisoners, and sailed away to fight one of the most famous naval battles of history. Shortly after receiving his reinforcements, Captain Jones greeted Richard Dale, who offered his services and was made first lieutenant. Richard Dale had a remarkable history. Early in 1776, the *Reprisal*, Captain Lambert Wickes, the first American cruiser which appeared in British waters, was sent across the Atlantic. In April, 1777, she was joined by the *Lexington*, Captain Henry Johnson, and the 10-gun cutter *Dolphin*, Lieutenant Nicholson. After capturing a number of prizes which were disposed of in French ports, thereby causing a protest from the British Government, the *Lexington*



The fight between the *Bonhomme Richard* and the *Serapis*.

sailed from Morlaix in September, 1777, and was captured by a superior vessel, the *Alert*. The crew was taken to Plymouth, thrown into prison, and treated with great brutality. Richard Dale was at this time master's mate of the *Lexington*, and was imprisoned with the rest. One day he secured a British uniform by some extraordinary means which he would never reveal, and putting it on, boldly walked out of prison, made his escape and joined the *Bonhomme Richard*.

On September 22, 1779, Jones ran across the *Serapis*, and then occurred that remarkable moonlight engagement in which the *Bonhomme Richard*, in a sinking condition, compelled the *Serapis* to strike her colors.

"Have you struck?" asked the British commander, when the *Bonhomme Richard* came alongside.

"I have not yet begun to fight," replied Jones.

Then, at a critical moment in the battle, the French ship *Alliance*, commanded by Captain Landais, and which had accompanied Jones on his cruise as a consort, drew up, and deliberately fired a broadside into the *Bonhomme Richard*. The only excuse for this, aside from the apparent jealousy of the French commander, was that he was crazy. His actions, both before and after the battle, seemed to indicate this. After three hours and a half of fighting, which for persistence and dogged determination on both sides has never been equaled, the *Serapis* struck her colors, and John Paul Jones became the foremost naval hero of his time, if not of all time.

The last naval action of the war took place between the *Hyder Ally* and the *General Monk*, Captain Rodgers. The former was a Pennsylvania State cruiser of 16 guns and 110

men, commanded by Lieutenant Joshua Barney, and the latter a British cruiser of 20 guns and 180 men. The *Hyder Ally* was convoying a fleet of merchant vessels off Cape May when attacked by the *General Monk*, and in thirty minutes had captured the British vessel.

During the Revolution the American loss in vessels was 24, while the British was 102 ships of war, and about 800 merchant vessels.

CHAPTER II.

MILLIONS FOR TRIBUTE, BUT NOT ONE CENT FOR DEFENSE.

Congress and the Navy—The Dey of Algiers—Construction of the Navy—The War with France — Bainbridge and St. Laurent—Captain Truxton and the *Constellation*.

THE naval part of the Revolution is a complete play in itself. The ships, as characters, had their parts, but in the last act those that remained were all killed off, and the curtain went down on an empty stage. In the last scene, the three ships of war left were promptly disposed of, in order to rid the country of any semblance of a navy. In 1785, all that was left of it were some memories and a few officers who had survived, most of them promptly taking to the merchant service. Congress had not then reached its fullest measure of stupidity, but it had made a fair beginning. The history of the United States might be termed a continuous series of moral victories won by her best men over her legislators. At that time, the thirteen colonies having won their independence over the mother country, all was well. Nothing further was necessary. The army might return home and talk about what glorious deeds had been done. The navy was a relic of the past, good while it lasted, but of no further consequence. Every other nation had a kind heart, pure and unselfish motives, and would gladly welcome

us on the high seas, and allow us to help ourselves to as much of their commerce as we could conveniently carry. Beautiful speeches were made in Congress, showing that systems of defense were needed only by monarchies. Young republics had no need of them. We were now free and would remain so, through Divine Providence and the love of others. A prominent Senator from Pennsylvania (Maclay) voiced the sentiments of the majority when he said: "This thing of a fleet has been working among our members all the session. I have heard it break out often. It is another menace to our republican institutions."

In the meantime our disinterested friend, the Dey of Algiers, became aware of our existence. Being a vassal of the Sultan of Turkey, who was somewhat grasping by nature, and his kingdom lying at the entrance of the Mediterranean, the Dey found it a great source of profit to himself and consolation to the Sultan to gather in all the merchant ships that came into his net. Up to the year 1793, however, American commerce, which was rapidly assuming great proportions, had been comparatively safe from the pirates of the Dey, because Portugal, who kept a strong fleet at Gibraltar, had agreed to protect American vessels. It is true that in 1785 two of our ships were captured by pirates and a number of our sailors made slaves, but at the time our patriotic legislators did not consider this of sufficient importance to act. "Eleven unfortunate men now in slavery in Algiers," sneered Maclay, "is the pretext for fitting out a fleet."

As a means to secure an end, England, in her characteristic manner, concluded in 1793 that our commerce must be

wiped out. So her agent arranged a secret truce between the Dey and Portugal, forced the latter to recognize it, and without warning our merchant marine was pounced upon. One hundred and twelve of our men were sent into slavery. Of course, England continued to pay a small tribute to the Dey. It was more economical to do this, and give him the chance to wipe out her one competitor. And our brilliant Congressmen urged that we ought to do the same thing because John Bull did it. And this is precisely what happened. Not having a navy, we were obliged to buy our sailors back. It cost about one million to do it. A beautiful ship, the *Crescent*, loaded with presents for the Dey, and several barrels of silver dollars, were sent by the Yankee nation as a tribute. In 1795 a peace was arranged with Algiers by the annual payment of about \$22,000.

This, however, was thought by some bigoted lovers of their country to be a base and servile surrender of our independence. To knuckle down thus to a Mohammedan pirate, the willing tool of England, was considered hardly compatible with our boasted freedom. An agitation was started, and the result was that a bill for a new navy was actually passed through Congress by a majority of two votes. George Washington had urged it long before, but having saved his country, his advice was not considered good.

Just because Congress didn't personally build the new navy it was a good one. If they had, it would probably have consisted of mutton-legged flatboats, armed with popguns. But Joshua Humphreys, an old shipbuilder, supervised its construction, and under his advice six frigates were constructed. They were the *Constitution*, the *President*, the *United*

States, sister ships of forty-four guns, and the *Chesapeake*, the *Congress* and the *Constellation*, thirty-six guns each. Humphreys's idea was to have the navy small, but to contain better and faster ships than any afloat. This idea, it may be



RICHARD DALE.

stated, has been steadily adhered to from that time to this. Our ships of war have always been singly better than any afloat. These six frigates were soon augmented by sixteen other smaller vessels, so that in 1798, when the war with

France broke out, the United States had a respectable navy. It is related that when the *Constitution* was launched, Captain Nicholson, who had charge of her, wished to have the honor of raising her flag, so on her launching day he gave instructions to this effect and went away to get his breakfast. During his absence, however, the flag was raised by the shipwright, Samuel Bently. When Captain Nicholson got back and discovered what had been done he is said to have been beside himself with anger.

Common tradition has it that the Lord looks out for little children and the United States of America, and it would seem in this instance as if the Dey of Algiers had been interposed to render it imperative upon us to have a navy to cope with France and England. It is equally certain that if it were not for the Dey no navy would have been built, and the few years from 1798 to 1801 would have been much more costly than they really were. Although we had bought off the Dey by tribute and established peace with that potent ruler, our ships were not idle from the time they were launched. France and England being at war with each other, and the United States a nonentity on the seas—as they both thought—they did not go out of their way to respect our flag or our feelings. They made fun of the ships we were building, and while England began her system of impressing our seamen into her service wherever they were found, France committed depredations on our floating property.

Our new ships proved later that they were the best afloat of their size, and they were manned by our best blood, so that in 1798, when hostilities with France began, we were in much better condition to meet her on the ocean than she

wotted of. Among the most prominent captains at this time were John Barry, Samuel Nicholson, Silas Talbot, Joshua Barney, Richard Dale, Stephen Decatur, Sr., Thomas Truxton, and Lieutenant Bainbridge, afterwards captain. Richard Dale



JOSHUA BARNEY.

will be remembered as the first lieutenant of the *Bonhomme Richard* when John Paul Jones fought his famous fight with the *Serapis*. Truxton was born on Long Island, and during the Revolution commanded a privateer.

The first French vessel captured during this trouble with France was the privateer *Croyable*, which was carried into Philadelphia, refitted, renamed the *Retaliation*, and immediately went to sea under the command of Lieutenant Bainbridge. In company with two other American vessels, the *Montezuma* and the *Norfolk*, on the morning of November 20, 1798, Bainbridge ran into the arms of two French frigates—the *Insurgente*, Captain Barreaut, and the *Voluntaire*, Captain St. Laurent—and was captured and taken aboard the *Voluntaire*, where he offered his sword to St. Laurent, who refused to take it. “You had, sir,” he said, “no opportunity to defend yourself. I therefore beg you to retain your sword.”

In the meantime the other French frigate, the *Insurgente*, was chasing the two American vessels, and would have undoubtedly captured them had not Captain St. Laurent suddenly turned to Bainbridge and asked him what their armament was.

“Oh,” said Bainbridge, innocently, “the ship has twenty-eight twelve-pounders and the brig twenty nine-pounders.”

This was more than St. Laurent bargained for, and he signaled the *Insurgente* to haul off and return, much to Barreaut’s disgust, who, when he hailed his senior officer, shouted out: “If you had not signaled me, sir, I would have taken those ships.”

“Your ship was not heavy enough, Citizen Captain,” sternly replied St. Laurent. “Those vessels are armed with twelve and nine-pounders.”

“There isn’t a gun on either,” howled Barreaut, “heavier than a six pounder. I was near enough to see.”

St. Laurent turned to Bainbridge, who had a large laugh in his elbow regions.

"Didn't you tell me," he sputtered, "those vessels had twelve and nine-pounders?"



"If necessary, I would have told you twice as big a lie."

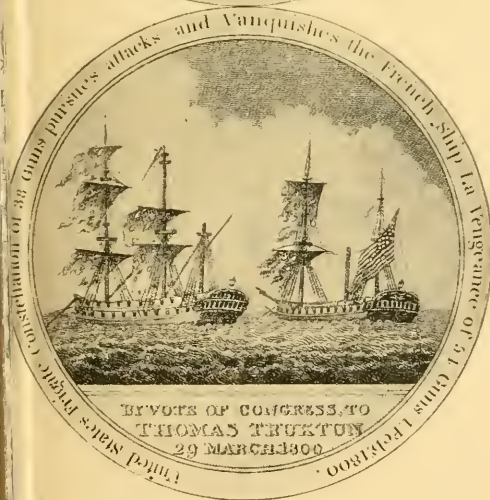
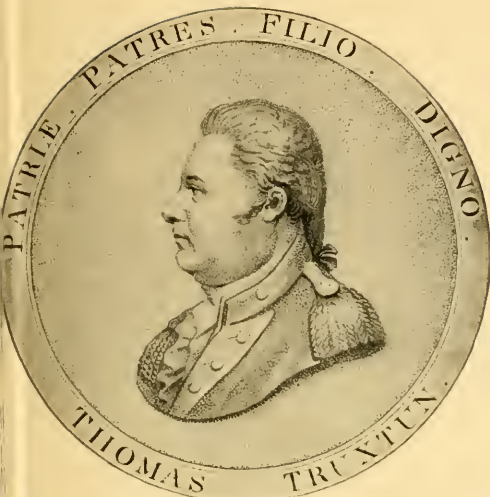
"I did," said Bainbridge, "and if necessary, I would have told you twice as big a lie."

In the meantime the American vessels were beyond reach. The moral of this is that when you lie, tell one that is big enough to answer the purpose.

On the 16th of this same month, Captain Isaac Phillips in the *Baltimore*, while convoying some merchant vessels from Charleston to Havana, was sighted by a British squadron of five frigates and the seventy-four gun *Carnatic*, Captain Loring. Loring ordered Phillips aboard, proceeded to take fifty-five men out of his ship, afterwards returning fifty of them, and seized three of the American merchant vessels. Phillips made a vigorous protest, but was powerless. Congress not only censured him, but he was dismissed from the service because he couldn't help himself.

Our naval war with France lasted from May 28, 1798, to February 3, 1801, and the scene of most of the battles was in the vicinity of the West Indies. The only warship captured from us by the French was the *Retaliation*, which, as related, we had previously taken. Two of our schooners, the *Enterprise* and the *Experiment*, fitted out expressly for this service, captured a great number of French vessels, and on October 12, 1800, the *Boston*, Captain Little, took the *Berceau*, an inferior vessel, after a valiant defense. Bainbridge, after being captured by the *Voluntaire*, was taken to Guadeloupe, where he and his sailors were nearly starved until they were finally released.

But by far the most important work of this war was accomplished by Captain Truxton, in his famous cruise in the *Constellation*. On February 9, 1799, the *Constellation* took the French frigate *Insurgente* off St. Kitts. The *Constellation* was slightly superior to the *Insurgente*. One year later Captain



MEDAL PRESENTED BY CONGRESS TO CAPT. TRUXTON.

Truxton, in the *Constellation*, had his famous fight with the *Vengeance*, a vessel slightly superior to the *Constellation*. The action began at eight o'clock at night, and continued for five hours, when the *Vengeance* succeeded in escaping. During the engagement her colors were twice struck, but Truxton was unable to see this. The *Vengeance* was badly crippled, as the fire of the *Constellation* had been deliberate and direct.

Much excitement and exultation was created by this battle. Our sailors

were lauded to the skies, and, under the extraordinary pressure of public opinion, Congress actually voted Truxton a gold medal and gave him command of the *President*.

Many of the minor officers in this war were afterwards to achieve celebrity, among them being Midshipmen Stephen Decatur and David Porter, and Lieutenant Isaac Hull, the famous Commander of the *Constitution* in the War of 1812.

CHAPTER III.

WAR WITH THE BARBARY STATES.

The Dey, the Bey and the Bashaw—Captain Bainbridge and His Visit to Constantinople—Defiant Attitude of the Bashaw of Tripoli—Operations in the Mediterranean—Capture of the *Philadelphia*—Decatur's Daring Feat—Reduction of Tripoli—Richard Somers—The Bey of Tunis.

THE Dey of Algiers was an avaricious and insatiable ruler. So also was the Bey of Tunis. Likewise was the Bashaw of Tripoli. This piratical triumvirate ruled over the northwest corner of Africa, on the southern shores of the Mediterranean.

Piracy with them was not so much a pastime as an occupation. Being vassals to the Sultan of Turkey, they were obliged to reimburse him at frequent intervals, and they hesitated not to rob when there was any vessel in sight. Plunder was a state institution, the only difference between them and other rulers of the present day being that they preferred to rob other countries, while the rulers prefer to rob their own.

When, therefore, the Bey of Tunis and his next-door neighbor, the Bashaw of Tripoli, beheld the success of the Dey of Algiers; when they saw the noble ship *Crescent* loaded with silver dollars which had been sent as a bribe from the Yankee nation to the Dey, they exclaimed with one voice,

“What are *we* here for?” “Where do we come in?” and other expressions indicating their displeasure. Of course, in a case as urgent as this, had Congress previously not been influenced by George Washington and others to create a navy, the Bey of Tunis, and likewise the Bashaw of Tripoli, would no doubt have been similarly placated. Then they would have asked for more, and still more. Eventually they would have come over to the United States and settled, and their ancestors might, through inherited gifts, have been even more successful to-day in robbing the country than some of our present politicians.

Their dreams, however, were knocked in the head by our new navy, and so it happened that through a few ships, which our legislation had almost tabooed as being monarchical and unnecessary, we were still able to preserve our independence, although this had already been given a severe shock by the annual tribute we paid to a barbarous power.

The ship *George Washington*, commanded by Captain William Bainbridge, sailed to the Mediterranean in the spring of 1800 to convey our annual tribute to the Dey of Algiers. Captain Bainbridge was a spirited naval officer, and it may well be imagined that this duty was not a pleasing one in itself, but his stern sense of discipline carried him through the ordeal that was to come.

After Captain Bainbridge had anchored his ship in the harbor of Algiers, under the guns of the fort, so that he was practically helpless, the Dey proceeded to inform him that he considered the Americans his slaves, and they must do his bidding. He therefore commanded him to go on an errand to Constantinople, taking a present to the Sultan, and also to

convey some Mussulmans to that potent Turk. Moreover, he directed that Bainbridge fly the Algerian flag over the *George Washington* as an acknowledgment of vassalage.



WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE.

This is a delightful incident, and that the Dey should have selected a ship named the *George Washington* as a peculiar

mark of his pleasure has a tinge of irony. Particularly is this so when we consider that three years before George Washington himself, in a speech before Congress, said that "to secure respect to a neutral flag requires a naval force organized and ready to vindicate it from insult and aggression."

Bainbridge did as he was told. He hoisted the Algerian flag until he got beyond gunshot, and then proceeded to Constantinople. But he got even, in a measure, with the Dey. The Sultan took a great fancy to him and his ship, and gave him a firman, a document which, displayed in the Sultan's dominions, means that the bearer can do as he pleases.

Bainbridge sailed back to Algiers, taking care this time to anchor out of reach of the guns, and paid his respects once more to the Dey.

That ruler, however, was not satisfied. He wanted more. He made not only further demands, but threatened to throw Bainbridge into jail. He was about to make good his threat, being in an ungovernable rage, when Bainbridge produced his firman and spread it before the astonished eyes of the Dey. It had an instant effect. The barbarian shrank back, and after that Bainbridge had his own way. He released a lot of French prisoners and landed them in his own ship in France, although that country was at war with us at the time, and then proceeded home, wild with rage at the treatment he had received. His story spread like wildfire, and the Yankee spirit was fully aroused.

In the meantime the Bashaw of Tripoli, having written over to the President of the United States that he expected as much if not more than the Dey of Algiers, and being impatient of delay and rapacious to a degree, early in 1801 declared



“Spread it before the astonished eyes of the Dey.”

war on the United States. Up to this time nothing had been done to defend ourselves from these pirates. Thomas Jefferson, who became President in 1801, was pledged to rigid economy, and immediately a lot of vessels belonging to the navy were disposed of, but the imperative necessity of greater naval strength becoming apparent, the available force was afterwards augmented and a fleet sent to the Mediterranean to quell the pirates. Jefferson's idea of an adequate protection of our coasts, and as a measure of self-defense, consisted of a small fleet of diminutive gunboats stored on land in neat dockyards, and ready to be launched if the enemy hove in sight. They would scarcely live in a twenty-knot breeze, and the "enemy" would have had to look for them with a microscope.

The nation now being aroused over the defiant attitude of the Bashaw of Tripoli, a fleet was dispatched across the Atlantic with Captain Richard Dale in command. The fleet comprised the *President*, Captain James Barron; the *Essex*, Captain Bainbridge; the *Philadelphia*, Captain Samuel Barron, and the schooner *Enterprise*, Lieutenant Andrew Sterrett. When the Dey of Algiers beheld these vessels he made the most violent protestations of friendship; but not so the Bashaw of Tripoli. He had yet to learn something, and so the first lesson was given him by Sterrett, who, on August 1st, captured off Malta the war polacre *Tripoli*, fourteen guns and eighty men. Twice the *Tripoli's* flag was lowered, and when Lieutenant Porter put off in a boat to board her a murderous fire was opened on him.

There is a limit to all things, however, and Sterrett proceeded to rake the polacre fore and aft, and would have

sunk the vessel with every man on board if the commander of her had not begged on his knees for quarter and thrown his flag in the sea.

This was the first engagement, and there being few vessels



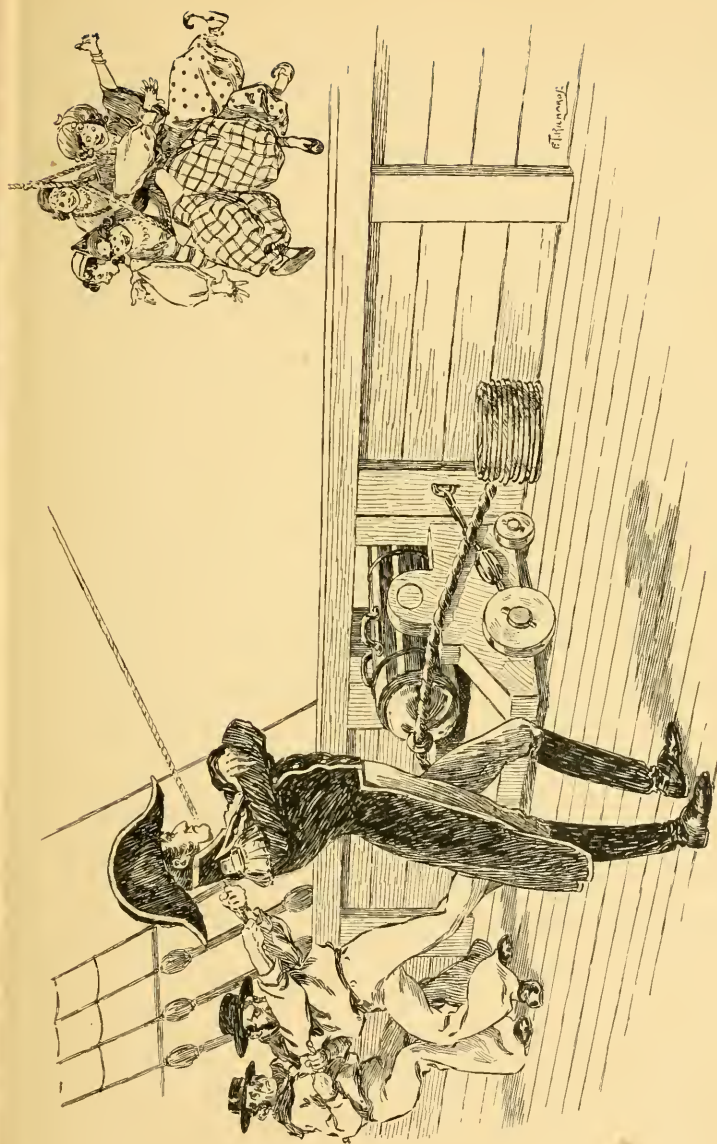
EDWARD PREBLE.

in the Tripolitan Navy, a desultory warfare continued until the 31st of October, 1803, when the *Philadelphia*, under Bainbridge, in chasing a corsair into Tripoli, struck a reef, and the captain and crew were captured and thrown into jail, while the ship was rescued by the Tripolitans.

With one of our captains and his crew in the power of the Bashaw, and one of our best ships in his possession, things were not the same as they had been. Bainbridge from his confinement, however, through the assistance of the Danish Consul, wrote a letter to Commodore Edward Preble, then commanding our fleet, suggesting a plan whereby the *Philadelphia* might be blown up. The only way this could be done was to secure some vessel of the enemy, and, disguised thus, enter the harbor at night.

It happened that just such a vessel as was needed fell into our hands. In December, 1803, a Tripolitan ketch, the *Mastico*, set sail from the Barbary coast, filled with sprightly maidens for the Sultan's harem. This siren deep-laden vessel, bound for Constantinople, was sighted by the lookout of the *Enterprise*, commanded by Lieutenant Decatur, who, giving chase, captured her with all on board. Thus the very vessel needed was supplied, and one night in February Lieutenant Decatur with a picked crew, some of them disguised as Turks, entered the harbor of Tripoli in the ketch, ran up alongside of the *Philadelphia*, boarded her, set her on fire, and escaped a short time before she blew up. This daring and successful enterprise may well be classed as one of the most courageous deeds in naval warfare.

Following the destruction of the *Philadelphia*, for which Decatur was made captain, came a series of five attacks on Tripoli, which culminated, on the 27th of April, 1805, in the capture of Tripoli, with the aid of Hamet Karamauli, an elder brother of the Bashaw, who had been deposed, and the Stars and Stripes waved over the city. For this result Commodore Preble was entitled to the chief honors, and



Taking aboard the freight of the Tripolitan ketch.

upon his return to the United States he was appropriately honored.

While the American fleet was thus engaged in subduing Tripoli, there was not lacking the grit, gumption and gunnery which has always distinguished our naval heroes, and there occurred an act of bravery unsurpassed in naval history, and a dire tragedy.

In the first of the attacks, made on August 3, 1804, the fleet not being of service among the dangerous reefs, gunboats were used, and six of them were dispatched to attack the enemy's fleet in the harbor. One of these boats was commanded by Stephen Decatur and another by his brother. Stephen led the way, and, after a desperate fight, captured one of the enemy's gunboats.

In the meantime his brother, James Decatur, deceived by the fact that another gunboat had treacherously hauled down her flag, stepped on board to take possession, and was shot dead by the commander, a swarthy Tripolitan. In some way Stephen heard that his brother was killed, and, losing no time, he cast off the gunboat he had in tow, boarded the boat which held his brother's murderer, and, after a desperate hand-to-hand conflict, shot him to death. While thus engaged, a Turk back of Decatur raised his scimiter to strike him. Reuben James, a common sailor, perceiving the Turk's design, interposed his own body, received the blow himself, and saved Decatur's life. Reuben James, though badly hurt, afterwards recovered.

The tragedy of the war occurred on the night of September 4th, when Master Commandant Richard Somers, in the identical ketch *Intrepid* that had been so useful in destroying

the *Philadelphia*, after loading her with gunpowder, took her into the harbor of Tripoli with the intention of setting her afire among the enemy's fleet and returning in swift rowboats.



DECATUR'S CONFLICT WITH THE ALGERIAN AT TRIPOLI.
Reuben James interposes his body to save the life of his Commander.

Somers and his crew went, but never came back. The ketch was prematurely blown up, but no one knows how to this day.

In the meantime the Bey of Tunis got impertinent, and,



encouraged by England, announced his intention of declaring war. Our fleet, then under Commodore Rodgers, had grown formidable by reinforcements, and appearing before Tunis compelled the Bey to sue for peace, a method which, if Congress had known its business, would have been pursued years before, and saved a great many men, ships, and American dollars. Even after Tripoli had practically capitulated, however, we paid them \$60,000 for the privilege of returning some of our prisoners.

Peace in the Barbary States having been fully dictated at the muzzles of our guns, the next naval event of importance was the War of 1812.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WAR OF 1812.

Causes Leading to the War—*Chesapeake* and *Leopard*—*President* and *Little Belt*—*Constitution* in Portsmouth—Opening of the War—*President* and *Belvidera*—Escape of the *Constitution*—Hull and Dacres.

THE events and causes leading up to the War of 1812 were numerous and well sustained. There were in the United States a considerable body of Tories, not yet thoroughly weaned from the parent government, and their influence upon public opinion was pronounced. It might be said that public opinion was at one time pretty evenly divided. On the one side were the large body of citizens who had fought and bled for their country's independence, and on the other side the still active Tories, who believed that any injustice which England might force upon us should be submitted to. The influence of this latter body of citizens enabled England to exercise an undue aggressiveness, and it was only when this was pushed to the extreme limit, by the impressment of our sailors and by wanton firing on our ships, that the tide of resentment waxed strong. It was difficult to make England perceive the exact difference between an American and an English subject, and where the two countries had been only so recently severed, much confusion in determining the nationality of sailors was bound to arise. It was

natural that England, at that time sorely in need of all her sailors, should endeavor to impress every available man, and her naval officers were not always nice in their efforts to secure this result, or just in their demands.

The naval War of 1812 was a curious combination of insolent aggression on one side and legislative incompetence and individual superiority on the other. The period from the peace with the Barbary States to the outbreak of the war was employed by our able legislators in doing what they could to leave us unprepared, while every possible sign plainly revealed that war was an inevitable result. On top of the lesson we had received from a lot of pirates, and in the face of the most humiliating insults from a greater power, our navy was allowed to go by the board, so to speak. In place of building a few efficient ships of good size, it was proposed in 1807 to add 188 gunboats to the fleet of those already built, making 257 in all. These boats were to protect our coast from English squadrons!

Congressman Williams, of South Carolina, declared that the navy was "a curse to the country, and never had been anything else." When the war came, however, something had to be done, and all the available ships were put in commission, although Congress was of the firm conviction that it would be of very little use, and timidly tried to keep the vessels in port for fear they would be forthwith grabbed up by the enemy, whose prowess on the sea had terrorized the whole maritime world. The following vessels were in the American Navy at the beginning of the war:

The *President* (44), *Constitution* (44), *United States* (44), *Chesapeake* (36), *Congress* (36), *Constellation* (36), *Essex* (32), *John*

Adams (28), *Hornet* (18), *Wasp* (18), *Argus* (16), *Siren* (16), *Enterprise* (12), *Nautilus* (12), *Vixen* (12), and *Viper* (10). In all, seventeen ships, while Great Britain had over one thousand. Of course, England, as at the present day, had a vast maritime commerce, and a system of dependent colonies so world-wide that in fighting a single foe it would have been impossible for her to have concentrated all of her ships at one point. That her naval superiority was manifest, however, it is only necessary to state that, in ships, England had stationed, from Halifax to the West Indies, over seven times the armament of the whole American Navy.

As illustrations of the methods employed by England, a few incidents which occurred previous to the actual outbreak of hostilities will suffice. Of these, the unfortunate *Chesapeake-Leopard* affair was the most prominent, and had the greatest bearing on our navy subsequently, teaching as it did a lesson that was not soon forgotten.

On the 22d of June, 1807, the United States frigate *Chesapeake* (36) dropped down to Hampton Roads, got under way, and started on her voyage to the Mediterranean, to relieve the *Constitution* at that station. Commodore Barron had come on board a short time before she started, after receiving a report from Captain Gordon, commander of the *Chesapeake*, that she was in readiness. As the ship sailed out to sea, everything was in confusion. Her crew was new, her decks were strewn with truck of all descriptions, and everything was as unshiphape as it ought not to have been.

A squadron of British ships was lying in Lynnhaven Bay. One of them, the *Leopard* (50), had detached herself from the fleet, and, standing out in the offing, was quietly awaiting the

approach of the *Chesapeake*. She was observed by Commodore Barron, who, turning to Captain Gordon, remarked :

“I distrust that fellow’s movements. I wonder what he is after?”

He soon found out. The *Leopard* bore down on the *Chesapeake*. Captain Berkley of the *Leopard* hailed.

“I have a dispatch for you.”

The *Chesapeake* lay to.

In a short time a British officer came aboard with a note and the information that the *Leopard* had been instructed to search the *Chesapeake* for deserters. Commodore Barron replied : “Sir, my government will not permit the commander of any of its vessels to muster its crew to any but its own officers. Here is my reply.”

“Very well, sir,” replied the British lieutenant, with a smile.

After he had boarded his own ship, the Commander hailed once again.

“On board the *Chesapeake*! You must be aware, sir, that the orders of the Vice-Admiral must be obeyed.”

No reply was given, but the officers of the *Chesapeake*, in the short time they had, made every effort to clear the ship for action. It was not believed up to the last moment, however, that the *Leopard* would fire, although it had been observed that her ports were triced up.

Suddenly a shot came across the *Chesapeake’s* bow. Then another. Then a broadside. The cry to quarters was given. Some of the guns were defective. No ammunition could be found for others. Broadside after broadside from the *Leopard* poured in upon the helpless *Chesapeake*. Not a single shot

would have been fired in return if Lieutenant Henry Allen had not seized a live coal from the galley and discharged a gun with his own fingers. Then the American flag was hauled down. Twenty-one men had thus wantonly been killed and wounded.

Of course the British Government deprecated this little affair. The Vice-Admiral was censured for his ungallant act, and shortly afterwards promoted. Commodore Barron was suspended for five years, without pay, for his negligence. On the whole, however, it proved a good lesson for the American Navy, and very useful afterwards. Our ships were not caught napping *again*.

About four years after this, it happened that we paid back the British in their own coin for the *Chesapeake* affair. The impressment of American seamen had, of course, gone on in the interval, until it was getting to be a serious matter. Commodore Rodgers was not disposed to submit to such encroachments on our rights, and when he heard that an English frigate, presumably the *Guerrière*, had seized an American sailor, he hurried to sea in the *President* in search of her. On the topsails of the *President*, in conspicuous letters, was painted her name, that the British vessels might know who she was. On the evening of May 14, 1811, Rodgers hailed a strange ship that he took to be a frigate.

“What sail is that?”

“What sail is that?” came the answer.

“What sail is that?” repeated Rodgers.

A shot came in reply. Whereupon the *President* opened with a broadside, and kept it up until the other vessel was badly damaged, many of her crew being killed and wounded.

The next morning Commodore Rodgers discovered that she was the British sloop-of-war *Little Belt*. A dispute afterwards arose as to who fired the first shot, and the whole matter was eventually dropped, but there can be no doubt as to what



ISAAC HULL.

would have happened if the *Little Belt* had been a superior ship.

Not many months after this it happened that Captain Isaac Hull was called upon to assert his independence in the harbor of Portsmouth, England. The *Constitution*, with Captain Hull commanding, had been dispatched to Holland to

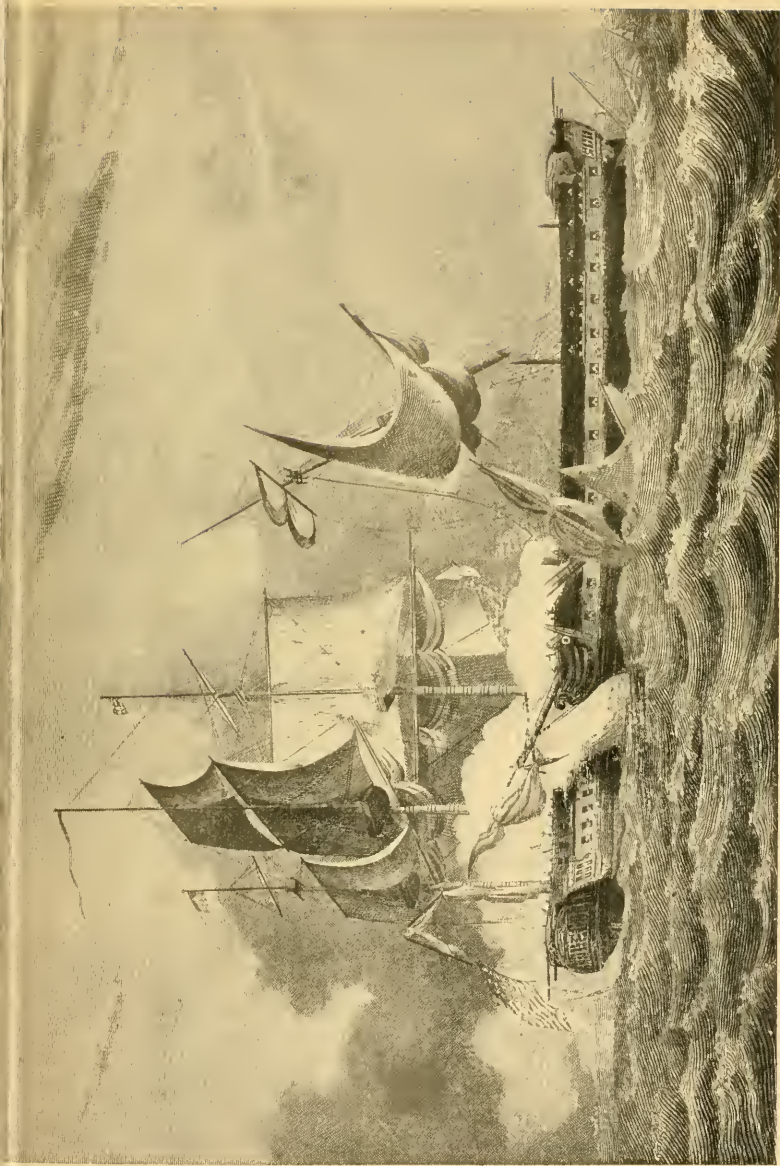
pay that country the interest on our debt, and she proceeded from thence to Portsmouth, where there was stationed a large force of English frigates. Captain Hull was ashore one night, and the *Constitution* was in command of First Lieutenant Charles Morris, when he was informed by an officer from the British man-o'-war *Havana* that an American deserter was aboard that vessel, and might be had upon application. Captain Hull being away, Lieutenant Morris made efforts to get the deserter back. The next day he applied to the Commander of the *Havana*, and then to the British Admiral, but was met with frigidity and innuendoes. While this was happening a stroke of good fortune enabled Lieutenant Morris to turn the tables. One night a deserter from the *Havana*, with a rich Irish brogue, came aboard the *Constitution*. This enabled Lieutenant Morris to employ the same tactics that the British officer had used with him. He sent word to the *Havana* that he had a deserter, and then promptly refused to give him up. Here was a state of things at once. The *Constitution* was practically at the mercy of the British squadron.

Signals were rapidly made from the British flagship. Two frigates anchored close to the *Constitution*. Captain Hull then came aboard, the crew was sent to quarters and she put out to sea, followed by the two frigates. Then the *Constitution* was hove to and waited for one of them to come up. There was great excitement on board. The men were stripped for action. The frigate rapidly came within hail, and, to the surprise of all on board the *Constitution*, hailed her, exchanged a few remarks, and bore away. Thus Captain Hull had to wait for another opportunity to show the power of his ship.

War was formally declared on June 18, 1812, and the first

battle was not encouraging. A few days after, Commodore Rodgers put to sea in the *President*, accompanied by the *United States*, the *Congress*, the *Hornet*, and the *Argus*, and had his unfortunate fight with the *Belvidera*, which caused more dissatisfaction than ever. The *President* sighted the *Belvidera* off Nantucket, and drawing away from the rest of the fleet, chased that vessel unsuccessfully. During the engagement one of the *President's* guns burst, killing sixteen men. The *Belvidera* escaped, and the American squadron continued on a long cruise, returning to port on August 29th, without accomplishing anything. This was a bad beginning, and the effect on Congress and the country at large very dispiriting. Our little navy had been decried often enough in the halls of Congress, and timid legislators inveighed against the policy of allowing our ships to put to sea in the face of so formidable and hitherto invincible enemy. But subsequent events proved that we were always able to hold our own and in many instances to whip forces greatly superior, opposed to us on the ocean.

The *Constitution*, with a new crew, sailed from the Chesapeake on July 12, 1812, and on the 17th began that famous chase which showed Isaac Hull's great ability. Heading up along the coast, he sighted a British squadron, which attempted to close in on him. For three days and nights the enemy were close in his wake, and every device to make a ship move through water was tried by Hull and immediately imitated by the British frigates. Among them was the *Guerrière*, that the *Constitution* met later on under different conditions. The *Constitution* was towed by boats, kedged, and her sails soused with water, and thus inch by inch was



The *Guerriere* being raked by the *Constitution*.

contested, until finally, availing herself of a favorable squall, she slipped away from her pursuers.

The British captains did not recover for many a long day from their surprise and chagrin over the manner in which the *Constitution*—which they had referred to as a “fir-built Yankee frigate, flying a piece of striped bunting at her masthead”—finally got away from them.

Captain Hull, after his escape from the British squadron, put into Boston, and it began to look as if the imbecility of Congress would prevent him from going to sea again. He was instructed to wait orders, but this was not to his fancy. He wanted to meet Dacres of the *Guerrière*. Dacres was also anxious to run across Hull. Before the war they had both met at an entertainment. In joking about the probability of a war, Hull said: “Well, Dacres, take good care of your ship if I ever run alongside of her when she is alone.”

“Look here, Hull,” replied Dacres, “would you like to bet money on the outcome?”

“No,” said Hull, “I don’t care to bet money, but I’ll go a hat.”

“Done!” said Dacres.

Hull was therefore anxious to bring about a result, and taking matters into his own hands, he sailed out of Boston Harbor on August 2d. He cruised south of Cape Sable, then east of Halifax, around Nova Scotia to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, taking a few prizes, and then south again. On August 19th he sighted a British frigate.

“Good!” said Hull. “I hope it’s Dacres.”

The frigate hoisted the British colors, and the two vessels drew near, when the enemy opened fire.

"Shall we return the fire?" asked Lieutenant Morris.

"Not yet," said Hull.

The *Constitution* then bore upon the stranger's quarter.

"Let her have it!" shouted Hull.

So excited was that able Commander that he jumped up and down on the quarterdeck, and his trousers being a tight fit, he split them up the side.

"If that's Dacres," he muttered to himself, "I wish I had bet him a whole uniform."

The fire between the two frigates was now terrific.

"Hull her!" sang out Lieutenant Morris.

In their excitement the crew, not yet so far separated from old England that they didn't know a pun, repeated the cry, "Hull her!"

In fifteen minutes the enemy's mizzenmast went, in a few minutes more the foremast and mainmast followed, and the *Guerrière* was a hopeless wreck, having been raked fore and aft by the terrible fire of the *Constitution's* guns. The *Constitution* then hauled off for repairs, and, when they were made, prepared to continue the action; but the British colors came down just in time.

Third Lieutenant Read got in a boat and ran up alongside the *Guerrière*, for then there was no doubt as to her identity. Dacres poked his head over the after-bulwarks.

"Captain Hull's compliments to Captain Dacres," shouted Read. "Have you struck?"

"Well," replied Dacres, "our mizzenmast, foremast and mainmast have gone. We're not in good condition to continue."

"Have you struck?" asked Read again.



The *Constitution* bears down upon the *Guerriere*.

"I—don't—know," said Dacres. "I—"

"You'd better made up your mind pretty quick," roared



"I'll trouble you for that hat."

Read. "This is no time for parley. I ask you again if you have surrendered."

"Well," replied Dacres, "I suppose I have."

"All right," said Read. "Do you need a surgeon?"

"Don't you need him yourself?"

"Why, no," replied Read. "We have only seven wounded and they've been attended to."

Captain Dacres was wounded himself, but he was transferred to the *Constitution*.

"Let me help you, Dacres," said Hull, as he came over the gangway; "you're hurt."

"Thank you," said Dacres, despondently. "Here's my sword."

"Keep it," said Hull; "you deserve to keep it; but I'll trouble you for that hat."

In this action the *Constitution* was somewhat superior to the *Guerrière*, but there is no comparison between the force of the two vessels and the amount of damage inflicted. The *Guerrière* was so badly shattered that she had to be blown up, while the *Constitution* was practically unhurt.

This victory on the part of the United States frigate was due to three things: grit, gumption and gunnery.

Nothing could exceed the universal joy over Hull's victory. Hitherto defeat had perched on our banners both by land and sea, but this showed that the war was not going to be altogether a one-sided affair.

CHAPTER V.

THE WAR OF 1812—(Continued.)

David Porter's First Cruise—*Wasp* and *Frolic*—*United States* and *Macedonian*—*Constitution* and *Java*—Capture of *Chesapeake* by *Shannon*—Career of *Argus*—*Boxer* and *Enterprise*.

DAVID PORTER was commander of the *Essex* when the war broke out, and did not get to sea with the squadron under Rodgers that allowed the *Belvidera* to escape. But shortly before the *Constitution* took the *Guerrière* he did sail from New York, and, cruising at random, took several prizes. Then on August 13, 1812, he disguised the *Essex* as a merchantman, and succeeded in fouling the English sloop *Alert*, so that vessel fell into his hands.

And here we are introduced for the first time to David Glasgow Farragut, who, later, in the Civil War, was heard from with such great results.

The *Essex* was crowded with prisoners from the *Alert* and other prizes captured, and a conspiracy was formed among them to capture her.

But Captain Porter had been in the habit of training his crew to meet emergencies, and delighted to spread a sudden alarm of fire, to accustom them to act quick.

Midshipman Farragut, feigning sleep, discovered the plot. He quietly notified Porter. Porter shouted "Fire!" and the

crew responded in double-quick time. Then the prisoners were quickly secured.

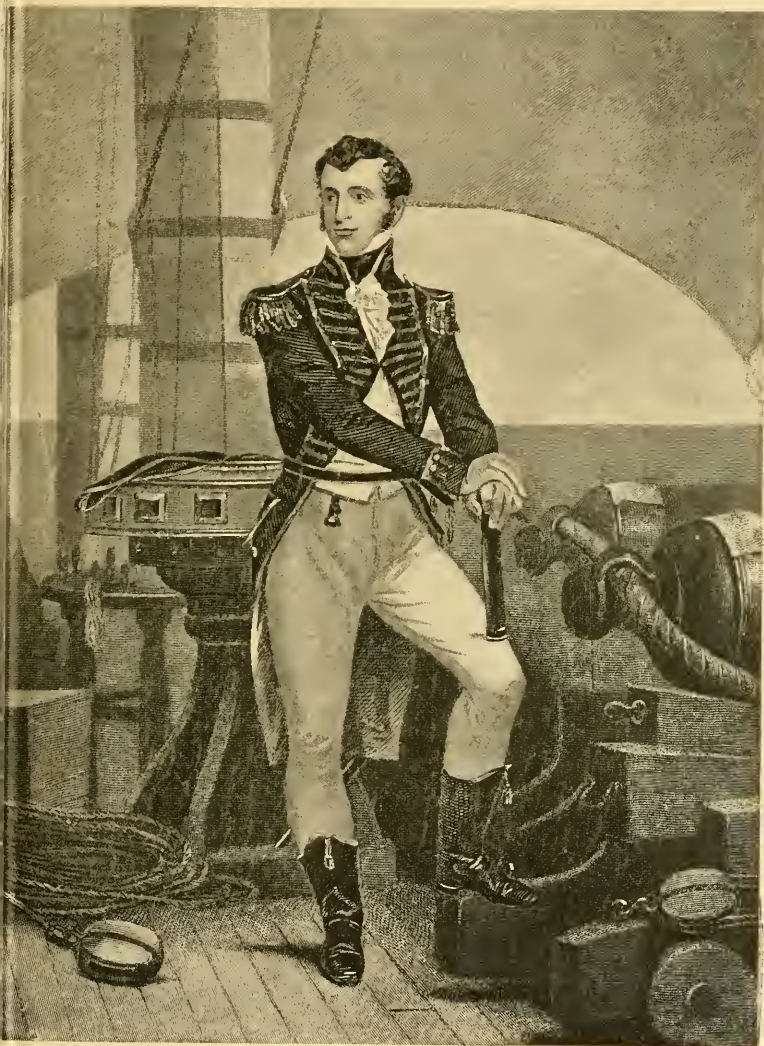
The *Essex* sent her prisoners to Halifax under parole, and succeeded in getting back to the Delaware. Later on she made a famous cruise, which will be referred to.



"WASP" AND "FROLIC."

It was great fun to beat the English at their own game on the high seas. No nation had ever done it before, and when the *Constitution* took the *Guerrrière* John Bull opened his eyes ; but this was only a small beginning.

In October, the sloop *Wasp*, 18 guns, commanded by Captain Jacob Jones, started out to pick up prizes from the



STEPHEN DECATUR.

West Indies. In a heavy gale she sighted a fleet of merchant vessels protected by a sloop-of-war.

Moreover, the sloop seemed anxious to fight.

Jones gave her the opportunity, and it wasn't long before the superior gunnery of the *Wasp's* men disabled the enemy. She was rapidly dismantled, and, the two vessels fouling each other, the crew of the *Wasp* boarded her, and found only one man on deck at the wheel, and a few officers who were left, and who promptly surrendered. The majority of her crew were killed or wounded.

This vessel proved to be the British sloop *Frolic*, of 20 guns. Shortly after the engagement, both vessels were taken by the British frigate *Poicters*.

It was a grand victory, however, and proved that we could even capture British vessels superior in armament to our own. All on account of grit, gumption and gunnery.

The capture of the *Frolic* was followed by a still more important victory.

In October, Commodore Rodgers sailed from Boston with his squadron on a second cruise, in the *President*, in company with the *United States* and *Argus*. The *United States* soon parted company with the others, however, and stood off to the southward. This vessel was at that time commanded by Stephen Decatur, famous in the war with Tripoli.

On Sunday morning, October 25th, a strange sail was sighted. Decatur saw that she was an English frigate.

"Here is my chance," said Decatur, and he called the crew to quarters.

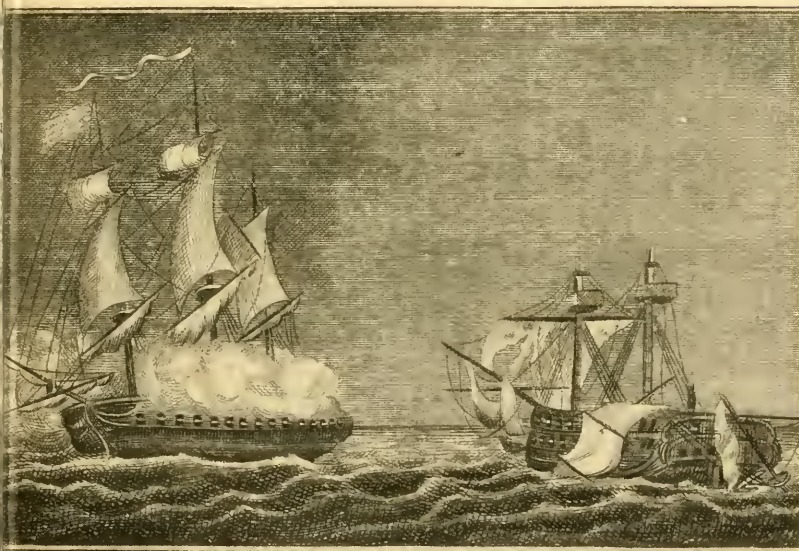
There was in the ship a boy who had been considered too small to be enrolled, but was allowed to accompany the ship.

This boy now came aft, and attracted Captain Decatur's attention.

"Well, what do you want?" he asked.

The boy, Jack Creamer by name, took off his hat.

"If you please, sir," he said, "I would like to be put on the muster roll."



"UNITED STATES" AND "MACEDONIAN." *From an old print.*

"What for?" said Decatur.

"So I can get my share of the prize money," responded Jack. So much for Yankee foresight. His request was granted.

The two ships were now rapidly approaching each other. At first the stranger kept at long range, but the guns of the

United States reaching him easily, he began to close up. Here was shown the good marksmanship of the Yankees, which, it may be remarked, we are as proud of to-day as we were then. It played havoc with the enemy's top hamper. The mizzenmast fell, and one of the American gunners remarked with a smile: "We have made a brig of her."

Decatur, standing near, heard him.

"Try again," said he, "and she'll be a sloop."

After nearly two hours' stiff fighting, the *Macedonian*, for such she proved to be, struck her colors. She was commanded by Captain Carden, one of the most successful commanders in the English navy, and was admitted to be a fine frigate in every respect. She mounted 49 guns to the *United States's* 54, and had a much smaller crew. Her loss was 104 killed and wounded, that of the *United States* only 12. Captain Carden firmly believed up to the last moment that he would win, such was British confidence.

But he made the mistake of his life.

Decatur got back to New York with his prize, and was greeted with the plaudits of the whole nation. Our poets were very much alive at that time. One of them wrote:

" Bold Carden thought he had us tight,
 Just so did Dacres too, sirs,
 But brave Decatur put him right
 With Yankee doodle-doo, sirs.
 They thought they saw our ship in flame,
 Which made them all huzza, sirs,
 But when the second broadside came
 It made them hold their jaws, sirs."

Not able poetry, but it conveyed the idea.

At the precise hour in which 500 men were sitting down to a banquet at Gibson's City Hotel, New York, to celebrate

the victories of Isaac Hull and Stephen Decatur, another event was taking place off the coast of South America, which was to be celebrated in history to the discomfiture of the over-confident Briton.

On the 26th of October, 1812, Captain William Bainbridge set sail from Boston in the *Constitution*, accompanied by the



JAS. LAWRENCE.

Hornet, Master Commandant James Lawrence, to cruise in the West Indies. Two days before Captain Porter had sailed in the *Essex*, and it was the intention to have these three vessels meet later, and, by proceeding to the Indian Ocean, to cruise in the East Indies, and thus draw some of the English frigates

away from our coast. This design, however, was not carried out, as the *Constitution* and the *Hornet* failed to meet the *Essex* at the appointed rendezvous. Porter proceeded on his own way, rounding the Horn into the Pacific.

The *Constitution* and *Hornet*, after touching at Port Praya, proceeded to the coast of Brazil, and on December 13th the *Hornet*, with the *Constitution* discreetly out of sight, appeared off Bahia, St. Salvador, and, after vainly trying to induce a British sloop-of-war there, the *Bonne Citoyenne*, to come out and give battle, blockaded that vessel, her captain being not so ready to engage an American vessel of about the same weight as the boasts of the British might lead one to believe.

The *Constitution*, then leaving the *Hornet* off Bahia, proceeded to sea, and on December 29th ran across the English frigate *Java*.

It was a one-sided affair from the start. It took the *Constitution* about two hours to make a wreck of the enemy, and it was a good job and well done. Indeed, she was so badly damaged that the next day she had to be blown up.

On board the *Java* were Lieutenant-General Thomas Hislop, recently appointed Governor of India, and some extra British naval officers. Her captain (Lambert) died shortly after from his injuries.

Bainbridge sailed for Boston with the news of his victory, arriving there on February 27th, and it is needless to say that he got a lively reception. Fifty thousand dollars were voted by Congress to the officers and crew.

In commenting on these successive victories, the *London Times* had occasion to remark: "Oh, what a charm is hereby dissolved!"

One of our poets sang :

“ Come, lads, draw near, and you shall hear,
 In truth as chaste as Dian, O !
 How Bainbridge, true, and his bold crew
 Again have trained the lion, O !
 ’Twas off Brazil he got the pill
 Which made him cry, *Peccavi*, O !
 But hours two the *Java*, new,
 Maintained the battle bravely, O !”
 Etc.

Nearly a year of war and not an American frigate had struck !

Grit, gumption, and gunnery !

In the meantime, Lawrence, in the *Hornet*, had remained at Bahia until he was chased by an English frigate, and, making off, he came across the English sloop-of-war *Peacock*, and made short work of her, the engagement lasting about fifteen minutes. She then returned to New York (in March, 1813), and they had another celebration.

Of course, after these brilliant victories, it was necessary to have one disaster. The *Chesapeake*, unlucky from the time she was launched, was the victim. She was in Boston in May, and Captain Lawrence, her commander, decided to go out and meet the English *Shannon*, Captain Broke, who was cruising around outside, daring an American vessel to meet him.

On the 1st of June, Lawrence sailed out in the *Chesapeake* with a raw crew and met his fate.

Early in the fight he was wounded and carried below to die ; but his last words, “ Don’t give up the ship !” are a battle-cry even to this day.

In this action it is well to observe that the usual conditions were reversed. In every American naval victory our success



DEATH OF LAWRENCE.
"Don't give up the ship!"

has been due to the high state of discipline and the extraordinary regard paid to gun practice. Captain Broke of the *Shannon* had studiously employed these methods. His crew was not only well trained, but they had been practiced frequently at the guns. On the contrary, the *Chesapeake*, ill-fated from the start, had only just shipped a new crew, most of them inefficient and landlubberly.

The *Shannon* took the *Chesapeake* into Halifax harbor amid British rejoicings, and correspondent American despondency.

Shortly after this happened, the sloop-of-war *Argus*, under Lieutenant Commander Allen, sailed for British waters with the intention of repeating the exploits of John Paul Jones. After destroying twenty British merchantmen, the *Argus* captured a ship loaded with wine. Alas! It was too much for the crew. While they were in a condition of partial intoxication, the *Argus* was taken by the English *Pelican*. Allen died the next day, and on August 21, 1813, he was buried at Plymouth.

There was a compensation for this loss, however, in the capture of the *Boxer* (Blyth) by the *Enterprise* (Burrows), on September 4th. Both commanders were killed in this action, and their remains are in Portland, Me.

These vessels were equally matched, and the American victory was a source of great mortification to British minds.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WAR OF 1812—(Continued.)

Lieutenant Woolsey at Sackett's Harbor—Perry and Chauncey—On Lake Ontario—Battle of Lake Erie—Perry's Great Victory—On Lake Champlain—Thomas MacDonough—An Attempt that Failed.

WHILE our navy was gaining laurels on the ocean, events were happening on the great lakes. On July 30, 1812, Lieutenant Melancthon Woolsey, at Sackett's Harbor, Lake Ontario, was in charge of the entire American force on that lake. It consisted of the brig *Oncida*, and the British came after it with a squadron of five armed vessels.

It would be an easy matter, thought the British, to run into Sackett's Harbor and capture the *Oncida*. Word was sent ashore that if she were given up, the town itself would be mercifully spared.

Woolsey thought differently.

He stationed the *Oncida* at the entrance to the harbor, where her broadside would bear on the enemy, and removed the remaining guns to the shore, forming them into a battery.

While these preparations were being made, it was discovered that on the shore nearby was an old thirty-two-pound gun, that had been lying there for years, covered with rust. It had wallowed so long that it had been nicknamed "The Sow."

Woolsey got this gun up and placed it in the battery.

"We haven't any shot to fit it, sir," said one of his men.

"Never mind," said Woolsey, "take some twenty-four-pound shot and wrap some old carpet around them, and let her go."

This is why the American always has the weather gauge



OLIVER HAZARD PERRY.

over others. He uses his brains to accomplish the best result, regardless of custom or tradition.

Amid the jeers on the British vessels, *Royal George* and *Prince Regent*, now rapidly approaching, the "old sow" was loaded and fired.

At this moment a thirty-two-pound shot from the *Royal George* came over the embankment, and bounded along until it was caught by Sergeant Spier.

It was just what was most needed.

"Here we are!" said Spier. "I've caught 'em out, and now I'll give it back to 'em. One good turn deserves another."

So saying, he rammed it into the "old sow," and, taking deliberate aim, let fly. At this moment the *Royal George* happened to be wearing to bring her broadside on. The shot struck her stern, and raked her fore and aft. It killed fourteen men and wounded eighteen.

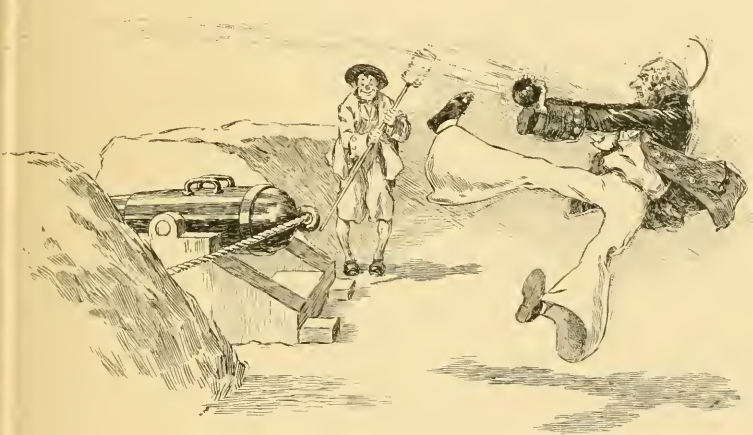
That was enough. The British squadron put about and sailed away, while the boys on shore struck up "Yankee Doodle."

This was the "opening gun" on the great lakes, and there were lively times there up to the close of the war in 1815.

On Washington's birthday, 1812, two men set out from Albany to the lakes. They were Master Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry and Captain Isaac Chauncey.

These men were to create ships of war out of trees that lined the shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario. They were to rely upon guns and men wherever they could be picked up or sent through a trackless wilderness. Against them was an organized force of the enemy equipped with fleets, some already afloat, and others in the process of building. They both went to Sackett's Harbor, prepared to defend that point against the enemy, and Perry stayed there with Chauncey for two weeks; but the enemy's attack was postponed, and he started for the southern shore of Lake Erie, to begin his work there—a work that we are enjoying the fruits of to this day.

What Chauncey accomplished on Lake Ontario up to the close of the war is too long a story to be told in detail. On August 31, 1812, he was given command of operations on all the great lakes, but his own active part in the war was confined to Lake Ontario. Opposed to him was Sir James Yeo, whose principal occupation while in command of the English squadron



Sergeant Spier catching the British out.

was dodging the enemy, and at this work he was a grand success.

In 1813, on April 25th, Captain Chauncey took York (now Toronto). On May 27th, with Perry's assistance, he took Fort George, and on October 5th captured five gunboats filled with troops and released 200 American prisoners. A number of other engagements took place on Lake Ontario in 1813 and 1814, but they were not important as affecting the final result.

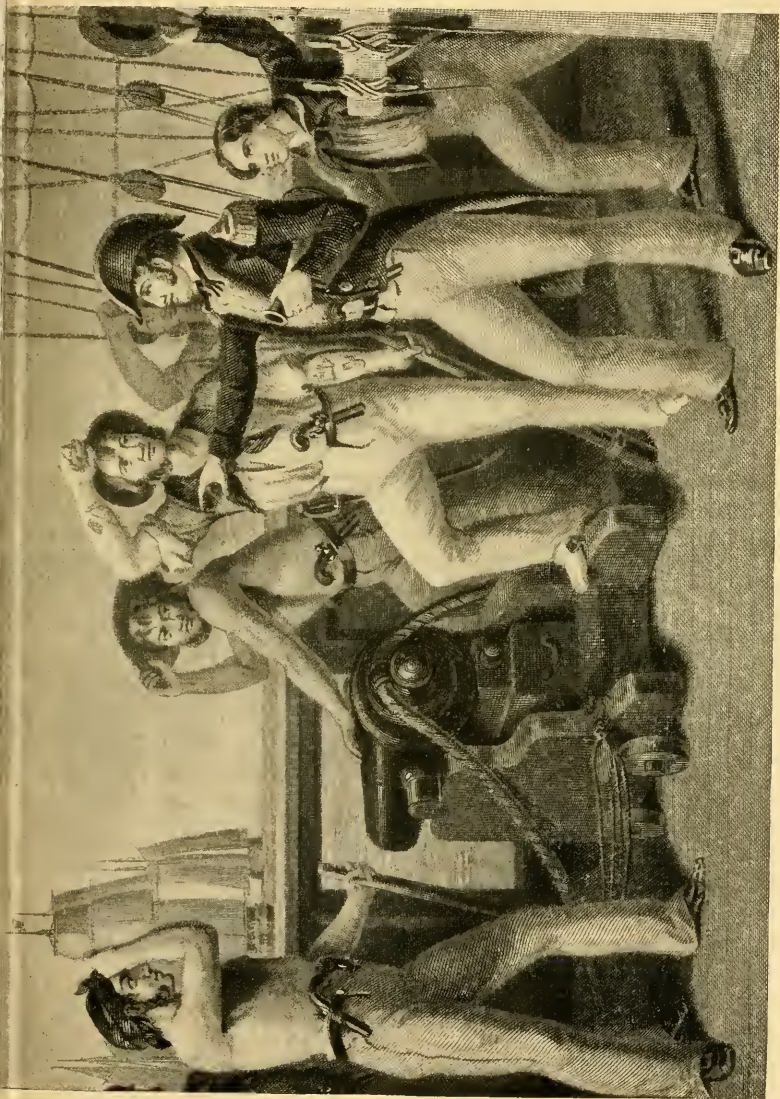
On the 10th of September, at half-past ten in the morning, Oliver Hazard Perry stood on the deck of the brig *Lawrence*, the flagship of his squadron, and unfolded a blue battle-flag. Turning to the crew, who were ranged in front of him, he said : "Boys, this flag has on it the words of James Lawrence, 'Don't give up the ship!' Shall I hoist it?"

"Ay, ay, sir!" came from a hundred throats, and up it went to the royal masthead.

The enemy's fleet was in sight. There were six vessels in all, commanded by Robert Barclay, who had been wounded under Nelson at Trafalgar. The American fleet consisted of nine vessels, the brigs *Lawrence*, *Niagara* and *Caledonia*, the schooners *Ariel*, *Tigress*, *Porcupine*, *Scorpion* and *Somers*, and the sloop *Trippe*—in all fifty-four guns and 490 men. The British squadron consisted of the flagship *Detroit*, the ship *Queen Charlotte*, the brigs *Lady Prevost* and *Hunter*, the schooner *Chippewa* and the schooner *Little Belt*—sixty-three guns and 502 men. Nearly 200 of Perry's men, however, were sick and unable to fight.

As the youthful Commander stood on the deck of his little brig, his mind reverted to the events of the preceding year. In the face of immense odds, he had succeeded in getting his little fleet together at Erie. Then, when two of his vessels were built, he was unable to get them out into the lake, as they drew too much water, his necessities compelling him to float them over with barges. Then he had no men to man them. Then he was taken sick with lake fever, and in July, in this condition, he had written to Chauncey :

The enemy's fleet are now off the bar. . . . Conceive my feelings. An enemy within striking distance, my vessels ready, and not men enough to man them!



"Are you ready, boys?"
"All ready, sir."

In the meantime the enemy had sailed away to Malden, and Perry, finally succeeding in getting crews, had followed, and his fleet, stationed at Put-in Bay, waited for the British. Now they were in sight, and his opportunity had come. He walked around by the guns and encouraged his men.

"Are you ready, boys?" he asked in turn.

"All ready, sir," was the cheerful reply.

Then the battle began.

Perry, in the *Lawrence*, soon found himself in the midst of it, and his other vessels having lagged behind, his ship bore the brunt of the enemy's fire. It was an uneven fight for a time, with three to one against him, so Perry made up his mind to leave his flagship and take chances in getting to the *Niagara*. Shielded somewhat by the smoke, he jumped into a boat, and, rowed by four men, accompanied by his fourteen-year-old brother, and bearing his pennant and battle-flag, he shoved off.

That was a great sculling match for Perry and his crew.

The British knew if they could pick him off they would win. One of the British gunners aimed so well that he put a hole through the boat, and Perry promptly took off his coat and stopped it up.

From the moment he reached the *Niagara* the day was won. Two of the enemy's ships—the *Queen Charlotte* and *Detroit*—ran foul of each other, and Perry raked them fore and aft. In a short time they were all *hors de combat*, and surrendered.

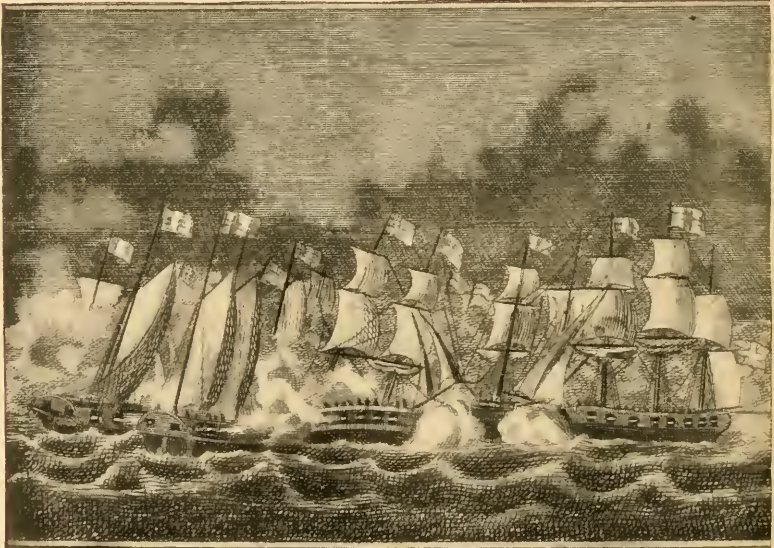
The *Lawrence* in the meantime had been obliged to haul down her flag, and had drifted to leeward. Perry went back to her, hoisted it again, and prepared to receive his prisoners.



Perry leaves the *Lawrence* for the *Niagara*.

He had on an old suit during the engagement (in spite of the pictures to the contrary), and looked more like a farmer than a naval hero.

But now he put on his uniform, and the British officers came on board and gave up.



Perry's Victory.

From an old print.

And then Perry took an old letter from his pocket, and wrote on it in pencil to General William Henry Harrison :

We have met the enemy and they are ours—two ships, two brigs, one schooner and one sloop.

Yours, with great respect and esteem,

O. H. PERRY.

The British had intended, after making themselves masters on the lakes, to push on and cut off the West from the East,



Battle of Erie.

From an old print.

from Lake Erie down to New Orleans. But Perry blocked their little game.

What he did, however, is extraordinary only from other standpoints than the Yankee. There were any number of officers in the navy at that time who would have accomplished the same result.

Perry was American, uncongressional in his methods, and did things. When he was at Erie the British squadron blockaded him and prevented him from getting his two brigs over the bar. But one day Barclay got an invitation to dinner at another point on the lake, and sailed away to eat it. Perry seized his opportunity and floated his vessels. That is what the other side calls luck. It is in reality eternal vigilance, which, added to grit, gumption and gunnery, make the average American naval hero.

It remained for Thomas MacDonough to put the finishing touches to the British on Lake Champlain. This young man was one of the heroes of the expedition that had succeeded in burning the *Philadelphia* in the harbor of Tripoli, and he was well qualified for his task.

His famous battle off Plattsburg took place just a year and a day later than Perry's great victory.

The English, having practically lost control of Lakes Ontario and Erie, made great preparations to capture Lake Champlain, and Sir James Yeo sent Captain Downie with a squadron to obtain possession.

Sir George Provost was also sent with a force of 15,000 men to take Plattsburg, which was defended by about 3,000 Americans.

MacDonough, after the usual delays and discouragements,

finally succeeded in building a fleet to repel the enemy's attack, and on September 11, 1814, in his flagship the *Saratoga*, he lay off Plattsburg with three other vessels and ten galleys.

Downie, in his flagship *Confiance*, with two other vessels and twelve gunboats, appeared in sight at 8 a. m.

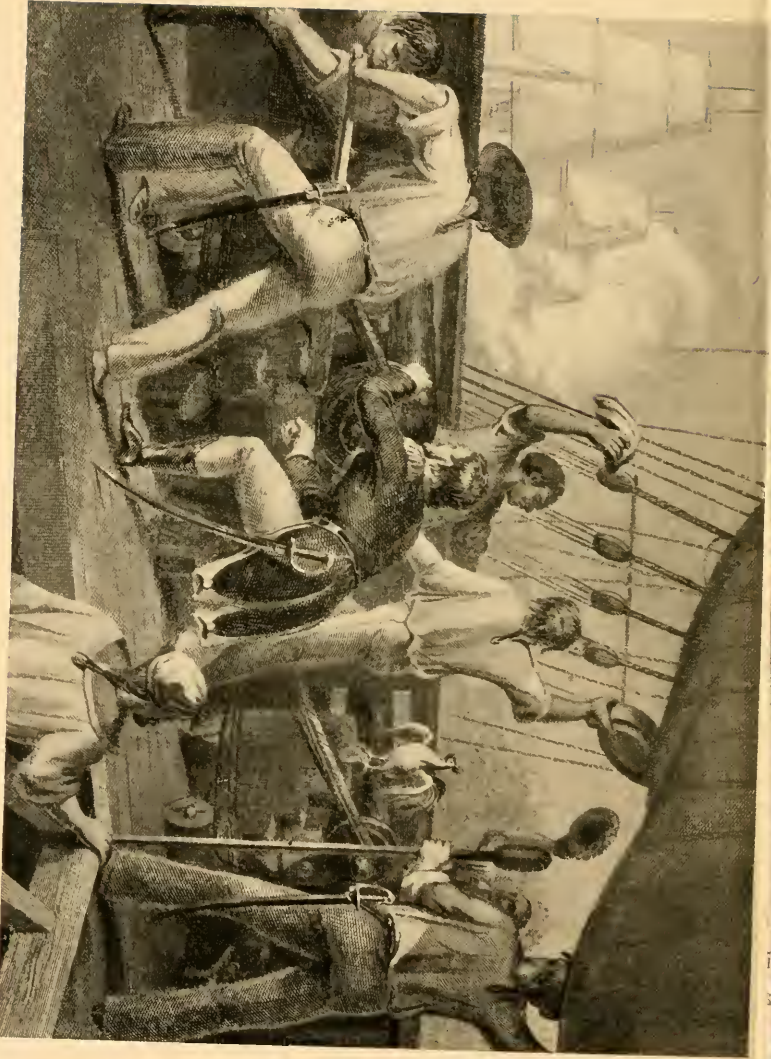


T. MACDONOUGH.

It is unnecessary to state that the British force was superior to ours, not only in guns, but in men, and the result was what might have been expected.

The battle was decided by the two flagships.

As the *Confiance* approached, MacDonough kneeled on the



Battle of Lake Champlain—MacDonough pointing the gun.

Saratoga's deck and took careful aim with a twenty-four pounder. The shot raked the *Confiance*. Almost at this moment a cock on the *Saratoga's* deck was released from his coop by a shot from the enemy. He flew up on one of the guns and crowed with all his might. This incident inspired the men, and they went at it hammer and tongs.



Battle of Lake Champlain.—From the land

The day was won, however, not so much by pure bravery, as by MacDonough's seamanship and foresight.

These qualities have won more of our battles than anything else. See Hull, Decatur, Bainbridge, Truxton, Porter, Farragut, Dewey and Sampson.

MacDonough not only carefully arranged his line of battle, but he provided kedges in advance, so that if the *Saratoga*



should lose the use of her starboard broadside, he could swing her around and bring her port broadside to bear.

The enemy's fire was so hot that this is precisely what happened, and then at the critical moment MacDonough, by the use of a stream anchor and hawser, brought the *Saratoga* around, and poured in such a deadly fire that the enemy was quickly brought to terms. The British ship tried to follow his example, but her Commander had not thought far enough ahead.

The result was a complete victory, and the possession of Lake Champlain. Sir George Prevost, who at the same time attacked Plattsburg with his 15,000 men, was compelled to retreat, and MacDonough became, at one bound, one of the most prominent naval commanders of the time.

Although the British attempted after this to regain what they lost, they did not succeed, and early the next year peace was declared.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WAR OF 1812—(Continued.)

Porter's Cruise in the *Essex*—Young Farragut and the Pig—Rodgers and Hutchinson—Minor Engagements—Career of the *Wasp* and Her Disappearance—The *Constitution*, *Levant* and *Cyane*—Last Shot of the War—Once More the Dey of Algiers—Decatur before Tunis, 1815-1861—Minor Exploits.

DAVID PORTER sailed in the *Essex* from the Delaware on October 28, 1812, and did not return until July, 1814. Moreover, he did not bring his ship with him, but he did bring a large slice of imperishable glory, which was added to later on by his descendants.

The *Essex* had been ordered to join the *Constitution* and *Hornet*, but not meeting them in the South Atlantic, he was instructed to use his own judgment. This he proceeded to do, and made up his mind to go off on his own hook.

So he started around Cape Horn into the Pacific, and until March, 1814, when the *Essex* was finally destroyed by two English men-o'-war sent out for that express purpose, Porter cruised, supplying his men and ship from the prizes he captured. He captured whale ships, privateers, and practically every English vessel he came across, until on the 19th of June, 1813, he entered the harbor of Guayaquil and found himself in possession of a squadron of nine vessels, all armed and flying the American flag.

One of the midshipmen on Porter's ship was a youngster of twelve. His name was Farragut. He was afterwards an Admiral, as everyone knows. Porter was so burdened with prizes that he determined to send some of them to Valparaiso, and young Farragut was placed in charge of one of them. But this didn't happen by act of Congress.

Soon after this Porter sailed for the Marquesas Islands, and made Nooaheeva his headquarters until February, 1814, when he sailed for Valparaiso.

He had some difficulty in getting away from the Islands with his crew, who had become enamored of the dusky female inhabitants. But he finally succeeded, and the *Essex* sailed away to the tune of "The Girl I Left Behind Me."

At Valparaiso he was blockaded by two English men-o'-war, the *Phæbe* and the *Cherub*.

The *Essex* attempted to run the blockade, and would probably have got away if it had not been for an untimely squall, and she was disabled and compelled to seek safety in a bay. Here a desperate fight ensued, and the *Essex*, after a gallant defense, was compelled to surrender.

When the crew of the *Phæbe* came on board to take possession they found on her a pig named "Murphy," and one of the sailors brought her on board the *Phæbe* in triumph.

"That pig belongs to me," said young Farragut.

"Go on with you," said the sailor. "You are a prisoner, and so is the pig."

"This is private property," replied Farragut.

Whereupon a ring was formed, and the thirteen-year-old American boy and the English sailor went at it.

A desperate encounter ensued, but Farragut, although

only a boy, succeeded in whipping his adversary and bore the pig off in triumph.

Porter and the remainder of his crew, now prisoners of war, were sent to the United States in a cartel-ship, and after many adventures he arrived home in July, 1814, bringing the story of his cruise. "We have been unfortunate," wrote Porter, "but not disgraced."



"The thirteen-year-old American boy and the English sailor went at it."

The value of the prizes Porter took on his cruise amounted to millions of dollars. He was thereafter hailed as the "Hero of the Pacific."

Somewhat similar to Porter's cruise, but on a much smaller scale, was the cruise of Commodore Rodgers in the *President*, during the summer of 1813.

After sailing towards the West Indies and meeting with no luck, the *President* headed up into the North Sea, sailed near the

Shetland Islands, put into Norway, and failing to get supplies, Rodgers began to capture prizes and replenish his stores.



DAVID PORTER.

Lieutenant Hutchinson, commanding the English *High Flyer*, tender to the English ship of the line *San Domingo*, had been especially warned to beware of Rodgers.

Hutchinson himself was a trifle uneasy at the thought of meeting that astute Commodore, for it was only a short time before that he had appeared at Havre de Grace, Rodgers's home, plundered it, and actually stolen a sword from the Commodore's house.

"If Rodgers gets hold of you," said Warren to Hutchinson, "he will carry you into Boston on the end of his jibboom."

On the afternoon of September 23d, as Hutchinson was walking the quarter-deck of the *High Flyer* with the sword he had stolen clanking at his side, a strange vessel was sighted. The reason why Hutchinson didn't know it was the *President* was because Rodgers happened to know some of the English signals. Hutchinson hoisted a private signal and Rodgers promptly replied, at the same time running up the British ensign. Then Rodgers put a British uniform on one of his officers and sent him aboard the *High Flyer*, deceiving Hutchinson so that the officer was soon in possession of the whole code. He was told that the other vessel was the *Sea Horse* and induced to come on board, where he greeted Rodgers as a brother, and told him about the *President* and how much she was wanted.

"They say," said Hutchinson, "that Rodgers is an odd fish, and slips through one's fingers."

"I imagine so," replied Rodgers. "I suppose you would like to meet him."

"Wouldn't I!" exclaimed Hutchinson; "that is," he added, thoughtfully, "in a vessel of equal size."

"You shall have the pleasure," said Rodgers. "Do you know what vessel this is?"

"Why, the *Sea Horse*, of course," said Hutchinson.

"It happens to be the United States frigate *President*," chuckled the wily Commodore, "and I, sir, am Commodore Rodgers."

Then the band played "Yankee Doodle."



"I, sir, am Commodore Rodgers!"

Hutchinson was well treated by Rodgers, and three days afterwards the *President* and her prize reached Newport.

During the year 1814, and early in 1815, a number of minor engagements took place between our ships and the English, and the blockade which England endeavored to

establish along our entire coast was provocative of many battles and much loss of property, the British not hesitating to plunder where they had an opportunity. In July, the *John Adams* was burned on the Penobscot. Shortly before this the new sloop-of-war *Wasp*, under Captain Johnston



JOHNSTON BLAKELY.

Blakely, appeared in the English channel, created much excitement, and captured the British sloop *Reindeer*. This action lasted only thirty minutes, and on his return Blakely was presented by Congress with a gold medal.

In August he went on another cruise in the *Wasp*, took the *Avon*, which the approach of three other vessels compelled him to abandon, and captured and scuttled the *Three Brothers*, took the *Bacchus*, and on September 12th took the eight-gun *Atlanta*. The *Atlanta* was placed in charge of Midshipman David Geisinger, who arrived in October at Savannah, and reported the various victories of the *Wasp*. From that day to this, however, the *Wasp* has never been heard from. Whether she foundered at sea, or the precise manner of her disappearance, is one of the mysteries of the deep.

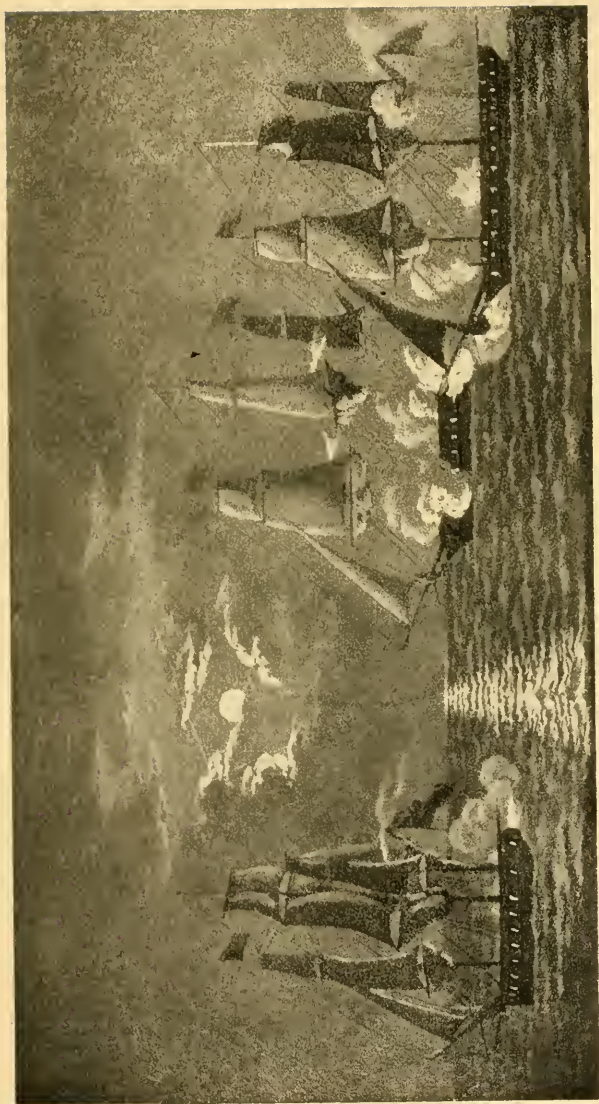
In April, 1814, Captain Warrington, in the eighteen-gun *Peacock*, captured the English brig *Epervier*, and, though chased by two English frigates, escaped with his prize. Early in 1815 the *President* was taken by an English squadron. In March, 1815, Captain James Biddle, in the *Hornet*, captured the eighteen-gun *Penguin* in just twenty minutes. This was considered one of the most brilliant minor engagements of the war.

But one of the most glorious battles at sea took place after peace had been declared.

Captain Charles Stewart commanded the *Constitution* in 1814-15, and on February 20, 1815, when off St. Vincent, he gave chase to a strange sail. Soon after he sighted a second.

Running up to both vessels, the *Constitution* engaged them together, and, securing an advantageous position, made things so lively that in a short time one of them—the *Cyane*—struck.

The other vessel—the *Levant*—had retired, but Stewart now went after her, and captured her also.



"CONSTITUTION," "LEVANT" AND "CYANE."

Combined, the two were easily superior to the *Constitution*.

The last shot of the War of 1812 was fired from the *Peacock*, when she captured the *Nautilus* in the Straits of Sunda, on June 30, 1815. The *Nautilus* was also the first vessel taken in the war, having been captured by the British soon after hostilities began.

The British Minister had informed the Dey of Algiers that the American Navy, which had proved so disastrous to his country's piratical aspirations, would be swept off the ocean by John Bull in the second war for our independence. John Bull had, furthermore, assisted the Dey in acquiring an effective navy, by sending him guns and ammunition; and the Dey, relying upon the statement, immediately renewed hostilities, and while our navy was engaged with England he lost no means of making it unpleasant for us.

When, therefore, in the summer of 1815, the American squadron appeared before Algiers, and with it three vessels—the *Guerrrière*, the *Cyane* and the *Epervier*—which had been captured from England and now waved the American flag, that potentate was greatly surprised. When, also, he was informed that the Algerian flagship, the *Mashonda*, and another vessel, had already been captured by the Americans only a few days before, his surprise grew.

Likewise, when he was notified by Captain Stephen Decatur that all the other vessels in his navy might also be captured and Algiers itself subjected to much unpleasantness, his surprise knew no bounds. He immediately backed water, and agreed to everything that Decatur demanded.

Decatur then appeared before Tunis and Tripoli and accomplished the same result, and although shortly afterward

it became necessary for Oliver Hazard Perry to appear with another squadron in the Mediterranean and emphasize our attitude toward the three rulers, this practically settled the matter, and the presence of a small squadron was enough to keep peace with these barbarians.

From the close of the second war with England to the Civil War, our navy was engaged in many minor exploits in various parts of the world, and there were many brilliant instances of bravery recorded. In the extermination of the pirates from the waters around the West Indies (1821-1825) the young Farragut received much of his naval experience. Captain David Porter was actively engaged in this warfare, and in the *Foxardo* affair in 1824 acted so aggressively with the authorities at that place that he was court-martialed, and resigned to enter the service of the Mexican Navy. He was afterwards appointed Consul-General to Algiers, and became later Minister to Turkey, where he died March 28, 1843. In 1832 an effective lesson was given to the Malay town of Qualla Battoo, Sumatra, for treachery to one of our merchant vessels, and during the war with Mexico our vessels did most effective work on the Pacific coast and the coast of Mexico.

Then, in 1853-4, occurred a triumph of diplomacy which could have only been so well done by an American naval officer. Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry appeared at Tokio, Japan, with a squadron, and succeeded by immense tact in opening Japan to our trade. The Japanese had hitherto remained obstinate in their exclusion, but to Commodore Perry's successful overtures they yielded, and the

friendliness of that country to the United States to this day may be traced to the astute Perry.

After this the navy was principally occupied in scientific expeditions, and had a long breathing spell, until it was called into service to fight some of the members of its own family.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CIVIL WAR.

Object of the North—Depleted Condition of the Navy—Loss of the *Savannah* and *Petrel*—Port Royal—The *Merrimac* and *Monitor*.

THE Civil War takes us away from the open sea, and we leave those stirring encounters between frigates on the broad ocean, and have instead a continuous four-year effort on the part of the North to establish a blockade of the entire Atlantic and Gulf coast and the command of the Mississippi, and on the other side a continuous effort to prevent this from taking place. It did take place, however, as everyone knows, and the navy, in accomplishing this result, made it possible for the United States Constitution to continue to be issued in one volume and not two, as Jeff Davis fondly hoped. Previous to the opening of the war, our navy, in obedience to Congress, had been reduced to a peace footing, which means that we practically had no navy at all. All vessels on which it would be necessary to spend twenty per cent. of their value in repairs were condemned. Hence it followed that in 1860 we were reduced to a nonentity upon the sea. But upon the approach of hostilities the most extraordinary efforts were made, and the result proved that in swiftness of preparation the United States led the world. The first thing the Confederates did was to start out a number of privateers, and their blockade runners soon became extremely numerous.

Early in 1861 the *Savannah* and the *Petrel* were sent out by the Confederacy to do what harm they could, but they both speedily met with the same fate. The *Savannah* ran across the United States brig *Perry* and took her for a merchant vessel. She was captured and her crew held as pirates, but afterward paroled as prisoners of war.

In July, 1861, the *Petrel* was ordered to sea by the Confederate Government, and soon sighted a strange sail, which happened to be the United States frigate *St. Lawrence*.

The Captain of the *St. Lawrence*, however, had taken the precaution to disguise his vessel as a merchantman, an old trick in our navy, and one which the Captain of the *Petrel* should have seen through. Believing her to be a rich prize, he ran up close, and when within range he was about to take an easy capture, when suddenly the appearance of the *St. Lawrence* changed. Her ports opened and three guns were let go. The *Petrel* was struck by an eight-inch shell and a thirty-two-pound shot, and in a few moments she was a total wreck and rapidly sank. These experiences made the privateers more careful.

The object of the North was to gradually blockade all the Southern ports and prevent English blockade vessels from entering with supplies, and to accomplish this all the available vessels in the navy were brought into play. When the war opened this navy was scattered all over the world, and great exertions were made to get every available vessel in fighting trim. Even ferryboats were utilized, and some of them did good service.

Among the first things done was to capture the two forts at the entrance of Hatteras inlet (July, 1861), and in October



Destruction of Confederate Privateer Petrel by the St. Lawrence.



a powerful force sailed down the coast to reduce Port Royal.

Commodore S. F. Dupont, who commanded the squadron that took Port Royal, arranged his ships at first in a straight line, and steaming past Fort Beauregard to his right, he turned beyond, and, describing a circle, came back past Fort Walker, his ships following, keeping this up until both forts surrendered. This was a glorious victory, and the North cheered up; but in a few months more the Union was confronted by a formidable monster, and despondency reigned throughout the Northern States, until there occurred the famous battle between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*.

In April, 1861, the United States vessels at the Norfolk Navy Yard had been destroyed to prevent their capture by the Confederates, and among these was the steam frigate *Merrimac*. She was raised, however, by the Confederates, and constructed into a terrible engine of destruction. On the 8th of March, 1862, the *Merrimac* left Norfolk, steamed slowly down the Elizabeth River past Sewell's Point into the south channel, and, heading for Newport News, she began her work of destruction. Off Newport News were the United States frigate *Congress* and sloop *Cumberland*, and down in Hampton Roads lay the frigate *St. Lawrence* and the steam frigates *Minnesota* and *Roanoke*. The *Merrimac* opened with her guns on the *Cumberland* first, then rammed the *Congress* and then the *Cumberland*. The *Cumberland* began to sink but Lieutenant Morris on board refused to surrender. As the ship settled, the wounded were brought up on deck while the battle was being fought. The "no quarter" flag was hoisted, and the *Cumberland* sank, firing her guns at the



Bombardment of Port Royal.

Merrimac to the last. It was one of the most gallant defenses in our history. The *Merrimac* then turned her attention to the *Congress*, and after a desperate battle she was compelled to surrender. Lieutenant Smith, commanding the *Congress*, was killed early in the engagement. It is related that his father, Capt. Joseph Smith, was attending church in Washington when he was informed of the loss of the *Congress*.

"Then Joe is dead," exclaimed his father.

In the meantime, the *Minnesota*, *St. Lawrence* and *Roanoke* endeavored to come to the assistance of the *Congress*, and all of them grounded in shoal water. They were at once attacked by the *Merrimac*, assisted by some light draught vessels, and in this precarious position were subjected to a heavy fire until dark, when the *Merrimac* turned back up stream, with the intention of completing her work of destruction the next day.

But the genius of one man prevented this. In October of the previous year, John Ericsson had begun the construction of his *Monitor* at New York. It seems remarkable that after the long years of study, delay and almost insurmountable obstacles to be overcome, Ericsson should have succeeded in getting his *Monitor* ready for action on the very day before the *Merrimac* created such havoc. It was not until the 4th of March that her guns were mounted, and on the 6th she was on her way out of New York harbor in an unfinished condition, and in many minds a most doubtful experiment. She carried a volunteer crew of officers and men, and after a tempestuous voyage, in which she came near foundering, she appeared off Fort Monroe at 9 o'clock in the evening, only a few hours after the *Merrimac* had complacently left the scene of her triumph.



Action between the *Merrimac* and the *Monitor*.

The next day was an eventful one in American history. A new idea had been hatched and was to be demonstrated. Two iron ovals were to be opposed to each other. The day of the wooden fighting ship had passed away. It was now iron *versus* iron, and the whole system of naval warfare was to be revolutionized. The crew of the *Monitor* were exhausted by their long fight with the elements. Nevertheless, they were possessed by that indomitable spirit that permeates the American sailor, and although in a hitherto untried engine, they remained undaunted. The next day was Sunday, but there was no time to rest. All night long they worked making repairs, and in the morning they steamed out to meet their hitherto invincible foe. The *Monitor* had a revolving turret that did not revolve with any ease. It would swing so rapidly that the gunners had to fire the guns on the fly, as it were, and although chalk marks were made on the floor inside to indicate which way the vessel was headed, these were soon obliterated, so that it was only through the narrow porthole above the guns that they could catch an occasional glimpse of outside objects. Once, indeed, they came near firing at their own pilot house.

For two hours there was a battle the news of which went around the world. At the end of that time the *Monitor's* ammunition failed, and she retired, but her success in repulsing the *Merrimac* was undoubted. A few days later the *Merrimac* was blown up, and on the morning of December 31st the *Monitor* sank on her way to Beaufort, N. C. In this famous action between the two ironclads, the *Monitor* was commanded by Lieutenant John Larimar Worden, and the *Merrimac* by Captain Franklin Buchanan.

CHAPTER IX.

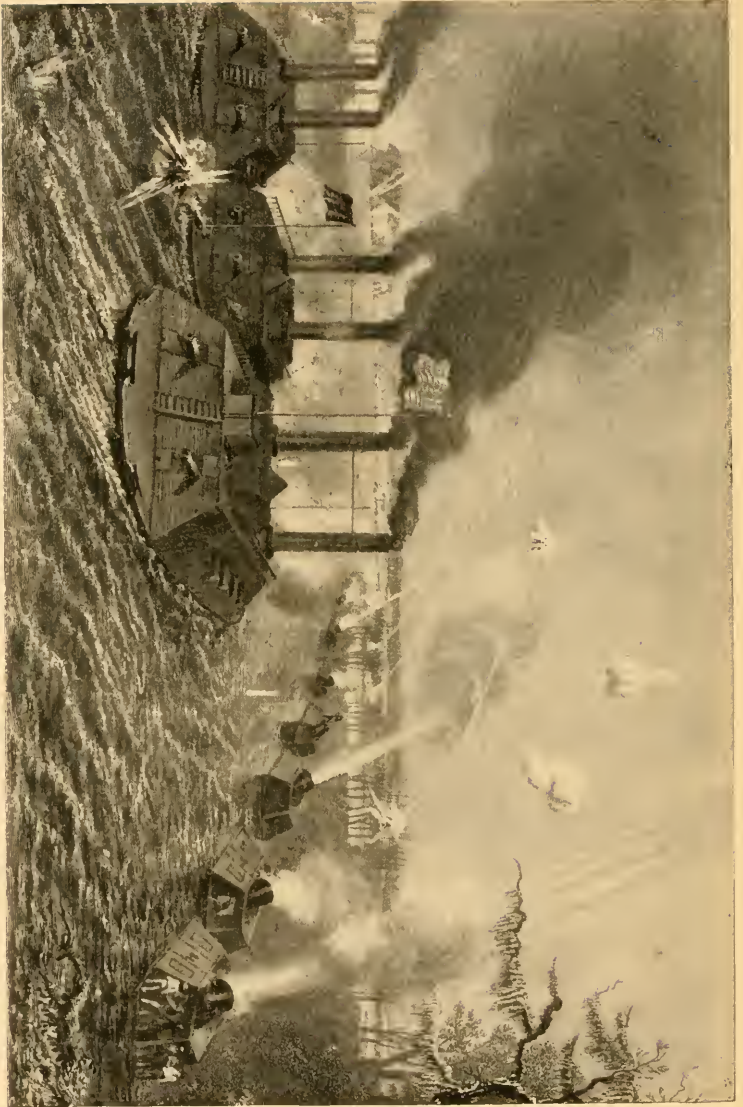
THE CIVIL WAR—(Continued.)

On the Mississippi—Battle of New Orleans—Farragut Enters Mobile Bay—Lieutenant Cushing's Glorious Deed—The *Alabama* and *Kearsarge*--The *Alabama* Claims.

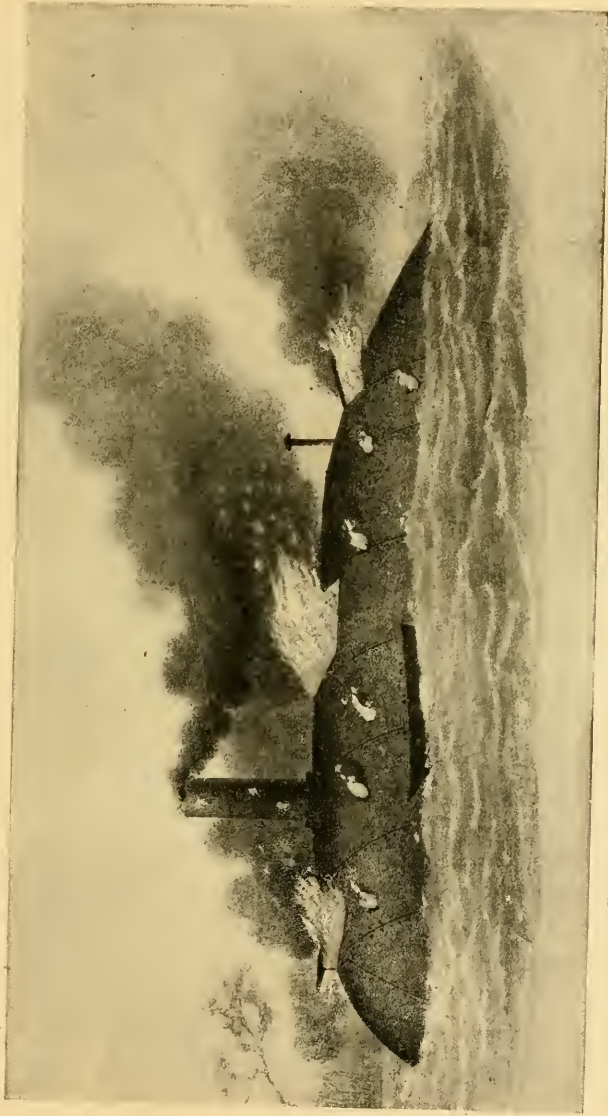
IT is a long way from the good old wooden *Constitution* to the modern ironclad, and it is a stirring satisfaction to know that the leap was made by American invention. The Confederates seem to have put the idea into practice at first, and the Yankees quickly followed and produced better boats.

When the war broke out in 1861 there were numerous steamers plying the Mississippi and its tributaries, and these were quickly utilized. They were covered with sheet-iron and made to do service as gunboats, and very effective they proved to be. Then began the conflict for the control of the river, which the Confederates quickly fortified from below Cairo down to its mouth. Little by little they were obliged to give way, with Farragut pushing up from the south and Foote pushing down from the north, until finally Vicksburg was captured and the "backbone of the Rebellion" was broken.

In this warfare between paddle-wheel steamers covered with iron our naval officers gained a lot of valuable experience, which is operative even to this day. Our own Dewey learned a great many things during this war, and not the least was



Gun and Mortar Boats of the Mississippi.



Ram *Manassas* as she appeared after receiving a broadside from the *Mississippi*.

when he was on the United States steamer *Mississippi* at the battle of New Orleans.

In order to gain control of the Mississippi and to blockade the Gulf ports, it was necessary to capture New Orleans, and this task was given to Farragut.

How he accomplished his purpose is an old story, but to run the formidable batteries of Forts Jackson and St. Philip, to say nothing of encountering the various rams and the fleet of gunboats the Confederates had gathered together, was something of a new idea in naval tactics.

The thing was done at night, and as a pyrotechnic display it is said to have no equal. As Farragut's flagship, the *Hartford*, followed by the *Richmond*, *Brooklyn*, *Pensacola*, *Mississippi*, *Oneida*, *Varuna*, and other ships of his fleet, passed the forts, shot and shell rained down on them, fireships floated down to meet them, and it was literally a hot time that night on the Father of Waters.

George Dewey, who later gained such laurels in the Pacific, as he stood on the deck of the *Mississippi*, witnessed the fate of the formidable ram *Manassas*, which came near making an end of the *Mississippi*.

The *Manassas* suddenly shot through the darkness and struck the *Mississippi* on her port quarter, and in return she received a broadside and steamed down the river, where she ran into the *Brooklyn*. Then the *Mississippi* encountered her again, and she ran ashore.

This was on April 24th, and the next day Farragut anchored in front of New Orleans. In July he captured Port Hudson, and the Mississippi was under control of the Union forces. Later on Farragut captured Mobile and damned the torpedoes.

Resuming command of the Gulf squadron, in January, 1864, he determined to enter Mobile Bay, and made his preparations accordingly. With a squadron of twenty-one wooden vessels and four ironclads he made ready for the attempt, and on the 5th of August he succeeded. In the rigging of his flagship *Hartford* Farragut stationed himself, and scorned to move out of danger. When told there were torpedoes ahead, he replied: "Damn the torpedoes! Go



The Battle of New Orleans.

ahead!" Ahead of the *Hartford*, the *Tecumseh* had struck one of these deadly machines and had sunk, but Farragut did not stop. Once inside the bay he encountered the formidable ram *Tennessee*, but after a desperate conflict, she was compelled to surrender, and Farragut's triumph was complete.

Among the most daring exploits of the war was the

one performed by Lieutenant William Barker Cushing. The Confederates had, after great difficulty, completed the ram *Albemarle* at Edwards Ferry on the Roanoke River. This ram proved to be a source of great annoyance, and several attempts were made to destroy her, but Lieutenant Cushing has the imperishable glory of accomplishing this result. On the night of October 27, 1864, he set out in a picket boat, his



A Mississippi River Ironclad.

intention being to land below the wharf where the *Albemarle* was moored, and board and capture her. In front he carried a spar with a torpedo on the end, in case he should be obliged to blow up the ram. As he approached the vessel he was discovered by a dog, who began to bark. Cushing, with his intrepid crew, made a dash for the ram, and right under the muzzle of her ten-inch gun he lowered his torpedo spar,

and blew her up. At this instant the gun was fired, and the daring attackers found themselves in the water. Most of them were captured, but Cushing escaped by swimming away, and succeeded in getting back to the Union squadron. His success had been complete.

Among the most famous privateers of the Civil War was the *Alabama*, commanded by Captain Raphael Semmes. Fostered by the British Government, and built in the first place in England, she did a great deal of damage, and from her depredations on the high seas resulted the celebrated *Alabama* claims. On the 19th of June she was caught at Cherbourg by the *Kearsarge* and sunk. The *Alabama* went out to meet the *Kearsarge*, accompanied by an English yacht, confident of victory. The battle lasted about one hour and the *Alabama* was sunk by the *Kearsarge*. Semmes and his officers were picked up by the English yacht and taken to England. The arbitration tribunal appointed by the United States and Great Britain to settle the *Alabama* claims, declared that Great Britain owed the United States fifteen and one-half million of dollars, as a direct result of the damages inflicted by the *Alabama* during the Civil War. This was rather a costly experiment.

CHAPTER X.

WAR WITH SPAIN.

The Affair of the *Virginus* — Attitude of Spain — Causes of the War — The New Navy — The *Maine* Disaster — Opening of the War — Battle of Manila — Hobson's Deed — Destruction of Cervera's Fleet.

THE war with Spain might have taken place in 1873, and at one time it seemed as though this result was inevitable. In the autumn of this year, the ship *Virginus* was off the Island of Jamaica. This vessel was registered on September 26th in the New York Custom House, and flew the American flag. She carried a number of passengers, and also four prominent Cuban leaders, General Bernabe Varona, General Pedro Cespedes, Lieutenant-Colonel Jesus Del Sol, and General W. A. Ryan, a New Yorker. At that time the Spanish man-o'-war *Tornado* was cruising in West Indian waters. On the 31st of October she intercepted the *Virginus* when that vessel was attempting to make a landing near Santiago de Cuba, and captured her. The passengers and crew were taken to Santiago de Cuba, and a few days after the four Cubans were taken out and shot. This in itself was enough to make trouble. A protest was at once filed with the Spanish Government, and the immediate release of the *Virginus* and her crew was demanded. President Castelar, then in charge of the Spanish Government, outdid himself

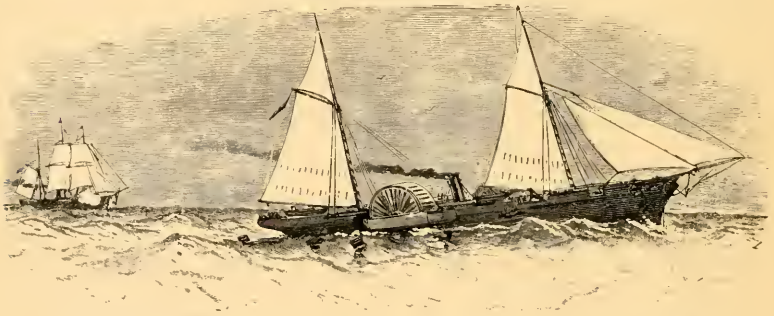
in polite rejoinders. His communications were couched in the most unctious language, and promises were made that the affair would at once be looked into, *et cætera*. In the meantime, while Spain was dallying with our Secretary of State Fish, Captain Fry, of the *Virginus*, and thirty-six members of his crew, together with twelve of the ship's passengers, were led out and mercilessly slaughtered, by order of Captain-General De Rhodas. Of course, when President Castelar learned of this sad news, he was more polite than ever. He protested that he had sent an order to stay the proceedings, but that it had arrived too late. This excuse, however, was not sufficient to bring back to life the Americans who had been so ruthlessly slaughtered. Spanish restitution consists in specious promises made after the deed has been done. What was the result? Simply this, that intense excitement prevailed throughout the country for a time, and that Spain, after backing and filling, finally released the remaining survivors of the *Virginus*, and the incident was closed. As a measure of conciliation, our Government at first demanded that Spain salute the American flag, but afterwards, it having been conceded by us that the *Virginus* had no right to fly our flag, this was not insisted upon.

To many thoughtful persons it will seem to this day that this incident, not forgotten by Spain, had its effect upon the subsequent action of that country. The Spanish Government admitted that it was a mistake that the men of the *Virginus* should have been murdered. This admission was a practical confession of guilt. That it was possible, through any error in the machinery of government, to hurry two-score of men

into their graves, is bad enough in itself. But our subsequent submission so readily to the crime undoubtedly produced the belief in Spain that they might go to almost any length before provoking us to actual resentment. It thus happened that up to April, 1898, when war was declared between the two countries, the Spanish Government could scarcely believe that such a result was probable.

Up to the year 1881 our navy had been allowed to settle down into innocuous desuetude, so far as our own Government was concerned.

After the Civil War, many of our ships were retired, and many were wrecked and not replaced.



The Spanish Man-of-War *Tornado* chasing the American Steamer *Virginus*.

The result was, that in 1881 our navy was at its lowest ebb. In this year some interest in its almost hopeless condition was awakened, and Secretary Hunt appointed a board to investigate its requirements. It was proposed to build a number of armored and unarmored vessels together with rams and torpedo boats, and the navy of to-day then had its

birth. Among those who were most instrumental in producing this happy result was Secretary William C. Whitney.

The *Chicago*, *Atlanta*, *Boston* and *Dolphin* having been constructed, other vessels rapidly followed under Whitney, Benjamin Tracy and Hilary A. Herbert.

Public interest and pride in the navy were aroused, and the appearance of the White Squadron produced the greatest enthusiasm. The splendid showing of our ships provoked universal applause, and the idea of a new navy became firmly fixed in the minds of the people. On March 15, 1889, when the *Vandalia*, *Nipsic* and *Trenton* were blown ashore in the harbor of Apia, the utmost consternation prevailed, and this disaster undoubtedly served to bind more closely the tie by which the people were bound to the navy.

On March 16, 1898—just nine years after—the entire nation was overwhelmed by the startling news that the battleship *Maine* (Captain Sigsbee) had been blown up the night previous in the harbor of Havana. Sigsbee's brief telegram that the public should suspend judgment was a masterly piece of diplomacy, and showed well the spirit of our navy. The Board of Inquiry appointed to investigate the disaster reported on March 28th that the cause was unknown. The universal belief, however, was that the *Maine* had been deliberately blown up through Spanish treachery. The cry, "Remember the *Maine*!" was echoed everywhere. Congress voted \$50,000,000, to be used at President McKinley's discretion, to prepare the country for war. On top of this came reports of the intolerable conditions prevailing in Cuba under Spanish rule. An ultimatum was sent to Spain that her rule in Cuba must cease, and on April 25th war was declared by Congress

as having existed since April 21st, when Spain refused to accept the conditions laid down by the United States Government. The most extraordinary efforts were at once taken to place the navy on a war footing, and under the supervision of Secretary John D. Long and Assistant-Secretary Theodore Roosevelt, a great number of vessels was purchased by the Government and refitted with great rapidity.

Captain William T. Sampson, appointed Rear Admiral, was placed in charge of the fleet, which was rapidly assembled at Key West. Commodore Winfield S. Schley was placed in charge of the flying squadron at Hampton Roads, in readiness to go out and meet the Spanish fleet under Admiral Cervera, that was expected to sail across the Atlantic for the defense of Havana.

At Hong Kong was the Asiatic fleet under command of Commodore George Dewey. This fleet consisted of the flagship *Olympia*, *Raleigh*, *Baltimore*, *Boston*, *Monocacy*, *Concord* and *Petrel*. The battleship *Oregon*, having been detached from the Asiatic fleet, was ordered to proceed around Cape Horn and join the Atlantic squadron. This remarkable voyage, the longest ever undertaken by a modern battleship, was accompanied without accident, and the safe arrival of the *Oregon* at Key West was the occasion of much rejoicing and many favorable comments from the Continental press. This feat did much to impress the nations of the world with the manifest superiority of our ships of war. As soon as the war opened Commodore Dewey proceeded from Hong Kong to Manila. On Sunday morning, May 1, 1898, Commodore Dewey entered the harbor of Manila at daybreak, taking the Spaniards by surprise. Inside the harbor was the Spanish

fleet, the *Reina Maria Cristina*, the *Castilla*, the *Don Juan de Austria*, *Don Antonio de Ulloa*, *Velasco*, *General Lezo*, *General Elcano*, *Marques del Duero*, *Isla de Cubi* and *Isla de Mindanao*. In this battle the American vessels were superior to those of



GEORGE DEWEY.

Spain, but on the other hand the Spanish ships were aided by the land batteries, and the fact that they were in their own harbor. By noon, Commodore Dewey had sunk or destroyed

all the Spanish ships, and had silenced the batteries at Cavité, compelling them to surrender. The Spanish loss was nearly 700. The most concise history of this battle, considered by many navy experts to be one of the most pronounced and perfect victories in naval history, is best told in Commodore Dewey's first report to his Government :

Manila, May 1st. The squadron arrived at Manila at daybreak this morning. Immediately engaged enemy and destroyed the following Spanish vessels : *Reina Cristina, Castilla, Ulloa, Isla de Cuba, General Lezo, Duero, Elcano, Velasco, Mindanao*, one transport, and one water battery at Cavité. The squadron is uninjured, and only a few men slightly wounded.

The thanks of the nation were tendered to Commodore Dewey, and Congress promoted him to be Rear Admiral.

The result of this great victory produced consternation in Spain, but it was to be followed by another one equally as great. Spain had despatched Admiral Cervera, with four of her finest and fastest warships and two torpedo destroyers, across the Atlantic to Cuba. For a time this fleet evaded the United States vessels in the Caribbean Sea. Commodore Schley, with his flying squadron, was ordered to join Admiral Sampson, and every effort was made to corner Cervera. Finally, on May 30th, the Spanish vessels were definitely located in the harbor of Santiago de Cuba. This harbor, like a bottle, has a narrow neck difficult of access, and on the 4th of June Naval Constructor Richmond Pearson Hobson, having conceived the idea of blocking the mouth of the harbor, by sinking there a steam collier, the *Merrimac*, carried his plan into execution. With a crew of seven volunteers he took the *Merrimac* into the harbor, under a most terrific fire from the Spanish batteries, and sunk her in the narrow

channel, escaping to the Spanish vessels, where he and his gallant crew were taken prisoners. Hobson's feat was one of the most daring ever attempted. There was still room, however, for the Spanish vessels to get out. On the morning of July 3rd, Cervera made his attempt to escape, our army



W. T. SAMPSON.

being in front of Santiago, with the strong probability that it would be invested in a few days. With his four ships and two torpedo destroyers, he steamed out of the harbor at full speed. Our sailors, however, were not caught napping.

Three of the Spanish ships, the *Almirante Oquendo*, *Viscaya* and *Maria Teresa* (flagship), were quickly destroyed. The *Cristobal Colon* made a desperate attempt to escape, but she was finally



RICHMOND PEARSON HOBSON.

caught after an exciting chase of nearly fifty miles along the coast, and beached. The two torpedo boat destroyers were quickly despatched, one by the battleship *Texas*, and the other by the former pleasure yacht *Corsair*, converted into

the *Gloucester*. This little boat, in charge of Lieutenant-Commander Wainwright, who had been second in command



WINFIELD SCOTT SCHLEY.

on the *Maine* when she was blown up, accomplished wonders, being right in the thick of the battle and escaping with but

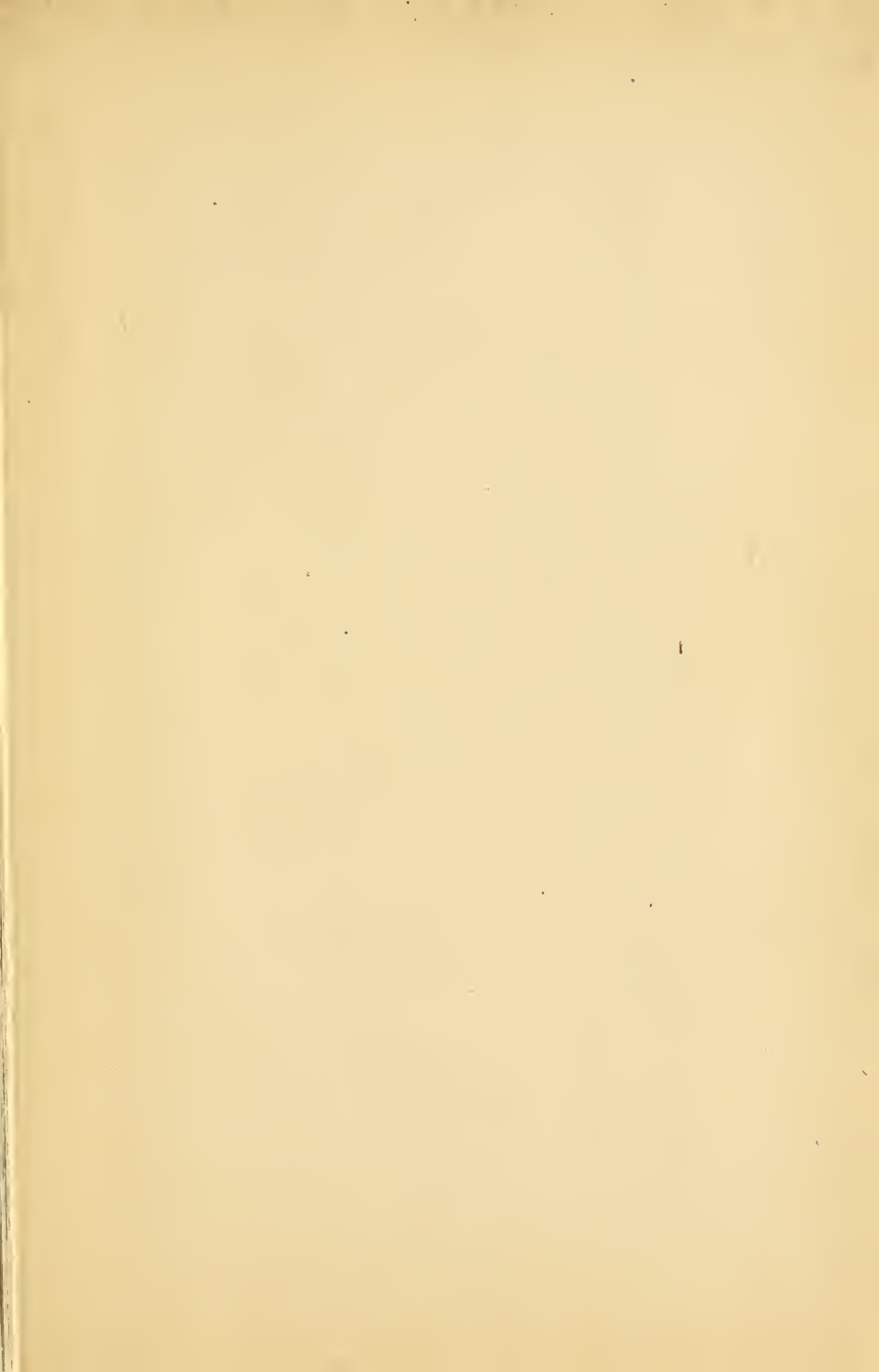
little damage. In this battle our loss was one man killed, and two injured. One thousand three hundred Spanish prisoners were taken, among them being Admiral Cervera. The result of this battle aroused the admiration of the world. At the time Admiral Cervera attempted to make his escape, the flagship *New York*, with Admiral Sampson, was eight miles away. Commodore Winfield S. Schley, on the *Brooklyn*, was therefore in immediate charge of our squadron, consisting of the *Brooklyn*, *Iowa*, *Massachusetts*, *Indiana*, *Texas*, and the converted yacht *Gloucester*.

Thus, in the short space of two months, Spain had received two such telling blows on the sea that the utter futility of the war she was carrying on with the United States was brought into bold relief. The Spanish home fleet, under Admiral Camara, made a start for the Philippines, but got only as far as the Suez Canal, and upon the widely circulated news that this country was about to send a squadron, under Commodore Watson, to appear along the coast of Spain, Admiral Camara was quickly ordered to return.

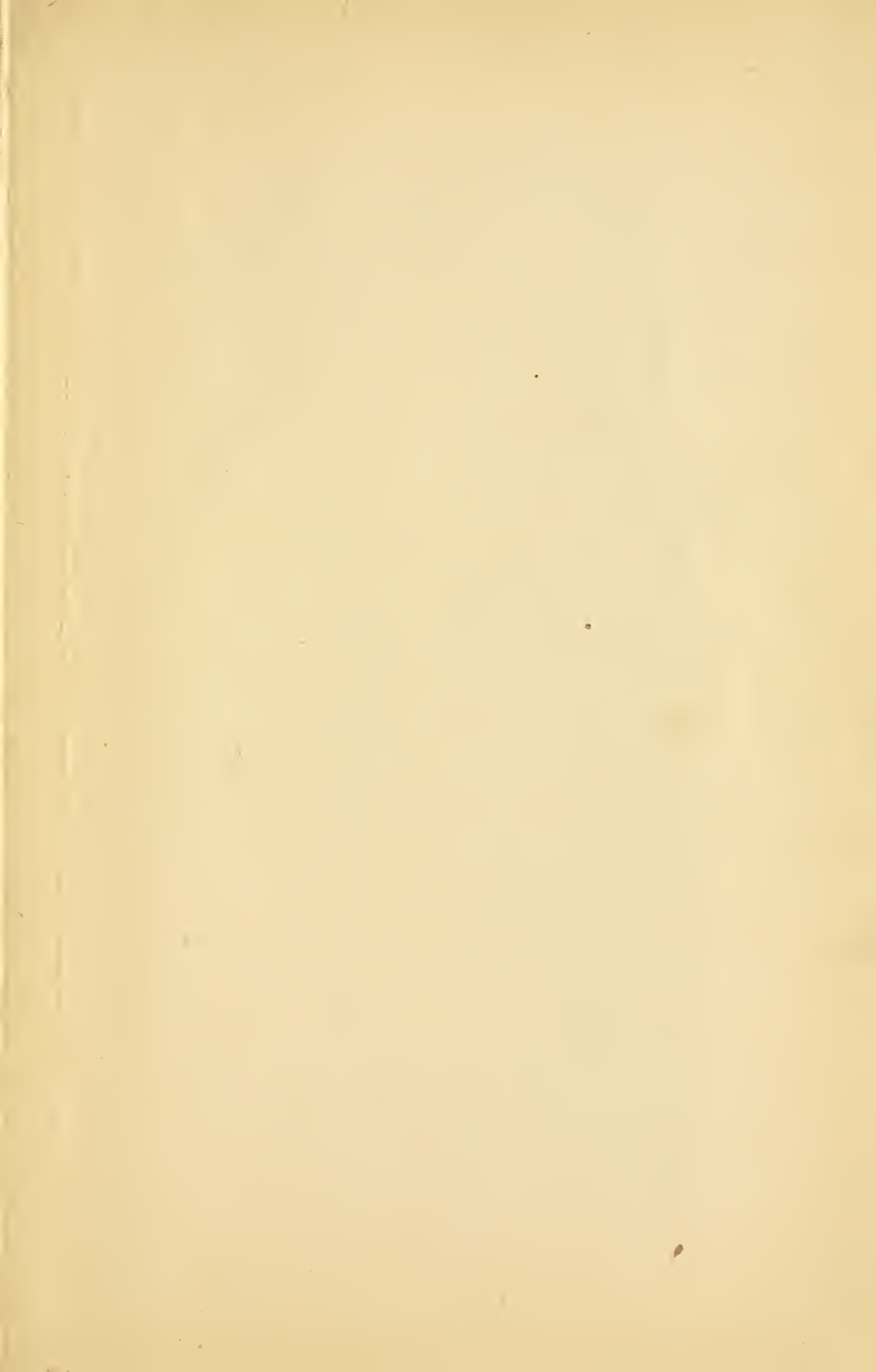
On July 26th a message from Spain was handed to our Government at Washington, through the French Ambassador, embodying a request to know upon what terms the United States would consider peace.

This result was brought about by the personnel of the American navy and the demonstrated effectiveness of our ships of war. It was due to grit, gumption and gunnery.

[FINIS.]







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