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The *Oregon* overhauling the *Viscaya* and *Cristobal Colon* off Santiago, July 3, 1898.

A SHORT HISTORY
OF THE
AMERICAN NAVY

BY
JOHN R. SPEARS

PUBLISHED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
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INTRODUCTION

THE purposes of the Navy League of the United States are "to acquire and spread before the citizens of the country information as to the condition of its naval forces and ships, and to awaken public interest and activity in all matters tending to aid, improve, and develop the efficiency of the Navy." There can be no better method of arousing and maintaining interest in the Navy than by reciting, however briefly, the principal facts in its splendid record. The stories of the brave men who have fought for our country on the sea cannot be told too often. All Americans should know them by heart, and every naturalized alien, as well as each boy and girl who will eventually participate in the duties and privileges of citizenship, should have ready access to them.

In compiling a bibliography of the United States Navy, it became apparent to the officers of the Navy League that there was no brief history of the Navy, and they selected Mr. John R. Spears to prepare one. The present volume is the result, and its official character is attested by a resolution passed by the Executive Committee of the Navy League on January 24, 1907, as follows:

*"RESOLVED:—*That the short history of the United States Navy, written by John R. Spears in response to the invitation of the League, having been examined and approved by the Committee appointed for that purpose, be and the same hereby is adopted as the standard 'Short History' of the United States Navy and be recommended to the members of the Navy League and to all Americans, and that Charles Scribner's Sons be authorized to publish the same. Furthermore be it:

“*RESOLVED*:—That the thanks of the League be tendered to Mr. John R. Spears, the historian; Mr. Carlton T. Chapman, the marine artist; Messrs. Harper & Brothers, publishers; and to Messrs. Henry W. Miller, William H. Stayton, and Herbert L. Satterlee, the Committee.”

Every reader of this little history will undoubtedly have a newly kindled enthusiasm for the Navy and a better appreciation of its important relation to the peace and prosperity of our Nation. In war times heroic deeds arouse the emotions that have borne such splendid results for civilization, but we need in times of peace a practical means for their continuance. Our country has become too large to trust to individual sentiment for the perpetuation of our national ideals. The Navy League has been founded to make this sentiment effective and its membership is open to every citizen.

January 25, 1907,
Navy League Headquarters,
78 Broad Street, New York City.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN NAVY

I

SEA FIGHTS AND FIGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION

THE first fight afloat in the War of the Revolution occurred when the British armed schooner *Gaspé* was burned on a reef just below Providence, R. I., early in the morning of June 10, 1772. The *Gaspé* while engaged as a revenue cutter had interfered with lawful coastwise commerce in unlawful fashion, and when she ran ashore while in chase of a coaster the exasperated business men of Providence mobbed her.

But it was not until war had been actually begun by the battle of Lexington, on April 19, 1775, that the people first gave serious thought to the building of an American navy. The Continental Congress met on May 10 following this battle, and on June 14 a committee of the Congress was appointed to "consider, inquire, and report with respect to organization of a naval force." Mr. Joseph Hewes was made chairman of this committee. Ten days later he was authorized "to invite John Paul Jones, Esq., gent., of Virginia, Master Mariner," to come to Philadelphia to give advice. Jones, Nicholas Biddle, and three other merchant-ship captains were empowered by the committee to examine a number of vessels, lying

at Philadelphia, that were supposed to be available for use as warships, and it was on their recommendation that Congress purchased two ships, which were named the *Alfred* and the *Columbus*, and two brigs that were named the *Andrea Doria* and the *Cabot*. The *Alfred* was in the East India trade when purchased. She was of 440 tons burden, and after she had been strengthened she was armed with eight 12-pounders, twelve 9-pounders, and eight 6-pounders. She carried a crew of 220 officers and men.

It is worth remembering that the foundation of the American navy consisted of these four converted merchantmen, the largest of which carried guns that could throw 126 pounds of shot at a broadside.

On December 22, 1775, Congress made Esek Hopkins commander-in-chief of the new navy, with Dudley Saltonstall, Abraham Whipple (he of the *Gaspé* attack), Nicholas Biddle, and John Burroughs Hopkins, captains of the four vessels in the order named. John Paul Jones was placed at the head of the list of lieutenants and assigned to the *Alfred*. On the same day Jones went aboard his ship and in the presence of a number of the members of Congress hoisted the first naval ensign, the rattlesnake burgee, bearing the motto, "Don't Tread on Me," thus placing the ship in commission.

This squadron was increased by the brig *Providence*, the schooners *Hornet* and *Fly*, and the sloop *Wasp*, and then, on February 17, 1776, it put to sea, went to New Providence Island in the Bahamas, captured some ammunition, and returned thence to New London, having accomplished nothing of importance. In fact one finds as a result of this cruise, through its lack of success and the quarrels among its officers, the beginning of a feeling of distrust that was to work incalculable harm to the navy and therefore to the nation, as shall appear.

From first to last the salt-water navy of the Revolution included forty-seven vessels—ships, brigs, schooners, and sloops. The first real naval ships were thirteen frigates that were ordered built on December 13, 1775. Five of these carried thirty-two guns—12-pounders on the gun deck and 9-pounders on poop and forecastle. Five more carried twenty-eight guns, and three carried twenty-four, 12-pounders and 9-pounders, as in the case of the largest frigates.¹ A frigate called the *Indien* was built at Amsterdam, Holland, and was armed with thirty 36-pounders and fourteen 9-pounders—a formidable vessel for her time. Another frigate, the *Alliance*, carried twenty-six 12-pounders and ten smaller guns. Then near the end of the war, a ship of the line (seventy-four guns) was launched under the name *America*, but she and the *Indien* were given to Louis XVI of France. Five of the forty-seven, including the *Bonhomme Richard*, were borrowed of the King of France. Of all the fleet, three only did work that is memorable in this volume—the *Ranger*, the *Bonhomme Richard*, and the *Randolph*. But before recounting their deeds, attention must be given to a fresh-water flotilla that served the country well.

As the reader will remember, the American forces that invaded Canada in September, 1775, were driven out, early in 1776, by the arrival of a British army that, under Sir Guy Carleton, was under orders to march to the head of the Hudson River, and by uniting with the British fleet there, cut the colonies asunder.

As there was no wagon road along either side of Lake Champlain, Sir Guy stopped at St. John's, a military station just below (north of) Lake Champlain, to build a fleet with which to control and cross the lake. When completed this fleet included a ship of 300 tons, two schooners,

¹There is good reason for supposing that 9-pounders were used on the gun-decks of some of these frigates.

a huge scow, a gondola, twenty gunboats, and four long-boats. These carried at least 109 guns of which a large proportion were 24-pounders and 12-pounders. Thus the scow carried six 24-pounders and six 12-pounders while the ship carried eighteen 12-pounders. Even the gunboats carried some 24-pounders, though the number of them is not given, and in fact it is not important save for comparison with the guns of the American vessels.

To meet this squadron Benedict Arnold, then a most energetic patriot, constructed one sloop, three schooners, eight gondolas, and five galleys, of which, however, one schooner and one galley were absent at the time of the fight. His best guns were 18-pounders and he had no more than six of them, if so many. There were, perhaps, nine 12-pounders, and the others to the number of 102 all told, were 6's, 4's, or 2's. In size and equipment the fleet was wholly inadequate for the work, and where the British ships were manned by picked crews from the men-o'-war at Quebec, Arnold had to recruit his crews from the garrison at Ticonderoga. Defeat and destruction were inevitable.

Nevertheless, traitor though he was in after-years, Arnold at this time showed courage and resourcefulness that make his work forever memorable in the annals of the navy. For, first of all, he went down the lake to meet the enemy. Then he anchored his flotilla behind Valcour Island, where, owing to peculiarities of the wind and water, he was sure to have the weather gauge when the enemy came.

On the 11th of October, 1776, the British left St. John's for Ticonderoga. The wind was from the north, and they were wafted well past Valcour Island before they saw that the American fleet was there. Turning hastily around they strove then to beat up to the attack, but they were so slow in doing this that the impatient Arnold went down

with three galleys and the schooner *Royal Savage* to meet them. The battle opened at eleven o'clock with a broadside from the British schooner *Carleton*, and Arnold was obliged to retreat to the support of his other vessels. In doing this a shot disabled the *Royal Savage* and she was sunk close to the island. Thinking that victory was now at hand the British followed into the narrow waters, while a horde of Indians who had come to lend their assistance gathered at each end of the American line to shoot down the American crews. It was a battle at musket range with the preponderance of heavy guns, and of men to work them, on the British ships. Nevertheless, from 12.30 o'clock, when the engagement became general, Arnold held his own until five o'clock, when the enemy "thought proper to retire to about six or seven hundred yards' distance," and fight thereafter until sundown at long range.

The Americans had succeeded thus far by sheer pluck and good marksmanship. But they had suffered more than the enemy, and it was plain that on the next day the superior force must win. Accordingly when the usual fog of the season arose that night, Arnold and his little fleet (one of his gondolas had been sunk) slipped through the enemy's line, and so strove to reach Ticonderoga.

On the 12th, when stopped by a head wind, some repairs were made, but one gondola sank in spite of efforts to save her. After that the Americans worked on with the oars as best they could, but all in vain. For on the 13th, as they passed Split Rock, with Arnold in the *Congress* galley and four other rowboats guarding the rear, the enemy came upon them with a fair wind. The big ship *Inflexible*, with eighteen 12-pounders, and the schooners *Carleton* and *Maria*, carrying twenty-six 6-pounders between them, opened fire at short range. The smallest of these was almost a match alone for Arnold's five row-

boats. The force of the three British vessels was overwhelmingly superior, and the remainder of the British fleet was rapidly coming to join in. Moreover, the first broadside of the enemy so crippled the *Washington* galley that she surrendered. But to surrender in time of battle was not in the heart of Benedict Arnold. Ranging the *Congress* across the track of the big *Inflexible* he continued to fight on, while other gondolas met the fire of the two schooners with equal intrepidity. Even when a third of his crew had been shot down, and his galley was a wreck barely able to float, Arnold cheered on his men. But being unable to inflict any more damage upon the enemy he directed the other captains to beach their vessels, covered them as best he could while they did so, and then after running his own vessel on the rocks, he stood guard while all were set on fire. And he remained on board his own vessel until she was in flames, "lest the enemy should get possession and strike his flag which was kept flying to the last." The flag was burned with the ship.

Then he leaped ashore, formed his men in an orderly line and marched away over a trail to Ticonderoga.

The American fleet was destroyed, but the sacrifice was not in vain. Carleton sailed on until within view of Ticonderoga, but there he paused. As Dodsley's (London) "Annual Register" said in reporting the affair, he had seen "the countenance of the enemy," and the sight made him give up his project.

By fighting on in the face of overwhelming odds and certain defeat—by fighting till the last gasp—the American flotilla turned back the invaders, and thus made straight the way that led to the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga.

Though brief, the story of the frigate *Randolph* (one of the thirty-twos first built) is, in one respect, as splendid as any known to the annals of our navy. Under Capt. Nich-

olas Biddle, on the 7th of March, 1778, she was cruising just east of the Barbadoes, in company with a small squadron of South Carolina vessels. In the course of the afternoon the British ship *Yarmouth*, of sixty-four guns, bore down on this squadron. Biddle waited for her, and as night came on, although she was, because of the size of her guns, of more than four times his force, he engaged her single-handed. He had often talked with John Paul Jones of the results that would follow if "by exceedingly desperate fighting one of our ships" should "conquer one of theirs of markedly superior force"; he had hoped that he might be the captain upon whom fortune was to confer the honor of fighting such a battle; he had always been ready for the chance, and now the hour had come. Flinging the Stars and Stripes to the breeze he gave the enemy a broadside, and after the *Yarmouth* replied, the spectators with leaping hearts saw that the *Randolph* fired three broadsides to the enemy's one. Biddle was shot down but, seated in a chair, cheered on his men until he saw that with guns alone he could not win. Then he ordered down the helm and was luffing up to grapple the enemy and fight it out on her deck by boarding, when fire reached the magazine beneath his feet and blew the *Randolph* out of water. Of the *Randolph's* crew four men only were saved.

"Nick Biddle—poor, brave Nick—was the kind of naval captain that the God of battles makes," wrote John Paul Jones. It was so, and he was the first to set the pace for the men of our navy.

Seven weeks later—on April 24, 1778—the little Yankee sloop of war *Ranger* met the British sloop *Drake* off Carrickfergus, on the north-east coast of Ireland.

While aiding the marine committee of Congress with his advice in 1775 John Paul Jones wrote that "keeping a squadron in British waters, alarming their coasts, inter-

cepting their trade, and descending now and then upon their least protected ports, is the only way that we, *with our slender resources*, can sensibly affect our enemy by sea warfare"—a most important statement, memorable yet. He would wage war like the eagle, not the rattlesnake. Accordingly it was with much pleasure that he took command of the ship *Ranger*—fourteen 9-pounders and four 6-pounders—built at Portsmouth, N. H., and bound for a cruise in European waters, although he was entitled to the command of a frigate. How the *Ranger* was driven on her outward passage because she carried the news of the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga cannot be told here, nor can more than mention be given to the fact that after she had been refitted she sailed through the French fleet at Brest, flying the Stars and Stripes which was then, for the first time, saluted as a national flag by the guns of a foreign navy. The *Ranger* sailed from Brest on April 10, 1778, and on the 24th of April appeared off Carrickfergus, where the British twenty-gun sloop-of-war *Drake* was guard ship. Here he hove to and waited while the *Drake* came out to fight. The *Drake's* sixteen 9-pounders and four 4-pounders were able to throw eighty pounds of shot at a broadside and she carried 157 men and officers. The *Ranger* could throw seventy-five pounds of shot at a broadside and she carried a crew of 126. For the first time a ship under the Stars and Stripes was to meet a British ship in a fair fight, the preponderance of force on the British side being inconsiderable.

It was late in the afternoon when the *Drake* drew up alongside the *Ranger* at musket range and hailed. The reply of Jones, "Come on; we are waiting for you," had hardly been given when the battle began with broadsides.

"Every shot told," said Jones speaking of the work of his gunners, "and they gave the *Drake* three broadsides

for two right along, at that." As the two ships were going off the wind together, the *Ranger* rolled down to port as the *Drake* came up to starboard. "Quite early in the action I noticed that my quarter gunners had caught the *Drake's* period of roll and were timing to fire as their muzzles went down and the enemy's side came up," continued Jones. Every shot struck into the hull, many of them going through and through below the water-line.

It was memorable gun practice, but Jones wished to carry the ship into port rather than sink her, and he told his men so. At that the gunners aimed at the *Drake's* rigging until her fore and maintopsail yards were brought down to the cap, and she was thrown off her course in such a way that the *Ranger* was able to luff across her stern and rake her, when the crew called for quarter. The battle had continued, broadside to broadside, for one hour and fifteen minutes. The *Drake* lost forty-two men killed and wounded. The *Ranger* lost in killed a lieutenant, and two enlisted men died of their wounds after the battle, while five others were severely wounded.

By prompt work, such as drawing sails over the wounds in her side, the *Drake* was kept afloat until the carpenters could make repairs. Jones then took his prize to Brest, where he anchored on the 8th of May, having been out of port but twenty-eight days. It may be mentioned that in addition to the man-o'-war he had captured six merchantmen, of which three were brought into port and three destroyed.

It is difficult now to realize the full importance of this battle, for the ships were no larger than small coasters of the present day, and the guns were insignificant. But the fact is that no British ship had ever before surrendered to an enemy of equal force, not to mention one of less. Such was the power of the British at sea that even the ablest

of the continental seamen supposed that it was impossible to win, gun for gun, in a battle with them. It was because Jones knew of this feeling that he asked his gunners not to sink the *Drake* in the battle. By carrying her into port he broke the spell.

A wonderful demonstration of what may be accomplished by those who will fight to a finish was yet to come—the most wonderful, in fact, known to the history of sea battles. Congress had intended to give John Paul Jones the command of the Amsterdam-built frigate *Indien*, and Jones hoped to get her, even after she had been presented to the French king. The jealousy of French naval officers prevented this, and prevented for a long time also the giving of any command to the hero of the *Ranger*. The vexations to which Jones was subjected are mentioned here only because his ability to endure them was a part of the mental equipment that has distinguished the best of our naval officers since his day. But after a personal appeal to the king the old French Indiaman, famous in history as the *Bonhomme Richard*, was placed under his command. She was well worn and rotten, but she was refitted and re-armed, beginning in February, 1779, and was ready for sea at the end of May. At this time she carried a battery of six condemned 18-pounders (no others were to be had) on a lower deck that was four feet above still water, twenty-eight long 12-pounders on the main gun-deck, and eight long 9-pounders on the quarter-deck, or forty-two all told. Her crew numbered 375 of whom 50, including officers, were Americans, 190-odd were nondescripts from the wharves and prisons, 122 were French soldiers, and 12 were French marines.

Under orders to sail with the *Bonhomme Richard* was the new American frigate *Alliance*, commanded by a half-crazy French lieutenant named Pierre Landais, who had

been cashiered from the French navy and thoroughly disgraced, but had afterward secured a commission from Congress by misrepresentation and fraud. A French twenty-eight gun frigate, the *Pallas*, and the *Vengeance*, a twelve-gun brig, were also of the squadron. With such a crew and such consorts, Jones put to sea (June 19th). The *Alliance* promptly fouled the *Richard* and did so much damage that the squadron had to return to port for repairs.

As it happened this disaster proved fortunate, for before the ships were again ready for sea the British Government decided to exchange prisoners with the Americans, and 119 American sailors came across the Channel. Of these five had been so crippled by their treatment in the prisons of Great Britain that they were forever disqualified for service on any ship. The others shipped for the cruise with John Paul Jones. Among these Americans were Richard Dale and John Mayrant—Mayrant having been one of the four men who lived to tell how Nicholas Biddle and the *Randolph* were blown out of water. Dale became the executive officer of the *Richard* and Mayrant one of the lieutenants. With these recruits the *Richard* had 149 or 150 genuine Americans on board, a part of the Americans being given to the *Alliance*.

But Jones had still another ill to suffer. Although he had been made commodore of the squadron he was compelled to sign, on the eve of his departure, a "concordat" that placed all the captains on a par, and made the *Richard* a mere place of meeting where the captains might discuss policies.

With one of the ships of his squadron commanded by a half-crazy captain, and with the other two commanded by men who had been trained to think a victory over an enemy of equal force a miracle; with his own ship rotten and armed in part with condemned guns, Jones put to sea

on August 14, 1779, having previously written a letter in which he said: "If I should fail and fall I wish this writing to witness that I take all blame upon myself."

How the *Richard* cruised around the British coasts and made prizes until she had 140 prisoners in her hold, and how she made a descent on Leith and frightened the people as they had never been frightened before, need only be mentioned. But it must not be forgotten that in the meantime Landais, of the *Alliance*, had mutinously refused to cooperate with the *Richard*. And then, on the afternoon of September 23, came the British Baltic fleet convoyed by the *Serapis*, Capt. Richard Pearson, a ship that carried twenty long 18-pounders on her lower deck, twenty-two long 9-pounders on her spar-deck, and eight 9-pounders on her quarter-deck—a ship able to throw 315 pounds of shot at a broadside where the *Richard* could throw but 258 pounds even with her condemned 18-pounders working.

By a manœuvre which Pearson called clever the *Richard* gained and held the weather gauge, and after considering this for a time the British captain turned to his surgeon and said:

"Doctor, the stranger is probably Paul Jones. If so, there is work ahead."

Then at 7.15 o'clock Pearson hailed the *Richard* and for an answer received a broadside.

The battle began at a range of 600 feet where every shot, even of the smaller guns, could penetrate if it struck home, and where, because the sea was smooth, even untrained gunners were able to hit their target. The heavier battery of the *Serapis* under such conditions was sure to win in the end, and when at the end of twenty minutes the six 18-pounders on the *Richard* had to be abandoned because two of them had exploded with disastrous effect, the broadside of the *Richard* was reduced to 204

pounds of shot at a round as against the 315 of the *Serapis*. But worse fate was coming. The 18-pound shot of the *Serapis* were soon dismounting the main battery of the *Richard*, and Jones said to Dale, his lieutenant:

“Dick, his metal is too heavy for us at this business. He is hammering us all to pieces.”

It was so. While Jones was speaking the 12-pounder battery of the *Richard* was reduced to five guns, and a little later still all the 12-pounders were silenced, leaving only three 9-pounders on the quarter-deck to continue the battle against the whole broadside of the *Serapis*.

Nor was that all. So many shot had penetrated the *Richard* below the water-line that she was sinking in spite of the efforts of her crew at the pumps, and yet at this moment the *Alliance* under Landais came up under her port quarter and fired two broadsides into her.

But there was yet one chance. The opportunity which Nicholas Biddle had sought—the opportunity where, by “exceedingly desperate fighting one of our ships” might “conquer one of theirs of markedly superior force,” had come to John Paul Jones. The veering of the wind placed the *Richard* where she blanketed the *Serapis*, and then the *Richard* drifted into her antagonist and Jones with his own hands helped to lash the two together. It was while Jones was doing this work that a frightened gunner, on seeing that the water was gaining in the hold of the *Richard*, ran up on the quarter-deck and bawled for quarter. As the firing had meantime ceased for the moment on the *Richard*, Captain Pearson at once answered the gunner’s outcry by inquiring if the *Richard* had surrendered. But by this time Jones had returned to the quarter-deck and replied to Pearson’s demand with the immortal words:

“I have not yet begun to fight.”

From this time on the crew of the *Richard*, led by Jones,

fought as if inspired. Going among the French soldiers who were serving as marines, Jones directed their fire at the British sailors who strove to cut the lashings holding the two ships together; and when he saw that their fire was not always accurate he took the muskets from their hands and fired them himself with deadly effect.

Having by example worked the French to a degree of enthusiasm where they would fight, as they afterward fought under the great Napoleon, he turned his attention to the 9-pounders on the quarter-deck, and with his own hands aimed them at the mainmast of the *Serapis* until he had shot it away. Then the lower deck called him. The master at arms had released the British prisoners there because he supposed that the *Richard* was about to sink. To make matters more desperate a fire had been started by the guns of the *Serapis* and the magazine was in great peril. But Jones ordered some of the prisoners to the pumps, told others to throw water from the hold on the flames, and when one of them had been killed for refusing the others obeyed.

In the meantime, before going to the hold, Jones had ordered Lieut. John Mayrant to prepare to lead boarders to the deck of the *Serapis*. Mayrant selected the men who had suffered in British prisons for that work, and when Jones returned to the deck they were standing ready, with pike and cutlass in hand. Moreover, Midshipman Fanning had just dropped a hand grenade from the end of the main-yard down through an open hatch into a pile of powder cartridges on the main deck of the *Serapis*, and the explosion had demoralized the British crew. With one glance Jones saw the situation and shouted to Mayrant:

“Now is your time, John. Go in!”

“With his fierce Huguenot blood boiling, and a hoarse yell, ‘Remember Portsea jail,’ the dauntless South Caro-

linian led his band of Yankee sailors over the hammock netting and down into the waist of the *Serapis*."

The battle was won at last. Seeing the Americans in full possession of his deck, Captain Pearson with his own hands hauled down his flag.

In one respect the victory was unique in the history of the sea. The *Richard* had been so badly injured that she sank in spite of every effort to save her; yet she captured the ship that destroyed her.

There were but four really memorable battles afloat during the period of the Revolution, and in three of these the American ships were destroyed. The battle on Lake Champlain was important because of its influence on the war, and because it was a battle waged with the one purpose of fighting to the last gasp. The others are memorable because they were examples of the kind of fighting that men of the navy are expected to do, while one of them shows what may be accomplished even after hope has fled.

The fate of the ships in these battles is notable. We won the battles as we won the war—in spite of disasters that seemed overwhelming. The navy suffered even worse than the army.

At the end of 1778 only four of the thirteen frigates that Congress had ordered in 1775 remained in the service and there were but fourteen vessels on the list all told, and of these three were destroyed at Penobscot. Five more were lost in 1780, including the *Ranger*, which was one of four captured at Charleston. At the end of the war but one remained, the *Alliance*.

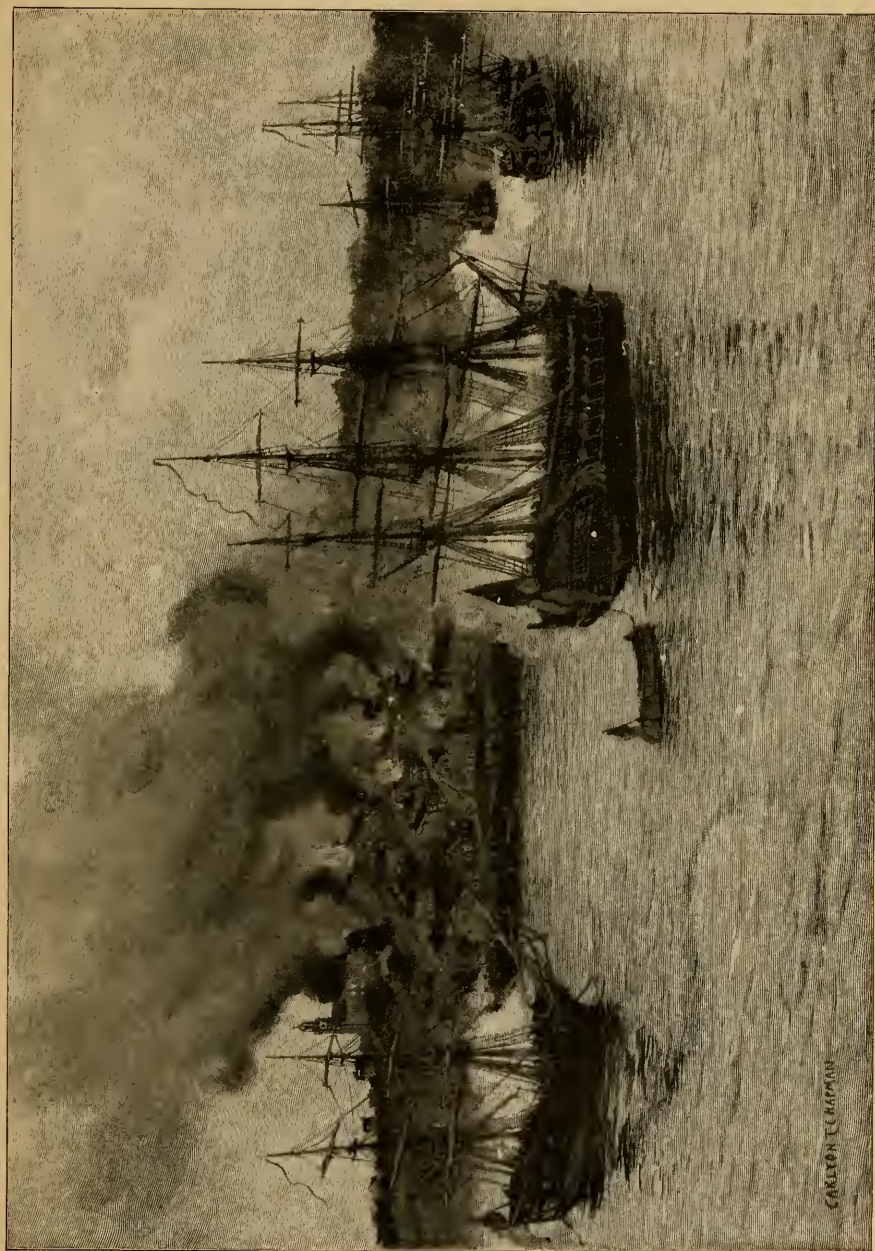
And yet, as Edward Everett Hale has pointed out, more men fought for the freedom of the United States on the sea than on the land, with the land militia counted in. The explanation of this is found in the fact that while the navy of the nation contained but forty-seven vessels all

told, there were hundreds of State cruisers and privateers in commission.

Thus Salem alone, in the course of the war, owned 150 privateers. Those owned in Boston numbered 365. It is supposed that Massachusetts sent out at least 600 privateers, and that 60,000 citizens of that State went to sea in them. No other State had as many sailors afloat as Massachusetts, but there were hundreds from the other States. Then there were the State cruisers—armed ships owned and fitted out by the States, and sent to sea to cruise against the enemy. Massachusetts had 34. Although the United States had but 3,000,000 inhabitants “fighting for the holy cause of Liberty,” there were more men fighting on the seas for that cause than were to be found in the whole British navy, including those stationed in the East Indies, or more than 87,000 men, that is to say. The British force on the coast of the United States during the war numbered but 26,000 men.

These are among the most important facts in the history of the Nation. Although the tonnage of the American privateers is nowhere stated, nor the number of guns, it is certain that at any time after the war was well under way the American force afloat was at least twice that of the British on the coast. *If properly concentrated and handled* there was force enough afloat to sweep the British navy not only from the American coast but from the face of the earth.

But the people, instead of concentrating their sea forces into ships of the line and swift frigates, scattered them among hundreds of little brigs and schooners carrying less than a hundred men each and armed with 6-pounders and a Long Tom throwing nine pounds. These were sent out to hunt for merchantmen. Greed blindfolded patriotism. A few privateers made great gains. Capt. Abraham Whipple left the service of the Nation to take command of a



The destruction of Falmouth (now Portland, Maine), in October, 1775, by Captain Mowatt.



privateer, and in one cruise sent in prizes that sold for more than a million dollars. Cruises that yielded a hundred thousand dollars or so (and a hundred thousand dollars looked larger then than a million now) were common—too common. For as the correspondence in Force's "Archives" shows, the naval ships were unable to secure crews and at times had to resort to impressment before they could go to sea.

There is no instance on record where a splendid power was so foolishly wasted as was the sea power of the United States during the Revolution.

Nor was the evil of the waste temporary. Many prizes were captured, much injury was done to the British *merchant* marine, and these losses had some influence, at last, in bringing the war to a close. The successes of the privateers therefore led the people to have confidence in the privateer as a ship of war rather than in a navy. As the war went on no effort was made by Congress to repair the losses among the naval ships, let alone adding to the naval strength. And when at last the war ended, leaving but one ship, the *Alliance*, on the naval list, she was sold for a merchantman (1785). A nation that could command the services of a hundred thousand able seamen and that had within its borders the materials for the best ships that the world had ever seen, came to look upon a naval force as a menace to its liberties, and to believe that the interest of their merchants in legalized piracy would furnish a sufficient sea power for the defence of the Nation from foreign aggression. And it was only when certain nations of Africa had carried the theory of privateering to its legitimate conclusion by making war upon the United States in order to extort tribute that the people were made willing to begin the building of naval ships. As a Nation we owe a debt of gratitude to the Barbary pirates that ought never to be forgotten.

II

BUILDING A NEW NAVY

ON July 25, 1785 (just a month and twenty-two days after Congress sold the *Alliance*, the last of our warships of the Revolution), the little schooner *Maria*, of Boston, Capt. Isaac Stevens, was captured by a corsair from Algiers as she was sailing past Cape St. Vincent. At Algiers, whither she was taken, she was confiscated to the use of the Dey, and all her crew were made slaves. And five days after the *Maria* was captured the ship *Dauphin*, of Philadelphia, Capt. Richard O'Brien, was taken by Algerine corsairs fifty leagues west of Lisbon. The total number of persons thus enslaved by the African pirates was twenty-one. An agent who went to Algiers learned that the Dey would surrender the prisoners for \$59,496.

Seven years later (May 8, 1792) the United States Senate resolved that it would approve a treaty with Algiers for the release of the thirteen prisoners that yet survived, and for perpetual peace, provided the Dey did not demand a greater sum than \$40,000 in hand and an annual tribute of \$25,000. And John Paul Jones was asked to become the agent for carrying the blackmail to the Dey. Jones died (July 18, 1792) before the commission for this work reached him, and the negotiation was allowed to drag along another year.

Algiers, in the meantime, had been prevented from committing further depredations by the activity of the Portuguese navy, but in 1793 the British agent at Algiers,

who also represented Portugal at that court, negotiated a treaty for Portugal, without the knowledge of the Portuguese Government, whereby the Algerine corsairs were allowed once more to sail on the Atlantic Ocean for further depredations on American commerce. In their first cruise the corsairs captured eleven different vessels with crews amounting to 109 men all told.

The story of these aggressions was considered in Congress, but when a resolution was offered to the effect that "a naval force, adequate to the protection of the commerce of the United States against the Algerine corsairs, ought to be provided," it prevailed by a vote of only 46 to 44—this in the House. And when on February 21 it was decided to build six frigates, the vote stood 43 to 41. The bill was signed by President Washington on March 27.

In pursuance of this act three ships to rate as forty-four gun frigates, and three as thirty-eights, were begun. Joshua Humphreys, a naval architect of Philadelphia, was chiefly responsible for the design of these ships. His idea was to build such vessels "as in blowing weather would be an over-match for double-decked ships, or in light winds may evade action by outsailing them." In order to make these ships of as good quality as possible live oak and red cedar were used, and there was some delay in obtaining materials. In consequence of the delay the ships were not yet completed when the Dey of Algiers was induced to sign a treaty of peace (September 5, 1795), and thereupon the work on the ships came to an end, as had been provided in the act for building them.

The opposition to the building of a naval force had been so strong in Congress that the friends of the measure had been obliged to agree that in case of peace with Algiers the work of navy building should cease. One of the most potent arguments against building a navy was the

poverty of the country. It was estimated that the six frigates would cost all told \$847,960. That seemed an enormous sum. The estimate for the entire expense of the Government for the year 1796 amounted to \$2,338,543.94, and to increase this by the estimated cost of the frigates seemed too great. Congress therefore chose to pay annual tribute to the black potentate of Africa. But it was found in the end that the treaty with Algiers, including the redemption of prisoners, presents and bribes, required the payment of \$992,463.25. In addition to this sum was an agreement to give a present of \$20,000 whenever a new consul arrived, and \$17,000 in presents biennially, besides "incidental and contingent presents." Nor was that all, for similar treaties with Tunis and Tripoli were obtained by similar means, though neither cost quite as much as that with Algiers.

It was submission to blackmail in the hope of saving the expense of building a navy, but when the accounts had run for a number of years it was found that the expense of the blackmail, not to mention the humiliation of it, was twice as great as the cost of the frigates, and what was more the frigates had to be built after all. For it was observed by a more civilized people than the pirates that we were without ships to enforce our rights; and aggressions followed that compelled us to fight.

These further aggressions grew chiefly from the disordered state of affairs that led to the French Revolution, though there were English aggressions, including the impressment of American seamen at the same time. Louis XVI of France was executed on January 21, 1793, and England immediately declared war on France. The French people, though in a state of anarchy, were yet able to fight. By a treaty made during the American Revolution Congress had agreed to aid France, in case of war, by defend-

ing her West India possessions. In consequence of this treaty France looked to the United States as allies, and when it was seen that we would not keep the terms of that treaty, a series of aggressions was begun on American commerce that were actually piratical. For commissions as privateers were issued to known pirates by French officials who intended to share in the plunder, and these piratical vessels looted every American ship that they could capture. In some cases they murdered the crews. More than three hundred American vessels were looted by French pirates and privateers in a single year.

Nevertheless the proposition to go on with the work of building a navy encountered violent opposition in Congress, and the friends of the navy were obliged to accept a compromise and complete three of the frigates only. The three selected under this compromise (act of April 20, 1796) were the *Constitution* and the *United States*, each of forty-four, and the *Constellation* of thirty-eight guns. In the beginning the navy of the nation consisted of four converted merchantmen, of which the best ship (the *Alfred*, 440 tons) carried for its largest guns eight 12-pounders. The *Constitution* (1,576 tons), the most memorable of the three ships of the new navy, carried for her main battery thirty long 24-pounders. While both France and England had at this time a few frigates armed with 24-pounders nearly all in both navies carried 18-pounders, and were of but little more than one thousand tons measurement. The United States Government, in establishing its new navy, began a policy of making such ships as it did build the most formidable, rate for rate, afloat, and with few lapses it has maintained that policy ever since.

Unhappily the American people at this time were divided in politics to a large extent by sympathy for and opposition to the French leaders, and those who sympathized

with France were strong in their opposition to every effort to resent French aggression by force. But this opposition was overcome when, in 1798, the three commissioners (C. C. Pinckney, Marshall, and Gerry), who had been sent to negotiate a treaty with France, were told that a new treaty could be had only on condition that they pay the French Directory a large sum of money, and a further sum as a tribute to the French Government. On April 27, 1798, an act was passed providing for the purchase of twelve vessels carrying not more than twenty-two guns, and on April 30 a regular Navy Department was created, the naval affairs of the Nation before that time having been under the care of the War Department. Benjamin Stoddert was the first Secretary of the Navy. On May 27 the President was authorized to send the naval forces then in hand to cruise for the protection of American commerce. Later still the President was authorized to accept ships of war that might be offered by private citizens or municipalities. Finally, on July 16, an appropriation of \$600,000 was made to complete the three frigates on which work had been suspended when peace was purchased of Algiers.

Although there was no definite declaration, war was thus actually begun with France, and it is of the utmost importance to observe here that this war was brought on by the fact that the United States had had no naval force except the three frigates with which to defend its commerce from aggression.

The story of this war may be briefly told.

The first battle of any consequence was that between the *Constellation*, the first of the 38-gun frigates of the new navy, and the French frigate *Insurgent*.

The *Constellation*, under Capt. Thomas Truxton, was cruising off St. Kitts on February 9, 1799, when the *Insurgent* was seen. Three hours later the *Constellation* luffed

out on the port quarter of the enemy and opened fire with a broadside that was promptly returned. For a time the ships worked their guns as rapidly as they could, but it soon appeared that the guns of the *Constellation* were too heavy for those on the *Insurgent*, and the Frenchman, with most admirable pluck, attempted to board. In this manœuvre, however, he was frustrated by the loss of his maintopmast, and the *Constellation* crossed his bow and raked him fore and aft. Then the *Constellation* took a position off the *Insurgent's* starboard bow and poured in broadsides as rapidly as the American crew could work their guns. After an hour of this the *Constellation*, having the advantage in speed, worked around to the port bow of the *Insurgent* and poured in broadsides until there was not a single gun left fit for action on the *Insurgent's* main deck. Even then the Frenchmen fought on, using their quarter-deck battery of 12-pounders, until the *Constellation* took a position astern, ready to rake once more. The French flag was then hauled down.

The battle is interesting chiefly because it shows the advantage of the system or theory which prevailed when the American ships were planned. The *Constellation* carried twenty-eight 24-pounders where the *Insurgent* carried twenty-six 18-pounders. On the upper decks the *Constellation* carried twenty long 12-pounders where the *Insurgent* carried ten long 12-pounders and four short 36-pounders. The *Insurgent* was badly outclassed. The *Insurgent* carried a crew of 409, of whom 29 were killed and 41 wounded. The *Constellation* lost only 2 killed and 3 wounded out of 309. The men of the *Constellation* had learned to aim their guns and those of the *Insurgent* had not.

The next battle to be noted was that fought between the *Constellation* and the French frigate *Vengeance*, on February 2, 1800. Before going on this cruise the *Constellation*

had been provided with a smaller battery—long 18-pounders instead of long 24's.

On quarter deck and forecastle she carried twelve long 12-pounders and ten 24-pounder carronades, the carronade being a light, short gun that at best was worthless at ranges above two hundred and fifty yards, and as usually loaded with two shot, was of but little use unless within pistol range. The *Vengeance* carried twenty-eight long 18-pounders on her main deck with sixteen long 12-pounders and eight 42-pound carronades on her upper decks. As the *Vengeance* carried a crew of 330 men to the 310 on the *Constellation*, the Frenchman had a clear preponderance of force.

It was eight o'clock at night before the *Constellation* overhauled the enemy. Truxton, having noted the enemy's force, ordered the gunners to reserve fire until he gave the word, and do their work deliberately. These orders proved hard to obey because the enemy opened fire with stern chasers. But the return fire was withheld until just off the weather quarter of the enemy when a broadside was given that brought blood spurting from her scuppers, while the shrieks of her crew, heard above the roar of the cannon, told of work done at close range. In the firing that followed, the American crew fired so rapidly that it became necessary to dip up water to cool the guns. But there was no loss of accuracy in this speed, for an American who was a prisoner on the *Vengeance* reported that 186 round shot struck her hull in the course of the battle. And at 12.30 in the morning of the 3d the fire of the *Vengeance* was silenced.

But just in the moment of victory it was observed that the shrouds and stays of the mainmast on the *Constellation* had all been shot away. All hands were called to repair the damage, but before preventers could be passed a roll of

the ship threw the mast over the rail, and the men stationed within the top, with Midshipman James C. Jarvis, were all lost. Jarvis had been warned of his danger but he refused to leave his post. The *Vengeance* escaped when the *Constellation* lost her mast, but Capt. Thomas Truxton and his men had set the pace for the new navy.

It was during this war, and to meet the many privateers and pirates swarming in the West Indies, that the swift little Baltimore clipper schooners *Enterprise* and *Experiment*, each armed with twelve long 6-pounders, were built. In 1800, in the course of a six-months' cruise, the *Enterprise*, under Lieut. John Shaw, captured eight privateers with forty-seven guns. The *Experiment*, under Lieut. Charles Stewart, made fewer captures only because she was less fortunate in finding enemies to fight, and the two together simply swept the piratical fleet off the seas.

It was a brief war, but memorable on that account, for it was fought out by the navy alone. The Americans did not lose a fight, and peace was concluded on September 30, 1800. The French, encouraged by the fact that the United States had only three frigates, and further by the speeches made in Congress against the building of a navy, began her aggressions against American commerce. An alphabetical list of the claims filed with the State Department shows that the spoliations by the French amounted to \$7,290,774.32½. Through the effort of Congress to get on without a navy the commerce of the country suffered that loss; but in the end (as in the case with the Barbary pirates), a navy had to be provided and a war fought out.

This most expensive lesson was heeded by the Administration of the day, but was ignored by the opposition. By an act approved on February 25, 1799, Congress provided for the building of six 74-gun ships of the line at an expense of \$2,403,800.94, besides smaller vessels, and in a

report by Secretary of the Navy Stoddert, dated January 12, 1801, he said:

“When the United States own twelve ships of seventy-four guns, and double the number of strong frigates, and it is known that they possess the means of increasing with facility their naval strength, confidence may be indulged that we may then avoid those wars in which we have no interest, and without submitting to be plundered.”

Unhappily the hope of peace thus proposed was frustrated by a change of national policy.

III

THE WAR OF 1812—ITS ORIGIN

THE most depressing, but withal the most instructive period in the history of the American navy is that preceding the War of 1812. The story has been told in full, and without prejudice but once—in the history written by Henry Adams. Every man who has failed to read that work is more or less ignorant of the facts. Though it is most important to the welfare of the Nation, the story can be but briefly summarized here.

The foreign policy of the Government of the United States, as conducted by Thomas Jefferson during that period, was laid down by him in letters to his friends rather than in public documents. In a letter to Thomas Paine he said:

“Determined as we are to avoid, if possible, wasting the energies of our people in war and destruction, we shall avoid implicating ourselves with the Powers of Europe, even in support of principles which we mean to pursue. We believe we can enforce those principles as to ourselves by peaceable means.” To a celebrated Pennsylvania peacemaker, Dr. Logan, he explained how he was to use peaceable means to compel the compliance of foreign nations. He said:

“Our commerce is so valuable to them that they will be glad to purchase it, when the only price we ask is to do us justice. I believe that we have in our own hands the means of peaceable coercion; and that the moment they

see our Government so united as that we can make use of it, they will for their own interest be disposed to do us justice.”

To make clear these important words of Mr. Jefferson it must be noted that in 1801, the year he became President, the total exports of the United States amounted to \$94,115,925, while the imports aggregated \$111,363,511. Mr. Jefferson believed that the profits of foreign merchants on this commerce were so great that we had only to withdraw our trade from any nation to compel its people, or rather its Government, to do us justice. A withdrawal of trade was his means of “peaceable coercion.” And special emphasis should be laid on the word coercion, for it was not a matter of Christian forbearance. Mr. Jefferson especially disavowed what he called the Quaker principle of turning the other cheek when one had been smitten.

“That a navy caused more dangers than it prevented or corrected was one of the deepest convictions that underlay the policy of Jefferson.” Accordingly one of his earlier acts as President was to lay up five of the warships at Washington. Then the work on the six ships of the line, begun by President Adams, was suspended, and it was never renewed. In 1800 the Administration had expended \$3,448,716 on the navy. Mr. Jefferson cut down the expense in 1802 to \$915,562. The public debt when Jefferson came in was \$83,038,051. In 1802 it had been reduced to \$80,712,632, and it must be said here that this debt was steadily reduced year by year until 1812, when it amounted to but \$45,209,738. On the face of these figures it would appear that the policy which Mr. Jefferson inaugurated, and Mr. Madison continued, as far as possible, brought nothing but prosperity to the Nation. But history tells a very different story.

England’s war with the French Republic was to close

with the peace of Amiens on March 27, 1802, but her war on Napoleon was to begin April 29, 1803. "Two powerful, angry, and merciless gods stood ready, opening their jaws wide against each other"; and we were "sitting down between both," as the supine Christian Delawares sat down before the massacre of Gnadenhutzen.

For years an infamous wrong had been steadily perpetrated by the British nation on the American people. Press gangs from British men-o'-war, whenever convenient, boarded American merchantmen and carried off American citizens who were compelled to serve in the British navy without pay unless they condoned the wrong by volunteering. It was a growing evil, especially after the war on Napoleon was begun, but the fact that government existed in order to protect individuals in their rights was not then so well understood in this country as it will be some time, and the evil was ignored for years.

What attracted the attention of Congress most in the line of British aggression was the British determination to render American over-sea commerce tributary to the British Government. It was theory of the British Government that American ships could not carry on the trade between France and the French colonies in time of war because French law prohibited such trade in time of peace. This doctrine was for a time admitted, and the American merchant then imported the French colonial produce into the United States, landed it, and paid the duty upon it. It was then reshipped to European ports, and so great was the superiority of American ships that even with such a handicap they could compete successfully with British ships making a direct voyage. In consequence of this success the British extended their rule so far that the British courts presumed to go behind the certificates issued by the American customs officials and declare that the im-

portation of the goods into the United States was never made. Indeed the whole over-sea trade of the United States was declared to be based on fraud and perjury.

British writers and those who sympathize with them have asserted that the British Government laid oppressive measures upon American commerce because it was obliged to do so in its death struggle with Napoleon—because in no other way could the vivifying produce from French colonies be kept from the European nations under Napoleon's control. But the truth is that our commerce was oppressed to keep all that trade in British ships, or, failing that, to compel the American ships to enter a British port and pay a duty on the produce before carrying it to a continental port. The little island of Heligoland, off the German coast, was then one of England's most valued possessions because it was such a convenient station for shipping goods to the continent in spite of Napoleon's decrees. It was greed of trade, as was more than once admitted in Parliament and by British writers of *that* day, that inspired British aggressions on American commerce. And it was because the British Admiralty refused to give fair pay or decent food to the common sailors in the navy that press gangs had to be sent out to get men to man British ships.

In carrying out their commercial policy the Admiralty were not content to cruise for American merchantmen on the high seas alone; a squadron was stationed off Sandy Hook (1805), and every vessel bound into or out of the port of New York was stopped and examined. And whenever by any interpretation of papers or of private correspondence a ship could be supposed to violate the British rules, it was placed under a prize crew and sent to Halifax. And at the same time American seamen were taken from

American ships with ruthless hand—often with no pretence that they were British citizens—as when red Indians and negroes were taken.

On February 5, 1802, General Leclerc and a French army took possession of Cap Francais, Santo Domingo. It was found that all the supplies on the island had come from the United States. As he needed them Leclerc confiscated all that he could get hold of, and one of his generals told the American consul that the American people were the scum of the earth. Then the consul was expelled and many Americans were maltreated. That was Jefferson's first warning that Napoleon, who was already master of France, was to prove unfriendly. In the course of 1801 fifty-two American merchantmen were taken into port by French armed vessels.

This is not to complain or scold about the British aggressions, or even of the French. It was entirely human for a strong government like the British, when engaged in a mighty struggle—a struggle that called for the use of every resource—to take advantage of the weakness of a growing young rival, and especially of a rival that deliberately made itself weak. The American policy at this time invited the outrages that were received, and the people who supported the policy deserved their fate. Only the sailors and their wives and little ones, who suffered under a system they were powerless to change, should rouse any feeling of sympathy. The object in view, when describing the many acts of aggression as vividly as possible, is only to portray the situation as it was. And if nothing is said in detail about French and Spanish aggression it is because we would have been able, if unhampered by the British at that time, to make short work with any force either might have sent against us. There was talk—faint talk—of declaring war against both Eng-

land and France. To do so would have been the making of the Nation, but nothing came of it.

Through continued aggressions the time for a trial of "peaceable coercion" came at last. So confident was Mr. Jefferson of success in his policy that he wrote:

"We begin to broach the idea that we consider the whole Gulf Stream as of our waters, in which hostilities are to be frowned on at present, and prohibited" as soon as possible. "We shall never permit another privateer to cruise within it." He wrote this while yet determined to build at Washington a dock "within which our present [naval] vessels may be laid up dry and under cover from the sun," an idea that he had promulgated in his second annual message.

To compel the enemy to cease their intolerable outrages, a non-importation act was passed. We refused to import British beer, playing-cards, and some other articles of equal importance. This was to end not only the outrages, but it was to compel British ships of war to cease cruising in the Gulf Stream.

How it led only to further outrages is known to every school-boy. "Confiscation of American ships and cargoes under piratical orders of council and murderous attacks upon American crews became as common as gales at sea." The oft-described attack upon the frigate *Chesapeake* by a frigate that she might have beaten easily if commanded by a Farragut, did but emphasize the contempt which all Englishmen felt for the American people. It was demonstrated, though neither Jefferson nor his party would see it, that "interest" of manufactures was not having the influence it had been supposed to have. The unfortunate workman who made playing-cards for the American market was "laid off," but his complaints were unheard because the infinitely more influential British naval officer

found more profit in robbing American ships than in any policy of just dealing with the young republic. Moreover the British ship-owner was growing rich, now that his only competitor was being driven from the high seas. The ship-owner and the naval officer were entirely willing that the card-making workman should go to the poor-house.

But the loss of our over-sea commerce was nothing, and the enslavement of our seamen was a matter of small consequence, when they are compared with the degradation of American manhood that followed on the policy that was pursued. To stifle the honest indignation that arose with each fresh outrage the people were assured by the Administration that to build a navy would necessitate levying taxes that had been odious under the preceding administration. Appeals were made to their "interest" instead of to their sense of honor and right. Worse yet, members of Congress with infamous iteration declared that it would be impossible to succeed on the ocean in a war with Great Britain.

Thus a motion was made in the House, April 20, 1808, "to equip the frigates." One member supported the measure and seven opposed it. Holland expressed the views of the majority when he said that "if we were to attempt to meet the British on the sea it would be the only way in which we could be materially injured by them." D. R. Williams said he "felt himself at a loss to find a term sufficiently expressive of his abhorrence of a navy. He would go a great deal further to see it burnt than to extinguish the fire."

On March 22, 1810, a resolution "that the military and naval establishments ought to be reduced" was carried, seventy-seven out of one hundred members present voting for it. A bill ordering the sale of all the armed vessels of the United States except three frigates and three smaller

vessels, that Randolph introduced on April 20, 1810, failed by a narrow majority.

“The idea of our meeting Great Britain on the ocean is too ludicrous to be repelled by serious argument,” said Congressman Nicholson in the House and he was applauded. He appealed to the fears of the people as well as to their “interest.” The pluck of Nicholas Biddle was forgotten. The work of John Paul Jones was never mentioned. Even the lesson of the more recent successes of Truxton, the dash of Sterett and Decatur, and the immolation of Somers were deliberately ignored. Worse yet, when the *Chesapeake* was attacked the Administration postponed action by talk that was intended to deceive, and by building gunboats that were known to be worthless for war. “Peaceable coercion”—an embargo on commerce—was to avenge the wrong!

In all the discussion about the navy the only memorable words in defence of the service were those spoken by Dana, of Connecticut, who told the opposition that they were adopting the “terrapin policy” and that, too, when they “had not provided any shell.” They were literally striving to substitute the terrapin for the eagle.

From a contemplation of the supposed invulnerable character of the British navy some Congressmen came to believe that it would be impossible to defend our ports; and Congressman R. Nelson, on January 23, 1807, said in the House: “When the enemy comes let them take our towns, and let us retire into the country.” In fact a time came when, to compel the enemy “to do us justice,” a bill was passed to lay “a line of blocks and chains across New York harbor.”

It was in this condition of affairs that John Randolph did one thing in Congress that is forever memorable. For, clothed in a riding habit, carrying a whip and followed by a

pack of hounds, he strode into the House, and told the cowering members that they could not be kicked into fighting.

The people of Europe, reading the words and the Acts of Congress, came to hold the American people as cowards whose sole motive in life was "interest."

The character of the Nation was then forming as the character of a child is formed. We seemed rapidly drifting to a condition where the contempt of Europe would have been fully justified, but happily a war party had been springing up in Congress and the Nation. It is of the utmost importance to observe that it was the policy of "peaceable coercion" that originated this war party. Jefferson had supposed that a navy caused more dangers than it prevented or corrected, but it was at last to be demonstrated that the Nation was suffering intolerable outrages because it had no navy with which to resent them. John C. Calhoun and Henry Clay, the leaders of the new war party, saw that American forbearance encouraged while American embargos provoked increased aggressions. It is manifest now beyond dispute, as it should have been manifest then, that if one ship of the line had been afloat in New York harbor there would have been no blockading squadron off Sandy Hook to take American seamen from American ships in American waters.

With the rise of the war party the end of the humiliation of the American people came into view, though it was at long range. The discussion in the Congress that met at the end of 1811 is most instructive. Congress by a working majority was determined to fight rather than submit longer, but, so far as the record shows, not a single word was said in any of the discussions of measures of preparations for war, to indicate that any member believed that our navy could accomplish anything on the high seas. The vessels in the British navy, in that year,

numbered 1,042, of which 254 were ships of the line, and 282 were frigates or razees. There were 101 of this great fleet already on the American station. The American navy numbered 17 ships, of which not one was a battleship. The British had more than 27,000 naval guns where we had 442.

With that mighty sea power staring them in the face, Congress turned to the land. Clay said that "the Nation could act with unquestionable success" there. The British were to be swept "from the continent" by a host of volunteers and militia who would dash across "Canada" with "the impetuosity of Niagara." The only fighting afloat was to be that of "private enterprise"—the privateer. It was with the utmost difficulty that means were secured for fitting out such ships as we had, and when they were fitted out the faint-hearted Madison and his Cabinet determined to keep the ships in port where the militia and volunteers could fully protect them.

The last act of "peaceable coercion" by self-strangulation was passed by Congress on March 1, 1809, and amended in June. It provided that for a specified period no trade should be carried on between the United States and either England or France. It was provided also that in case either party to the offensive measures should relent, after the expiration of the limit, the embargo should be revived against the unrelenting power. By deliberate falsehood Napoleon led the Administration, Madison being then President, to believe that his decrees had been revoked, and Madison proclaimed that commerce with Great Britain must cease on February 2, 1811.

In answer to this a British squadron once more appeared off New York, and the President, driven on by the war party, ordered an American squadron to sea to protect the flag. The time when the American people would find themselves was at hand.

IV

LEARNING THE ART OF NAVAL WARFARE

BEFORE describing the work of the navy in the War of 1812 it is important to tell how it happened that we had a navy after Jefferson had declared in his second annual message a wish to build a dock at Washington "within which our present vessels may be laid up dry and under cover from the sun." Fortunately for the navy, and therefore most fortunately for the country, the Barbary pirates began to make trouble. The Bashaw of Tripoli learned that the tribute paid him amounted to but little if any more than what was given to a minister of the court of Tunis, the minister having received \$40,000, "besides presents." As the American representative at Tripoli was unable to increase the tribute, war was declared against the United States on May 14, 1801. The Bey of Tunis, being not satisfied with the tribute paid him according to treaty, demanded 10,000 stand of arms at about this time under penalty of war. In May, 1800, the American warship *George Washington* arrived in Algiers with the annual tribute. When the tribute had been delivered, the dey ordered the *Washington*, as the ship of a vassal nation, to carry his tribute to the Sultan of Turkey, of whom he was a vassal, and the *Washington* was obliged to do it. And she was obliged to fly the Algerine flag above the American while on the voyage.

The historians of the Nation excuse the American payments of tribute by pleading poverty first, and then noting

that all the Powers of Europe paid tribute to the Barbary pirates. It is therefore necessary to observe that the great Powers of Europe paid tribute because by encouraging the pirates to destroy the commerce of weak nations the commerce of the strong was able to flourish all the more. An English consul made peace between Portugal and Algiers, as already noted, in order to enable the Algerine corsairs to get at the American merchantmen. But the Americans paid tribute because they thought that would be cheaper than fighting. It is a memorable matter because well-meaning people even now are heard to argue that it would be cheaper to submit to foreign aggression than to build battleships.

The Tripolitans having declared war, it was necessary to send a squadron to the Mediterranean or else abandon all commerce in that region, for there was no way of applying "peaceable coercion" to the bashaw. Fifteen of the vessels that had been employed in the war with France had been retained in the navy, and of these the frigates *President*, *Philadelphia*, and *Essex*, and the schooner *Enterprise*, were sent to overawe the pirates. Two Tripolitan corsairs were found at Gibraltar and effectually blockaded there. On August 1, 1801, the *Enterprise* fell in with the corsair *Tripoli*. The pirate fought such a desperate battle that it was only after he had lost twenty men killed and thirty wounded out of a crew of eighty that he surrendered. For gallant conduct in this battle Lieutenant Sterett, commanding the *Enterprise*, was so highly praised by the people of his country that Congress felt obliged to vote him a sword.

When it came to an attack upon Tripoli, however, it was found that the ships lacked the necessary force. We had no ships of the line, and nothing could be done beyond maintaining a blockade. Moreover the frigates were of too

deep draught for such work, and as the pirates could not be left free without the destruction of all American commerce in that sea, Congress was induced to build two brigs, the *Siren* and *Argus*, that mounted sixteen 24-pounder carronades and two long 12-pounders, and the schooners *Nautilus* and *Vixen*, mounting twelve 18-pound carronades and two long 6's. This was done in 1803. In the course of this year (October 30) the frigate *Philadelphia* was lost. Under Capt. William Bainbridge she was chasing a corsair among the reefs off Tripoli when she ran aground and could not be extricated. Here the Tripolitans boarded her, making her entire crew of 315 men, all told, prisoners. She was then floated and moored in the harbor close under the guns of the forts. A court-martial decided that "Capt. William Bainbridge acted with fortitude and conduct in the loss of his ship . . . and that no degree of censure should attach itself to him."

A fine ship was lost from our little navy and her crew were enslaved. It was an appalling accident, but it gave some men of the navy opportunity for a deed that strengthened the grip of all naval men upon the hearts of their countrymen. In December Bainbridge sent a message to the blockading squadron suggesting that an expedition be sent into the harbor to destroy the *Philadelphia*.

No more dangerous expedition, apparently, had ever been proposed to American seamen. The *Philadelphia* was moored within range of a hundred guns, and she was surrounded by well-armed and well-manned gunboats. Her crew far outnumbered any volunteer crew that could be sent against her. But when the matter was proposed in the blockading squadron there was instantly a strong competition among all the available officers for the honor of going in. Stephen Decatur, Jr., won. A little ketch had been captured. Under Decatur a crew that numbered

eighty men was selected from the host of volunteers. Among them were Lieut. James Lawrence and Midshipman Thomas Macdonough.

On the night of February 16, 1804, the little ketch appeared off Tripoli. She was piloted by a man who knew the harbor and talked the Tripolitan language. In her hold were quantities of combustibles and her crew were under such an order as that which inspired the men who stormed Stony Point under "Mad" Anthony Wayne—they were told to use cold steel only. Near midnight, as the ketch drifted slowly under the bows of the *Philadelphia*, a sentinel hailed her. The pilot replied that the ketch was a merchantman from Malta, and that, having lost her anchors in a gale, he wanted to make fast to the frigate until morning. Then he began to give a list of goods with which he said the ketch was loaded, and that proved so attractive to every barbarian within hearing that the desired permission was given. For with the exception of half a dozen men well disguised, the crew of the ketch were stowed well out of sight. Just then a breeze took the ketch aback, and she began drifting away; but Decatur, with not a tremor in his voice, sent two men in a yawl with a line to the frigate's fore chains. With a line to the frigate the crew of the ketch began hauling in and warping her to the frigate's side, but while yet far away a pirate, who was leaning out from a port, saw some of her crew that were in uniform, and began to shout:

"Americanos! Americanos!"

At that another pirate cut the rope that connected the ketch to the frigate, but before he had done this the American seamen had given a pull that brought their vessel alongside, and then, shouting "Boarders away!" Decatur leaped into the *Philadelphia's* rigging. Cutlasses in hand his men swarmed over the rail, and in through the ports.

On deck they formed in squads and charged fore and aft, hewing down all opposition. Not a word did they utter and the only sounds they made were the stroke and thud of steel, while the pirates fell to the deck or leaped in wild haste into the sea. Within ten minutes Decatur stood upon the quarter-deck, master for the moment of a frigate.

Then swiftly but not hurriedly the combustibles were passed up from the ketch, placed in nooks previously designated and fired. So thoroughly was the work done that the party that had been sent to the berth-deck with difficulty escaped the flames that had been kindled above. In twenty-five minutes from the moment when the ketch arrived Decatur returned to her, leaving the frigate doomed beyond hope. His crew had all escaped injury of every kind so far, but now new dangers surrounded them. The flames might at any moment reach the magazine and hurl the *Philadelphia* in fragments upon them, while every pirate gun within range was now aimed at them by the light of the flames they had kindled. The enemy's shot splashed water over them as if it were spray from a growing surf while they bent to their oars, and as time passed even the guns of the *Philadelphia*, heated by the fire, began to throw shot at them.

And yet in the midst of the infernal fire that roared about them that crew, seeing that their work was well done, ceased rowing and gave three cheers.

Not a man was lost in the expedition. Decatur was promoted to the rank of captain, and Congress gave him a sword.

A little later it was determined to try to destroy the shipping in the harbor of Tripoli by exploding a floating mine in the midst of the anchorage. The ketch with which Decatur had destroyed the *Philadelphia*, and which had been renamed the *Intrepid*, was loaded with a hundred

barrels of powder and an immense quantity of projectiles. Master Commandant Richard Somers was selected to command this expedition, and his lieutenant was Henry Longfellow, an uncle of the poet. With them went Midshipman Joseph Israel as a stowaway, and ten sailors selected from a host of volunteers.

On the night of September 4, 1804, when a misty fog hung low over the waters, Somers headed into the harbor. The men of the squadron watched while the little ketch faded slowly into the fog, and then waited in painful silence for signal or sound to tell what she was doing. Finally a light that was travelling in a waving line, as if a man were running along the deck with it, was seen where the ketch was supposed to be. It disappeared almost as soon as seen, but the next instant a mighty flame shot high in air, burning shells were hurled far through the night, followed by a heavy shock and a deafening roar. The ketch had grounded on a reef, and while held there was attacked by three gunboats. And when the pirates in overwhelming numbers came swarming over her rail, Somers fired the powder in her hold. He had declared that he would not be taken alive, and he kept his word.

These old tales of the navy are memorable chiefly because they show how the American sailors carried themselves, and how they were trained in the arts of war in the days when the Administration was anxious to build a dock at Washington in which to lay up all our naval vessels, "dry and under cover from the sun." It was the work of our navy that kept such ships as we had in condition for war. While the Administration frowned; while John Randolph, the leading orator of Congress, was saying that the mere sight of a marine made his gorge rise; in spite of the fact the bashaw received tribute amounting to \$60,000 when he finally made peace; the men of the navy fought

well and the people applauded their deeds. The brilliancy of the naval exploits is the only touch of light in our history of the period; but it is not to be forgotten that the mere fact that a naval force was thus needed demonstrated the absurdity of the idea that peace could be maintained by appeals to "interest."

Then as now the American people were long-suffering. Moreover they were deceived by their chosen representatives—as they are not now, thanks to an unmuzzled press. They believed that "interest" might yet induce the grasping Powers of Europe to yield to "peaceable coercion," and for years they made no complaint when the bearing that the gallant deeds done on the coast of Africa might have had on our growing troubles with Europe was deliberately ignored at Washington. Nevertheless the people were to be trusted then as now. When at last they learned the truth of the situation, though wholly unprepared for such a conflict, they silenced the whole Jeffersonian coterie and drove even the timid Madison to war.

IMPORTANT SEA BATTLES OF THE
WAR OF 1812

WAR was declared on June 18, 1812. The call to arms found the navy ready. One gropes for words with which to give adequate praise to the men of the American navy for their patriotism in remaining in the service under the multiplied indignities that were heaped upon them in the years immediately preceding the War of 1812. And they not only remained, but with all their power they strove to create some confidence in the service. Finding that the Administration had determined to keep the ships under the guns of the forts, Captains Bainbridge and Stewart went to the President, and with abundant remonstrances—by their manly presence as well—stiffened his limp backbone until he gave permission for a few ships to go to sea for one effort against the enemy.

So the *Constitution* got away, and on falling in with the British squadron off the New Jersey beach made the most inspiring race known to the history of the American coast. The superiority of the American ship and the resourcefulness of the American crew to this day give heart to every patriot. But when the President heard by how narrow a margin she had escaped, he sent an order post haste for the *Constitution* to remain in port “until further orders.”

The *Constitution* had made port in Boston, but brief was her stay there; for Capt. Isaac Hull foresaw that the story of his race with the British would make faint the heart



The *Constitution* escaping from a British squadron off the Capes of the Chesapeake, July, 1812.

of the President. He felt well assured that orders keeping him in port were on the way. He understood very well that if the *Constitution* were thereafter kept in port, all hope of the navy having a part in the war for the honor of the flag was gone. To avoid such disgraceful inaction, though he knew he might be shot if he failed, Hull sailed from port on August 2. And on August 19, just before two o'clock in the afternoon, the British frigate *Guerrière* was seen a-lee. The decisive naval battle of the War of 1812—the battle that was to determine whether or not the navy was to have a part in the war—was at hand.

Of the conflict that followed certain details claim especial mention. While the *Guerrière* began to shoot before her shot could possibly reach, Hull held his fire, even though the crew showed plainly their impatience, until within pistol range of the enemy. Then crouching till he split his knee breeches from waistband to buckle, he sprang erect and shouted:

“Now, boys, pour it into them!”

The broadside was like a single explosion. The crash of the shot piercing the timbers of the *Guerrière* came back like an echo. The gunners of the *Constitution* had aimed to avenge the wrongs of the 20,000 American seamen that had been impressed on board British warships, and every shot struck home. So plainly to be seen was the havoc wrought by that first broadside that Hull said with exultation:

“By ——, that vessel is ours.”

It was so. Fifteen minutes later the mizzen-mast of the *Guerrière* was shot away, and when the wreckage caught as a drag in the sea the *Constitution* forged ahead and raked her. The *Guerrière* had an Anglo-Saxon crew; they were full of pluck, of course, and Capt. James Richard Dacres, commanding, thought to board the *Constitution*, when at one time the two ships came together. But he

changed his mind when he saw the resolution of the men that gathered to repel him.

Then the *Constitution's* greater spread of canvas caused the ships to part, and a little later the remaining masts of the *Guerrière* fell over the rail, leaving her to roll the muzzles of her guns under water, a helpless hulk in the trough of the sea.

Out of a crew of 272 the *Guerrière* had lost 23 killed and 56 wounded. Thirty solid shot had pierced her at the water-line. In less than half an hour she had been utterly beaten and practically destroyed. She was burned later. The *Constitution* lost 7 killed and 7 wounded of a crew of 468, and when a few new braces and some other running gear had been rove off, she was as fit for battle as when the *Guerrière* was first seen.

The results of this battle ought never to be forgotten. The enemy had sneered at the *Constitution* as a "bunch of pineboards"; now they began to proclaim that she was "a seventy-four in disguise." They came to believe that the powder-monkeys of the *Constitution* were "the masters and mates of merchantmen." They measured the shot of the guns on the *Constitution* and found that the 24-pounders were a fraction of an inch greater in diameter than the 18-pounders on the *Guerrière*. They even made the foolish assertion that the *Constitution's* guns had been aimed by deserters from the British navy. But after a century devoted to the consideration of the battles of the War of 1812, both British and Americans can now see that the most important fact of that battle, as of several others of that war, was that the Americans were able to look clear-eyed through the sights of their guns. Neither the number nor the size of the cannon of the *Constitution* was of any particular moment in this battle. The fact that the *Guerrière* received thirty shots at or below the water-line,

and more elsewhere in the hull, proves that if the crews had changed ships the Americans would have won. The British crew was made up of impressed, ill-fed, and ill-trained seamen. The *Constitution* was manned by men of intelligence, who knew what they were fighting for, and they had taken kindly to the drill at great guns.

But the most important result of that battle was its effect upon the American people. The flames of the *Constitution's* guns burned away the prejudices and false doctrines that had been so carefully cultivated for more than ten years. Hull had been obliged to steal away to sea in "the awful stillness of a New-England Sabbath morning," because the Government was afraid to trust a naval crew beyond the protecting guns of forts. The idea of our naval ships being able to meet those of Great Britain had seemed too ludicrous for serious argument. The volunteers and the militia were to sweep the British flag from the continent. But the victory of the *Constitution* changed all that. And the surrender of Detroit to an inferior force of British soldiers at this time helped to emphasize the lesson. The battle of the *Constitution* and the *Guerrière* was the decisive battle of the war, because through it the American sailor received permission to fight for his flag, and because the victories won by our sailors saved the Nation from humiliating losses when peace was made. From the capture of the *Macedonian* in the sunlit seas south of Madeira to the crowing of the rooster in Macdonough's rigging under the evergreen slopes of the Adirondacks, every triumph of the "gridiron flag" was made possible by the victory of the *Constitution*. The *Constitution* saved the navy and the Nation.

The capture of the British frigate *Macedonian*, Capt. John Surman Carden, by the frigate *United States*, under Capt. Stephen Decatur (October 25, 1812), is of interest here chiefly because it emphasized the work already done

by the *Constitution*—it cultivated the good opinion the people were forming of the navy, and added to the feeling of chagrin among the enemy. It was particularly effective in these respects because the crew of the *Macedonian* had been well trained, according to their standards, though as a matter of fact the *Macedonian* had 104 killed and wounded whereas the *United States* had but 12. The hull of the *United States* was struck but three times, while the *Macedonian's* hull was struck by 100 solid shot, and so badly cut to pieces that it took two weeks to fit her for the passage to Long Island Sound, where she arrived eventually.

The story of the capture of the British frigate *Java*, Capt. Henry Lambert, by the *Constitution* under Capt. William Bainbridge (December 29, 1812), was much like the preceding actions in the matter of results. The *Java* was shot to pieces and the *Constitution* was but little injured. The *Constitution* lost 34 killed and wounded, the *Java* 161. The *Java* had to be burned; the *Constitution* was ready for another fight an hour after the battle ended.

In the meantime there had been a little battle between two sloops of war, the American *Wasp* and the British *Frolic*, on October 18, 1812. It is notable chiefly because the *Frolic* carried a heavier armament than the American ship (her guns threw 292 pounds of metal to the *Wasp's* 249). The two vessels met off the North Carolina coast at a time when a heavy sea was running. In fact the muzzles of the guns of both ships were occasionally submerged by the rolling of the vessels. But the *Wasp* ranged up within sixty yards of the *Frolic* and then the battle began. It was a matter of gunnery exclusively until the two came together. Then the Americans boarded the *Frolic*. They found but few of the Englishmen able to stand. She had lost 15 killed and 47 seriously wounded out of 110, while the Americans had lost but 5 killed and 5 wounded out of

138. The fighting had lasted twenty minutes. The Americans had fired their guns as their ship started to roll toward the enemy. The British had fired as their ship rolled away from the *Wasp*. So the American shot struck home in the hull of the *Frolic*, while the British shot flew high through the rigging of the *Wasp*. Unhappily, while the crew of the *Wasp* were repairing damages, a British ship of the line came into view and carried her and her prize to Bermuda. The *Wasp* was commanded by Master Commandant Jones; the *Frolic* by Capt. Thomas Whin Yates. This was the first naval action of the war where the force of the British was somewhat superior.

Off Demerara, on February 24, 1813, the sloop of war *Hornet*, Master Commandant James Lawrence, fell in with the British sloop-of-war *Peacock*, Capt. William Peake, and in exactly eleven minutes shot her to pieces so that she sank in spite of the most strenuous efforts to save her. She carried down three American sailors who were trying to keep her afloat. It is noted, too, that the fire of the Americans was rapid as well as accurate—so rapid that they had to dip up water and drench the guns in order to cool them off. The *Hornet* was not damaged in her hull, and but two slight injuries to her spars were sustained. The *Hornet* had 1 killed and 4 wounded out of a crew of 142, while the *Peacock* lost 5 killed and 33 wounded out of 130.

The stories of these battles, thus briefly told, show well the aggressive spirit of the American sailor after the prolonged ill usage to which he had been subjected by the warring Powers of Europe. They show, too, how the natural aptitude and the training of the American had made him superior to the average man behind the gun in the British navy. But the stories of the losses of two of our ships, now to be told, should prove equally interesting; that they are still more instructive is beyond dispute.

VI

SHIPS THAT WERE LOST

THE first ship lost was the frigate *Chesapeake*. She had been on a cruise beginning in December, 1812, and had returned to Boston on April 9, 1813. The term of enlistment of her crew had expired, and on reaching port there was a dispute between the captain and the men over the prize money due on account of five merchantmen that had been captured. Moreover Boston was swarming with crimps eager to ship men in various privateers that were fitting out there and at Salem. Therefore nearly all her crew left the ship; and when Capt. James Lawrence, who had been promoted for his gallantry while in command of the *Hornet*, came to fit her for sea, he was in hard straits for men. In consequence of this he shipped forty renegade Englishmen and an unstated number of Portuguese, one of whom soon brought a large proportion of the crew to a state of mutiny, which Lawrence quelled by a distribution of prize-money checks. Many of the Americans were green hands, but the chief weakness of the crew lay in the presence of the renegades and foreigners who numbered more than ten per cent of the whole crew.

Nevertheless Captain Lawrence was eager to get away to sea. The British frigate *Shannon*, Capt. P. B. V. Broke, was beating to and fro off the harbor, and Broke had sent in a challenge asking for a ship duel in any locality that Lawrence might appoint. In his eagerness to accept this challenge, Lawrence left his anchorage at noon on Tuesday,

June 1, 1813, and stood out to where the *Shannon* awaited him, although his final draught of men arrived just as he was leaving—the crew had never been drilled together so much as to cast loose and provide her guns, or even to make sail. A very large proportion of them had never been assigned to stations. With a few weeks in which to train his men, Lawrence would have made that crew, including renegades, work like a machine. The crew of the *Shannon* had been trained especially at great guns and target practice until they were perfect, even by the American standard.

Then when the *Chesapeake* had overhauled the waiting *Shannon*, and Lawrence had an opportunity to pass under the *Shannon's* stern and rake her, he deliberately refused this advantage and steered up alongside the enemy. How the fire of the *Shannon* proved superior; how Broke led boarders in person; how Lawrence was mortally wounded and was carried below saying, "Don't give up the ship!" how the untrained and unled crew of the American ship was then subdued, need not be told. The result was inevitable because of the lack of training of the American crew, and because Lawrence had refused to rake the enemy when he had the opportunity—that is to say, because of the chivalry of the American commander, which is a point to be considered further on. The chagrin which American writers have shown in connection with this battle is wholly needless.

After the long series of defeats which the British had suffered, including that wherein the better-armed *Frolic* was beaten to pieces by the *Wasp*, the elation of the British was natural. One is in no way surprised to find the story of this battle included in a popular English volume entitled "Deeds that Won the Empire." It did not win anything except the *Chesapeake*, but it was almost the only

battle afloat during that war to which an Englishman can refer without offering excuses.

The other ship that was lost, the story of which must be told here, was the *Essex*. Under Capt. David Porter, and with Midshipman David Glasgow Farragut on board, she sailed from the Delaware in October, 1812. She was under orders to join the *Constitution* and the *Hornet* in a cruise to the East Indies. But the *Constitution*, having captured the *Java*, was obliged to return home; the *Hornet* was driven from the Brazil coast by a line-of-battle ship, and the *Essex* was left without definite orders at a port in southern Brazil. In this condition of affairs Porter had the courage to sail to the Pacific on his own initiative. His work in destroying the British whaling fleet is a matter of small interest; the memorable matter is the battle in which the *Essex* was captured, together with the facts immediately preceding it.

Having heard that the British frigate *Phæbe*, with two sloops-of-war, was coming to capture him, Porter would have been fully justified in sailing for home by a route that would have been entirely safe. Instead of this he chose to seek the enemy. On this errand the *Essex* reached Valparaiso early in January, 1814. Early in the morning of the 8th, the British frigate *Phæbe*, Capt. James Hillyar, and the sloop-of-war *Cherub*, Captain Tucker, appeared off the port. A merchant seaman went off in a small boat and informed them that the *Essex* was in disorder because a dance had been given to the citizens of the town the night before, and because one watch (a third) of the crew were on shore leave.

On hearing this news Captain Hillyar reached into the harbor with the *Cherub* in company. Both of these crews were at quarters, and the *Phæbe* was steered alongside and within fifteen feet of the starboard rail of the *Essex*. Cap-

tain Hillyar intended to attack the *Essex* because he believed he had caught her unawares. In fact, his approach was an attack. But he found the *Essex* ready and waiting, and he made haste to retreat and anchor out of range.

Says Captain Mahan ("Admiral Farragut," p. 37): "Captain Hillyar afforded Porter full justification for opening fire." In resisting the attack which Hillyar had made Porter would not have been guilty of violating the neutrality of the port, and it was therefore not alone his privilege, it was his duty to fight. But, although he had grappnels at the yard-arms ready to secure the *Phæbe* alongside, and some of his men were at the guns eager to fire, while others were on the rail with cutlass in hand equally eager to board the enemy under cover of the smoke of the first broadside; although he had the *Phæbe* within his power, he let her go; and all that has ever been said in excuse of that act was that he "was the very pink of chivalry."

For a time the *Phæbe* and the *Cherub* blockaded the *Essex* in the port. Captain Hillyar refused to meet the *Essex* in a fair fight between the two frigates, a refusal which, if it did not show "chivalry," showed common sense. Then having learned that three other British frigates were coming in search of the *Essex*, Porter determined to leave port at the first opportunity.

In a stiff wind on March 28, 1814, the *Essex* parted her cable, and seeing that at the moment he had space to work out to windward of the *Phæbe*, Porter determined to put to sea. In this effort he was succeeding well when a puff carried away his maintopmast. At that he turned back toward the harbor. Farragut says that he should have squared away before the wind, fighting as he had to, until the damage was repaired, and then turned on the *Phæbe*. But Porter relied on a promise that Hillyar had made.

while lying at anchor, to respect the neutrality of Chili, and ran in close to the Chilian beach. At that Hillyar with flags flying from both his ships came down to the attack.

The *Essex* at this time carried forty 32-pounder carronades and six long 12-pounders. The *Phæbe* carried twenty-six long 18-pounders, one long 12-pounder, and one long 9-pounder, besides carronades. Being thus able to use fifteen long guns where the *Essex* could use but six, even if her six were all brought to one side, and having, moreover, 18-pounders, while the *Essex* had 12-pounders, Captain Hillyar determined to hold his ship at a range where the shot of his long guns would be entirely effective. This was also a display of common sense.

Finding the *Essex* at anchor the *Phæbe* sailed in astern of her, and at 3.54 o'clock opened fire. The *Cherub* took a position off the starboard bow of the *Essex* and for a brief interval also maintained a fire; but as she had only two small long guns, and was not disposed to get within range of carronades, her part of the battle was inconsiderable. It was a battle between the *Phæbe* and the *Essex* at a range that enabled the *Phæbe* to use fifteen long guns where the *Essex* had but six that would reach, and of these only three could be brought to bear. The first lieutenant of the *Phæbe* protested to Captain Hillyar that shooting the *Essex* to pieces from such a position of safety was sheer murder; but the captain replied that he was there to capture the *Essex*, and he would not risk closing in.

The defence was most desperate. Time and again Porter put springs on his cable to swing the *Essex* around so that he could use his six long guns against the enemy's fifteen long ones, but on each occasion the ropes were shot away. Then seeing that the *Phæbe* had anchored, and was firing as if at target practice, Porter slipped his cable.

He had but one sail left that he could control, for the gear of the rest had been cut by the shot.

Many of his guns were dismantled. His decks were slippery with blood in spite of sanding; a third of his crew had been shot down and disabled. The *Phæbe* at that moment had 289 fighting men on board, while the *Essex* had less than 150 able to handle a cutlass. But with his men—even those dying under the surgeon's knife—shouting "Don't give her up, Logan!" and "Hurrah for Liberty!" Porter headed for the *Phæbe*, determined to lead his men to her decks.

Hillyar had been trained in the school of Nelson—the school wherein it was taught that "No captain can do wrong if he places his ship alongside an enemy." But when he saw the *Essex* coming with her rags flapping in the air, he slipped his cable, brailed in his spanker, and fled from the cripple.

In the early days of the war the British sloop-of-war *Alert* was overhauled by the *Essex*, and when the crew of the little ship saw the American flag they cheered for joy at the thought of fighting an American frigate. When the *Constitution* was bearing down on the *Guerrière*, Captain Dacres at first refused to believe that the *Constitution* was an American ship, because, as he said, she came down too boldly for a ship manned by such people. But British opinion of American sea-fighters had changed somewhat in the months that had passed. The *Essex* was captured at last; but few stories of our history stir our pride as does that of this fight. And it is worth remembering that our first admiral served his country well in that battle.

For the good of the service it is necessary to point out that Porter and Lawrence made each a most serious error. Inspired by "chivalry," Lawrence refused to rake the *Shannon* when he had opportunity, while Porter, animated

by the same idea, allowed the *Phæbe* to escape from his grasp in the harbor of Valparaiso. Very likely the *Shannon* would have captured the *Chesapeake* even had Lawrence raked her, but it was a serious error to fail to take any advantage. In like manner the error of Porter cost him his ship, and many of his crew lost their lives and others endured untold suffering because of it. If any American naval officer is ever again guilty of such "chivalry," a courtmartial should inflict on him the just penalty for neglect of duty in the presence of the enemy. But when we consider the effect of these two battles upon the country, and its standing as a world Power, it appears that the "chivalry" was, perhaps, worth the price. For as already pointed out, the Nation had been dominated by the policy of "peaceable coercion" until the nations of Europe looked upon all Americans as contemptible cowards. We were fighting for "free trade and sailors' rights" (with "trade" placed before "rights") certainly; but we were also fighting to establish a character for the people. We had to demonstrate that we were not cowards whose sole motive in life was "interest." It appears that Lawrence lost his life in a determined effort to upbuild the character of his country, while Porter's work at Valparaiso was of the most brilliant in the annals of our navy.

There was one other feature of the battle of Valparaiso that needs special emphasis. When Porter wished to get alongside of the enemy he was unable to do so because his ship had not enough power to give her the needed speed. In modern days a naval officer is heard to say, here and there, that the popular demand for speed in American warships is a "craze," and that the quality most needed in a fighting ship is the ability "to stay in the battle line." Porter had plenty of guns with which to "stay in the battle line"; what troubled him was that he couldn't

get into the battle line. If, in our next war, we are to invite the enemy to come to our harbors to do the fighting, and, when there, to choose his range and time of fighting, then speed is a matter of no consequence. But the men of the navy who can be trusted to force the fighting in time of battle are a unit in demanding ships that will have power to reach the fighting line, and, when there, will have guns to demonstrate the truth of the words of Farragut: "The best protection against the enemy's fire is a well-directed fire from our own guns."

VII

SQUADRON BATTLES OF THE WAR OF 1812

THE battles of Lake Erie and Lake Champlain were among the most important of the war because victory in each case preserved the territory of the Nation from the invader. One cannot help recalling, over and again, the fact that Congress and the people, while utterly distrusting the navy, had looked to see the volunteers and militia sweep the British from Canada, and yet immediately after the war began Gen. William Hull (an uncle of Capt. Isaac Hull, who first made the *Constitution* famous) surrendered Detroit to an inferior force—a force, too, that had to cross the river, of course, to reach him. By this surrender the whole Northwest Territory, won by “Mad” Anthony Wayne at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, passed into the control of the British. It was a most depressing loss, and unhappily the control of Lake Erie went with it. To regain control of the lake was to recover the lost territory because at that time supplies for the British forces at Detroit could not be transported to them overland in sufficient quantities.

Accordingly Master Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry, who had been in command of a flotilla of useless gunboats at Newport, R. I., was ordered to report to Commodore Isaac Chauncey, commanding the Department of the Lakes, and take charge of such vessels as were building and already afloat on Lake Erie.

On March 27, 1813, Perry reached Presqu’ Isle, now

the city of Erie, Pa. He found two brigs building, one of which was named the *Lawrence*, after the ill-fated captain of the *Chesapeake*, while the other was named *Niagara*. Two gunboats and a schooner were also in hand. In due time Perry was able to add a brig, three schooners, and a sloop to this force—vessels that had been blockaded by the British in Niagara River, and were released when Fort Erie was evacuated. For a time the new vessels at Erie were blockaded by a British fleet maintained on the lake, but a dinner party took this fleet to Port Dover, and on August 4th Perry got his flagship and lighter vessels out of port, with guns mounted, and found himself so much superior in force that the British were obliged to retreat to Malden on the Detroit River, where a warship was on the stocks, which, when launched, was named the *Detroit*.

After some sailing about the lake and examination of the Detroit River, Perry and nine of his vessels went into Put-in-Bay, off Sandusky, on September 6th. The schooner *Ohio* had been sent to Erie for supplies. At a council of officers held there it was decided to sail over to Malden and attack the British there with small boats. The next morning the fleet sailed for this purpose, but as they were clearing the islands the British were seen under sail bound down the lake, the commander, Commodore Robert Heriot Barclay, having felt obliged to make a run to Long Point before he was ready, because his force was so short of supplies as to be hungry.

The British ships numbered six, measured 1,460 tons, and carried guns throwing 459 pounds of metal at a broadside. The American squadron numbered nine vessels, measuring 1,671 tons, and carried guns that threw 936 pounds of metal at a broadside. The British long guns were able to throw 195 pounds of metal at a broadside, while the American long guns threw 288 pounds. As each

side had as many men as were needed to handle the guns and rigging, it is apparent that the Americans were of decidedly superior force. This superiority was modified somewhat, however, by the fact that the *Detroit*, the British flagship, carried seventeen long guns, of which one was an 18-pounder and two were 24's, where the American flagship (the *Lawrence*) carried but two long 12-pounders. The *Lawrence* and the *Niagara* each carried eighteen 32-pound carronades, but the concentration of long guns on the British flagship was of great advantage while Perry's squadron was approaching, particularly as the wind was light. It should be stated, too, that the British commodore had fought under Nelson at Trafalgar, while Perry was a youth of twenty-seven years, who had to make up with aggressive enthusiasm what he lacked in experience.

That Perry possessed enough of this latter quality was manifested in an order given soon after the enemy had been sighted. For when his sailing master pointed out the fact that as the wind was then blowing, the British would have the weather gage, Perry replied:

“To windward or leeward they shall fight to-day.”

A shift of the wind, however, enabled Perry to attack as he pleased and he chose to advance in column with two little schooners ahead of the *Lawrence*. The enemy in line in close order awaited the attack, and as soon as the *Lawrence* was within range, the long guns were concentrated upon her.

It was by closing in thus, in spite of the enemy's long guns—by his “ready initiative” and “his instant acceptance of necessary risk, in standing down exposed to a raking cannonade to which he for a long time could not reply,” as Mahan says, that Perry showed his greatness as a squadron commander. The fighting that followed was most desperate, for Lieut. Jesse D. Elliott, commanding

the *Niagara*, deliberately lagged behind for an hour and by holding the vessels astern of him left the *Lawrence* with two small schooners to face the enemy. During that hour the crew of the *Lawrence* fought as few crews have ever done. For a time came when no one was left on deck to aim the guns but Perry and his first lieutenant, John J. Yarnall, while the men who loaded and handled the tackles had been shot down until Perry felt obliged to go to the hatch and call for the surgeon's aids to help with the guns. And when the gun thus manned had lost more men, and Perry was in such desperate need that he once more called down the hatch for help, his appeal was answered by wounded men who crawled up the ladder on their hands and knees, grasped the falls of the tackles, and in spite of wounds hauled out the gun that a last shot might be fired at the enemy.

And they did not fight in vain. The *Lawrence* was shot to pieces, it is true; but before her guns ceased to fire she had reduced the flagship of the enemy to a condition where Captain Barclay described it as a "perfect wreck," while the *Queen Charlotte*, the next in size among the British ships, was as badly injured.

After an hour's lagging Elliott made sail because "he realized that his commander-in-chief would be destroyed under his eyes, unless he went to his support, and that he himself would rest under the imputation of an inefficient spectator" (Mahan). But as he sailed down he kept a long way out of carronade range, and seeing this, Perry abandoned the *Lawrence*, and rowed away to the *Niagara*. Once there he sent Elliott to hasten on the other vessels astern, while he himself sailed the *Niagara* into the midst of the battered British squadron and with his fresh crew and guns quickly compelled them to surrender.

The spirit that found voice in the words in "To wind-

ward or leeward they shall fight to-day," was precisely what was needed in that campaign, and every campaign. The British fleet having been captured, Detroit and Michigan territory "fell back into the hands of the United States." The Indians deserted the British standard. The American army, under General Harrison, was transported to the Canadian shore and the British were utterly routed in the battle on the Thames River that followed. It was the navy that saved the Northwest Territory to the United States.

Of equal interest and greater importance was the battle of Lake Champlain, for the Nation was in greater peril. Napoleon had fallen. On March 31 of that year (1814) Wellington had marched into Paris. The victories in Europe had released the British armies there for service in America. The force that was concentrated in Lower Canada amounted to 18,000 men. A force of 11,000 men besides officers, and "a proportionate and most excellent train of artillery," was sent to invade the country by way of Champlain, the old Northern Gateway.

The character of the men in this army is worth recalling. Said Wellington, who had commanded but failed to restrain them in Europe: "It is impossible to describe to you the irregularities and outrages committed by the troops. . . . There is not an outrage of any description that has not been committed on a people who have uniformly received them as friends." And Napier in describing the sacking of Badajos by these veterans says: "Shameless rapacity, brutal intemperance, savage lust, cruelty and murder, shrieks and piteous lamentations, groans, shouts, imprecations, . . . resounded for two days and nights in the streets of Badajos."

These veterans, who as Napier says, "shamed the most ferocious barbarians of antiquity," were come to subjugate

the American people who had been driven to war by long years of oppression—an oppression made possible by the might of a great navy that was unopposed. Washington had already been captured, and its prominent buildings, including the National Library, had been burned. The Chesapeake was open to the enemy. The territory of Maine as far as the Penobscot had been occupied by the British. Another great British army was on the way to New Orleans. The two invasions were planned to hold so much of the territory of the United States as had been occupied in the East, and to add more in the north-east and the whole valley of the Mississippi in the West. Rarely has a battle been fought for so great a stake as that of Lake Champlain in the War of 1812. And yet as the British force, more than 11,000 strong, advanced toward Lake Champlain, the American Secretary of War ordered the general in command at Plattsburg to take the major part of the troops there to Sackett's Harbor for operations against Kingston, leaving 1,500 "effectives" under Brigadier-General Alexander Macomb to meet the British hosts that were advancing under Sir George Prevost.

But in the meantime Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough, who, as told, had taken part in the destruction of the *Philadelphia* in the harbor of Tripoli, had been sent to Lake Champlain to create a naval force for the defence of the Gateway.

When ready for battle this force included the ship-rigged corvette *Saratoga* of 734 tons, the brig *Eagle* of 500 tons (she was built in nineteen days), the schooner *Ticonderoga* of 350 tons, and the sloop *Preble* of 80 tons. There were also ten gunboats that were of no great use in the battle, making a flotilla of 2,244 tons that carried 86 guns able to throw 1,194 pounds of shot at a broadside of which 480 were from long guns and 714 from short.

To meet this the British provided a frigate of more than 1,200 tons, named the *Confiance*, the brig *Linnet* of 350 tons, the sloops *Chubb* and *Finch* of 112 and 110 tons respectively, besides 12 gunboats. In all there were 16 vessels of 2,402 tons, throwing 1,192 pounds of shot at a broadside, of which 660 pounds were from long guns and 532 from short. The advantage from the long guns was very greatly increased by the fact that the frigate carried 30 long 24-pounders in the broadside and another on a pivot. She also carried six short guns that were either 32-pounders or 42-pounders. The long gun broadside of the British frigate was but 96 pounds short of the entire long-gun broadside of the entire American fleet, and this lack was exactly made up by the long-gun broadside of the British brig *Linnet*, that carried 16 long 12-pounders eight in each broadside. This concentration of force is well understood in these modern days of battleships, and it was well enough understood by Capt. George Downie, a veteran of the British navy, commanding, to induce him to say that the *Confiance* was alone a match for the whole American squadron. And so she should have been, if properly handled.

Thomas Macdonough, when the British came to Lake Champlain, was thirty years old. The daring of youth was still in his heart, but it was "the intelligent forethought with which he provided for the chances of battle" that made him great. In the gorge where Lake Champlain lies the wind always comes from the north or the south. Macdonough saw that the British ships, being square-rigged, could not beat up from the Sorel River against a wind from the south; they would have to come with a fair wind.

With this fact in mind Macdonough placed his fleet in line from Crab Island northward into Plattsburg Bay.

The ships were so far within the bay that without entering it the enemy could not reach them.

Then he prepared for the exigencies of battle by causing each ship to put springs on her cable so that she could be turned to and fro even if the wind failed, and on the *Saratoga*, at least, he arranged anchors at bow and stern, with kedges off both bow and stern in such fashion that in case of need he could turn her clear around, regardless of sails or wind, and present a fresh battery to the enemy.

On September 6 Sir George Prevost, with his Wellington "Invincibles," came to the Saranac River. The American army there had been increased by volunteers and militia, but it still numbered only about one-third as many as the British force; and it was at best but a scrub army against the veterans from Badajos. Without the navy to support them they would have been swept away like the leaves of the mountains before an Adirondack gale. But with Macdonough's ships in the offing Sir George sat down and waited five days for Captain Downie and the British fleet.

Sunday, September 11, 1814, was a most beautiful day in the most delightful season of the Adirondack year. The warm sun was tempered by a northerly breeze that made mere existence a pleasure, and the forest-clad mountains were just beginning to show the colors of the autumn foliage. It was a day when the people of the region would naturally leave their homes to wander over the hills, and on this day without exception, save the sick and their nurses, every non-combatant in all that region did go out to the hilltops.

Never in the history of the region—not even in the days of Indian and Tory raids—was there a day of more intense anxiety than this beautiful Sabbath morning, for the northerly breeze was sure to bring the British fleet.

While the sailors on the ships thought most of defending the "gridiron flag," the militia, crouching behind the forts and within the stone walls of the old mill on the banks of the river, knew they were to fight for their homes and their wives and daughters. "They well knew that the men they were to face were very brave in battle, and very cruel in victory. They feared not for themselves; but in the hearts of the bravest and most careless there lurked a dull terror of what that day might bring upon those they loved."

Off the point of Cumberland head lay a Yankee cutter, well manned, and with its bow pointed toward the Yankee flagship—a lookout waiting for the enemy. And as eight o'clock drew nigh, the people on the hills saw its seamen bend to their oars and drive it with signals flying into the bay. The enemy were coming. The long roll of the drums called to quarters on the anchored squadron, and then the white new sails of the British frigate appeared over the lower parts of Cumberland head. Below the point the enemy came to the wind, and then, after a time spent in examining the American line, they stood in on the star-board tack—the British were able to choose whether or not they would close in on the Americans, and they chose to fight at as long range as possible, considering the depth of water, because of the number of long guns they carried. The little sloop *Chubb* led the line, followed by the brig *Linnet*. The frigate *Confiance* was next while the sloop *Finch* and the flock of gunboats came last.

As the enemy advanced, Macdonough, "who feared his foes not at all, and his God a great deal," knelt for a moment with his officers on the quarter-deck. Thereafter the men of the American squadron awaited in perfect silence while the enemy came on cheering in anticipation of victory, until a chance shot from the British brig *Linnet* came on board the *Saratoga*. A sailor on this ship "had obtained

by hook or by crook" a fighting cock of great repute in Plattsburg, and this shot knocked to pieces the coop in which the bird was confined. But, undismayed, the rooster flew into the rigging, flapped its wings with tremendous vigor and then crowed loud and long. At that the crew of the *Saratoga* whooped, laughed, shouted, and cheered. The rooster prepared them well for the fight.

Nevertheless the battle was at one time wellnigh lost. The British frigate anchored at a range of at least three hundred yards, where the short guns of the *Saratoga* would barely reach her, and she then fired a double-shotted broadside. Every one of those shot struck the hull of the *Saratoga*. A hundred men were knocked down, and forty of them were dead or wounded seriously. Then some of the long guns of the frigate were turned on the brig *Eagle*, on which the *Chubb* and *Linnet* were already firing. The *Chubb* was thrown out of it by one broadside from the *Eagle*, but the *Eagle* was in time driven from her anchorage to a shelter behind the *Saratoga*, leaving the *Linnet* free to take a place where she could rake the American flagship from stern forward. Under this cross and raking fire the guns of the *Saratoga* were disabled one after another until at last Macdonough found that he had not even one gun left on the side toward the enemy. The *Preble* had been driven from the line meantime, and the American gunboats had accomplished nothing. The supreme moment of the battle had come.

Leaving the disabled guns the crew of the *Saratoga* now manned the capstan and hove up the anchor. They then manned the lines to the kedges laid to wind her around, and in a brief interval had turned the fresh broadside to the enemy.

The captain of the *Confiance* had been shot down early in the battle, but she was handled by the executive officer

with perfect skill and bravery. Seeing the *Saratoga* turned, he strove to wind his ship. But she was unprovided with the needed kedges and the wind had fallen so that the sails were of no effect. She turned far enough to point her stern toward the *Saratoga*, and there she remained immovable while the American gunners raked her at will. Flesh and blood could not stand that long, her flag was hauled down, and then the guns of the *Saratoga* were turned on the *Linnet* until she, too, had to surrender.

As the battle was growing, the wind, as said, died down entirely, and the smoke of the guns arose in the still air until every ship was fogged from the view of the non-combatants who had flocked to the hills. Thereafter they gazed in silent awe, hearing the thunderous reports of the guns, but seeing only the faint glow of the flames through the growing cloud until the time came when the last shot was fired. The silence that followed was harder to bear even than the sounds of battle, for none could tell how the fight had gone. With bated breath they gazed while the smoke drifted from around the ships, revealing the tops of such spars as were yet standing. Then a wide-eyed patriot, standing on Cumberland head, saw that only the Stars and Stripes floated in the smoke-laden air, and with a shout that was heard all over the hill proclaimed the news of the Yankee triumph. A hundred throats about him took up the cry. It was echoed by a thousand voices from the hills across the bay and beyond the lake. The troops down in the valley of the Saranac took up the shout with such savage cries as were not to be misunderstood. They had withstood the onslaught that had been made upon them by Wellington's "Invincibles," and victory was now assured to them. Sir George Prevost, the commander of the British army, also heard, and "with extreme mortification," too, the "shout of victory from the American

works." To his mind the "farther prosecution of the service was become impracticable," and when night came on, thick and dark with an Adirondack storm, the British army fled.

The British gunboats escaped; the British ships were captured. The Americans lost 52 killed and wounded. The number of lost on the British side was concealed. The Americans found 270 killed and wounded on the captured ships. The British total loss was therefore certainly above 300. As showing the relative skill of the gunners it was found that the *Saratoga* had 55 shot holes in her hull and the British frigate 105. As Roosevelt says: "Macdonough in this battle won a higher fame than any other commander of the war. He had a decidedly superior force to contend with; and it was solely owing to his foresight and resource that we won the victory. His personal prowess had already been shown at the cost of the rovers of Tripoli, and in this action he helped to fight the guns as ably as the best sailor. His skill, seamanship, quick eye, readiness of resource, and indomitable pluck are beyond all praise. Down to the time of the Civil War he is the greatest figure in our naval history."

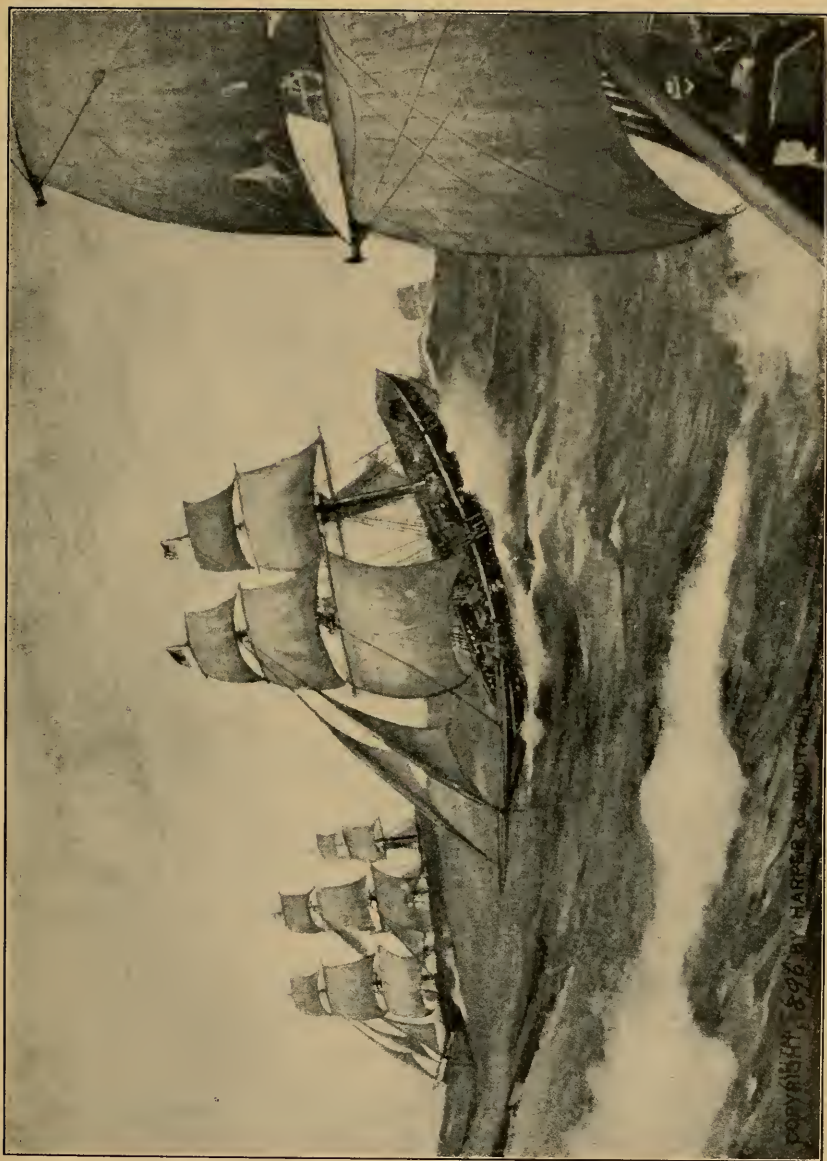
The battle of Lake Champlain was fought at an opportune time. The American Administration had been eager to make peace, and commissioners had been sent to Europe for that purpose, and they had been instructed to "omit any stipulation on the subject of impressment," if they thought it necessary to do so in order to obtain peace. The whole attitude of the Administration was one of supplication for peace. The British naturally reached out to claim the territory they already occupied in Maine as well as land that they expected to occupy. But when the story of the battle of Lake Champlain reached Europe, the British contention was dropped. The Battle of Lake Champlain preserved the integrity of the national domain.

Of the other battles of this war nothing need be said here because, while they were interesting as showing the ability of American sea-fighters (on occasion they showed also a degree of Yankee overconfidence), they had no particular influence on the result of the war.

But in connection with this war let it be said once more for the sake of emphasis that the theory of "peaceable coercion" was not based upon Christian principle—Jefferson distinctly disavowed what he called the "Quaker" theory—but it was based upon the supposition that men and nations were always more powerfully influenced by the profits of commerce than by ambition, national pride, love of home, race prejudice, or any other incentive. The love of money was to lead an aggressive nation "to do us justice" regardless of other circumstances. That England could or would find more profit—especially for the all-powerful officers of her navy—in looting our commerce—was something Congress did not foresee, and of which it refused to take cognizance when the fact was manifest.

Holding this view Congress necessarily believed that in hastening the growth of the Nation's material wealth it was increasing its power for "peaceable coercion." The more commerce we had to withdraw the more anxious nations would be to do us justice. How the growth of our commerce was cultivating the jealous hatred of the rival ship merchants of England to a point where they were eager for aggressions that would wipe our ships from the sea, was not appreciated.

Looking to the increase of national wealth as the sole element of national greatness the first ambition of Congress was to extinguish the national debt. To this end work on the six battleships already authorized was stopped. Every effort was made to decrease the navy instead. The world was notified that we would not fight. It was openly



The privateer *Comet* overhauling three British vessels off Pernambuco in January, 1813.

and often asserted that it was good policy to endure the outrages upon the flag so long as such endurance enabled us to save money for the reduction of the national debt, and the increase of private fortunes.

By holding up the greed of money as the Nation's ideal of inspiration, the public debt was reduced from \$83,038,051 to \$45,209,738. But a time came when the American people were held in hearty contempt by all other peoples of the earth, and 20,000 American seamen were serving as slaves on British warships. The degradation of the Nation could then go no further. The efforts to avoid war had brought on a condition where the people were absolutely compelled to fight. Then the debt of the Nation quickly arose to more than \$127,000,000. Worse yet, uncounted other millions were destroyed by the ravages of invaders that our theory of "coast defence" invited to our shores. For even when we were at last "kicked" into fighting, we could not wage war upon the enemy's coasts because we had no adequate navy. Long years were to elapse before any one would teach us that the only rational system of defence is an aggressive war.

But if it was a needless war it proved to be worth its cost in the end. Since the guns of the *Constitution* splintered the wooden walls of the *Guerrière* no American has ever flinched at the sight of a foreign warship—no Congressman has ever dared insult his people by asserting that "the idea of our meeting Great Britain on the ocean is too ludicrous to be repelled by serious argument." Moreover it was necessary that the theory of "peaceable coercion" should have full trial, that its absurdity and the detestable ideal upon which it was based might be fully exposed. We lost much, but we obtained peace with honor, and we did it in such fashion upon the sea as to compel all nations to respect the "gridiron flag," even through a civil war.

VIII

DEVELOPMENT OF SHIPS AND GUNS IN THE OLD NAVY

AFTER the War of 1812 the navy saw little real fighting until the Civil War. There was an expedition to the Mediterranean on account of trouble with Algiers, but the presence of the American fleet inclined the barbarian to peace after two of his warships had been captured. Then while the Spanish-Americans were fighting for freedom from Spanish rule the waters of the West Indies became infested with pirates. Fifteen small vessels, including one steamer called the *Sea Gull*, were added to the navy for use in hunting these pirates. It was most thankless work. Moreover a fourth of all the men who were on the station at one time died of the yellow fever. It was not until 1826, when the independence of the Spanish-Americans had been fully attained, that the trouble ended. As for the War with Mexico, the navy lost its only opportunity for real distinction when the commanding officer in the Gulf failed to attack and capture the castle at Vera Cruz. The most interesting feature of our naval history in the period between 1815 and 1861 is the story of the development of the ships and guns.

The naval battles of the War of 1812 were fought between ships of the sail, but a battle between a steamer and a fleet of blockaders was missed by only a narrow margin of time. The fact that the British with their preponderance of sea forces were able to blockade the Atlantic coast

of the United States at will, and the further fact that New York suffered continually, led to the building of the first steam warship in any navy. Late in 1813 Robert Fulton, who had as early as 1807 demonstrated the commercial success of steam navigation in the merchant marine, proposed to build a steam warship, and Congress, on March 9, 1814, authorized the construction of "one or more floating batteries," fit to "destroy any of the ships of the enemy that may approach the shores or enter the waters of the United States."

Considering the state of the mechanical arts a very good battleship was built, for she had timber walls so thick that no gun could penetrate them; a single paddle wheel concealed within the hull that drove her at five and one-half knots an hour, and she had a battery that was fit for a fight with a squadron. Fulton named her the *Demologos*, but she is known to the navy list as *Fulton the First*.

Unhappily for the development of naval power this steamer was not completed in time to take any part in the war; and after having been kept as a receiving ship at the Brooklyn navy yard until July 4, 1829, she was destroyed by the explosion of her magazine.

That no other steamers were built for the navy in the years immediately following the War of 1812 is explained in part by the conservatism of the naval men, and in part by the confidence in the ships of the sail which the battles of that war had created among the people of the Nation. The men of the navy loved their ships—particularly those that, like the *Constitution*, had done good service—with an affection that no landsman can comprehend. They asked for no higher opportunity for glory than to command one of them in a battle with an enemy. Accordingly battleships of eighty guns or more, and a few frigates were launched at intervals—three battleships were sent afloat

in 1820, for instance, and as late as 1848 the old *Vermont* was added to the navy.

The use that was made of the little 100-ton steamer *Sea Gull* by Commodore Porter in the pirate war did not change the prevailing opinion in the matter of steamers, though Porter was one of the unusually progressive men who saw the advantages that steam would give to a fighting ship, and it was he that commanded the *Fulton the First* in her trial trips.

However, in 1835, Secretary of the Navy Mahlon Dickerson observed that an act of Congress in the year 1816, long forgotten by most men, authorized the construction of a steam warship, and he wrote to the Board of Naval Commissioners requesting them to begin work on such a vessel immediately. On May 18, 1837, the hull for this steamer was launched at the Brooklyn navy yard. Then engines were installed that developed 625 horse-power and drove her at a sustained speed of twelve knots an hour. When tested in a race with the British transatlantic steamer *Great Western*, the new warship won. This, properly speaking, was the first ship of the steam navy of the United States. That is to say, because of the success attained in her the naval list has contained steamers ever since. Moreover new classes of men were added to the *personnel* of the navy—the engineers and firemen. Capt. Matthew C. Perry, a brother of the hero of Lake Erie, superintended the building of this ship, and he also hired, and arranged for the standing, of the engine-room force among the other officers and men of her crew. Mr. Charles H. Haswell, of New York, was her chief engineer, and the first engineer of our steam navy.

Then Congress, by the act of March 3, 1839, authorized “the construction of three steam vessels-of-war, on models that shall be most approved.” The side-wheel steamers

Mississippi and *Missouri*, sister ships, each displacing 3,220 tons, were constructed under this act. They were completed in 1842. The *Missouri* was destroyed by an accidental fire at Gibraltar on August 26, 1843. The *Mississippi* had a long and brilliant career. She was the flagship of the naval forces in the Gulf of Mexico during the war with Mexico, and she was Capt. M. C. Perry's flagship when he was negotiating his famous treaty with Japan. But like the *Missouri* she was at last destroyed by fire, though it was in battle—when with Farragut she was trying to pass the Confederate batteries at Port Hudson, on the Mississippi River.

In the meantime the screw propeller had begun to work as great a revolution in warships as steam was working in the old methods of driving such vessels. John Ericsson had tried a screw-driven steamer on the Thames River, England, but the Lords of Admiralty who saw it were convinced that even if a large ship could be driven by such a contrivance, the rudder would not steer her. Then Ericsson came to America, under the influence of Capt. Robert F. Stockton, of the navy, and here the steam sloop-of-war *Princeton*, with a screw propeller instead of paddle wheels, and with her engines entirely below the water-line, was built after his plans. This was the first screw warship ever built, as the *Fulton the First* was the first steam warship.

But while our navy thus led the way in the evolution of the modern ship nothing was done toward the evolution of a navy, properly speaking. The development of a *personnel* for the coming steam navy—a matter of more importance than the building of ships—was apparently unthought of. The Mexican war had no influence on the development of steam warships; for Mexico had no navy, and sailing ships with such few steamers as we had, and were able to improvise, served well enough.

To Congress and the people the navy seemed to be of ample strength, and it was therefore neglected. But in the meantime the British Government was unceasingly reaching out for more possessions on the American continent. The Mosquito Territory in Nicaragua was claimed as a part of British Honduras. The weakness of our navy made any assertion of the Monroe Doctrine absurd in European eyes. The discovery of gold in California, and the consequent enormous increase of trade and travel across the narrow parts of the continent, developed a rivalry of interests in Central America to a degree that threatened war. San Juan del Norte, Nicaragua (called Greytown by the British), on the San Juan River, was occupied by British forces. Tigre Island, in the Gulf of Fonseca, Honduras, a point that commanded the Pacific end of a proposed canal, was seized on the pretence that Honduras had refused to pay a debt. British warships were always found where needed to enforce British pretensions. The need of an American navy, able not only for harbor defence but for the protection of American interests, at least as far away as the coasts of Nicaragua, was apparent.

In consequence of this need Congress, by the act of April 6, 1854, provided for the construction, "at as early a day as practical," of "six first-class steam frigates, to be provided with screw propellers, and armed and equipped for service." There was an ominous sound in the last sentence quoted, for "service" meant "war." Later five steam sloops were ordered in much the same terms, and then, as the trouble was not settled, seven more steam sloops were provided for, "which ships shall combine the heaviest armament and greatest speed compatible with their character and tonnage."

The discussions in Congress, particularly that in the Senate on March 3, 1856, show that these warships were



The *Mississippi* going to the relief of the *Hunter* in a storm off Vera Cruz, in the War with Mexico.

ordered because war was impending, and that war impended because we did not have an adequate navy.

The ships were built "at as early a day as practical"; they were armed with the best guns in the world, and (when ready) they were the ablest fighting ships in the world. Because of the building of these most efficient ships the war was avoided.

Before describing these new frigates and sloops the story of the navy gun must be told.

We fought the War of 1812 with ships that carried for their most effective guns a smooth-bore cannon with a bore between five and six inches in diameter, throwing a spherical cast-iron ball that weighed twenty-four pounds. The use of a 24-pounder on a frigate was a distinct advance in efficiency on the practice of the day. After the war we substituted 32-pounders—guns with a bore six inches, or a trifle more, in diameter—for the 24-pounders, and even our smallest sloops-of-war carried guns of this calibre. Ships-of-the-line were armed with 42-pounders, but these were not strikingly more efficient than the 32-pounders.

In 1837 the French adopted a gun that threw a shell 22 centimetres (8.7 inches) in diameter in place of solid shot. Mortars throwing shells had been in use for many years, but these guns threw shells horizontally. The use of shell guns then spread to the British navy, and an 8-inch gun that weighed from 53 hundred-weight to 65 hundred-weight became very popular, while a 10-inch gun of 82 hundred-weight was introduced later. Following this lead an 8-inch gun was introduced into the American navy in 1841, but the 32-pounder remained the chief reliance of the service even when, some time later, a 10-inch gun, on the British pattern, was made. But happily for the peace of the country, the first real improvement in guns was made during the years when the need of superior weapons

for the preservation of peace became indisputably apparent.

Beginning in 1841 Col. George Bomford sought to determine the rending power of the powder in a cannon by boring holes through the metal at intervals from muzzle to breech and placing pistol balls in these holes as made. The force with which each pistol ball was expelled, when the cannon was fired, was measured by half-inch boards secured within range of the ball. Having learned by this method and an improvement on it the force of the powder gases at many points in the bore, it was assumed that the thickness of the gun metal at that point should be in proportion to this power. But no guns were designed on that theory until 1850, when Lieut. John A. Dahlgren submitted plans (January 9th) for one that was immediately cast. It had a calibre of nine inches. An 11-inch gun was ordered on April 30, 1851.

The 9-inch gun, made on this symmetrical model, used a solid shot weighing 90 pounds or a shell weighing 74 pounds, with a powder charge of 13 pounds. The initial velocity of the shell was 1,320 feet per second and the muzzle energy was 847 foot-tons. The gun weighed 9,000 pounds. To this the carriage added 1,300 pounds, and it was supposed by the conservative naval men of the world that 10,300 pounds was too great a weight for a gun's crew to handle. But it was found when the guns had been in use for a time that even the 11-inch gun that weighed 16,000 pounds and fired a shot weighing 166 pounds, and a shell of 136, was not too much for the strength of our naval men.

A type of the frigates that were built during the days of impending trouble with England was the *Merrimac*. When completed (1856) she was sent over to England, and was examined by the naval officers at Southampton. They found her (as described by Sir Howard Douglas) a

ship of 3,197 tons, "pierced for sixty guns," though carrying but forty. The forty included two 10-inch pivot guns, sixteen 8-inch shell guns of the old American pattern, and twenty-four 9-inch Dahlgrens. The *Merrimac* was at that moment the most formidable ship in Europe. The next year the *Niagara*, a much larger ship, appeared in the Thames, where "the beautiful lines of her dark hull showed to great vantage." She was fitted for a battery of twelve 11-inch Dahlgrens, and the British supposed these guns to have an effective range of 7,000 yards.

The type of the sloops built was the *Hartford*, a ship of 1,990 tons, carrying twenty-two 9-inch Dahlgrens in her broadside batteries.

In all four 40-gun frigates that looked as if pierced for sixty guns, and fourteen smaller ships that were also armed with the Dahlgren guns, were constructed between 1854 and 1858. It was in the days when steam was considered an auxiliary power—they had full sail areas and could make from eight to twelve knots an hour only under steam. But for the purposes of war, either acting singly or in squadrons, they were the most efficient ships in the world. So we had peace.

IX

THE NAVAL WORK OF THE CIVIL WAR

THE features of the naval work of the Civil War which ought to receive some notice in this work, are the blockade of the Confederate ports; the occupation of Hatteras Island and Port Royal; the capture of New Orleans; the battle of the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*; the closing of the Mississippi River; the cruises of the Confederate commerce destroyers; and the battle of Mobile Bay.

It is a most memorable fact that while the Confederate authorities were, with splendid energy, reaching out for Pensacola, the forts on Charleston harbor and other National property within the borders of the seceding States, the National forces, and particularly the naval forces were under orders to "act strictly on the defensive." It was even feared that officers might "act on the defensive" with too much energy. Pensacola and its fine navy yard were surrendered to the Confederate troops (January 12, 1861), without resistance, lest a fight there should "precipitate a conflict," and bring on "all the horrors of war." Even Lincoln and his Cabinet were for a time uncertain what to do because of the feeling everywhere prevailing that when Americans were compelled to fight they ought always to act "on the defensive." The hardest lesson that the American people have to learn is that the best way of "acting on the defensive" is to make the most vigorous attack possible on the strongholds of the enemy. For if we fight like a terrapin the "horrors of war" are brought to our

own country; but if we fight like the eagle we carry the horrors of war to the territory of the enemy.

The first aggressive naval act of the Civil War was laid out when on April 19 and 27, 1861, proclamations were issued blockading the Confederate ports. In August an expedition under Flag Officer Stringham was sent south and on the 28th Fort Hatteras, on Hatteras Inlet, was captured. This was the first National naval victory of the war. In November Port Royal was occupied. The shoal waters of the coast from the Chesapeake to Savannah were thus brought more or less under the control of the National forces, and a base for the relief of the blockading squadron was obtained.

The Confederate coast had, all told, 185 harbor and river openings. In fine weather goods could be landed from shoal-draught ships at almost any point on the entire coast, and many cargoes were landed, during the war where no harbor existed. The continental line from Alexandria, Va., to Mattamoras, Mexico, was 3,549 miles long. The shore line, including bays and sounds, was 6,789 miles long, and the entire beach line, including islands, was 11,953 miles long.

To guard this extent of beach line the National Government had just three ships when the blockading proclamation was issued. There were in commission twenty-six steamers and sixteen sailing ships, but all save the three were scattered where they could not be made immediately available; and no one at that time knew how many would be needed. In all 600 vessels, nearly all of which were steamers, were finally in use, and the crews of our merchant ships and fishing smacks supplied an able host for manning them. The merchant fleets of Europe that had been running to Southern ports and European manufacturers that had obtained their cotton, tobacco, and naval

stores from the Southern States, were suddenly thrown out of employment by this blockade.

The price of a bale of cotton rose to a point where, if it were smuggled through the lines, it could be sold at a profit of \$250 above all expenses. The arms, medicines, and food that the Confederates soon needed paid equally large profits to successful blockade runners.

The blockade runners were nearly all English. At first goods for the Confederates were shipped to the Bermudas, the Bahamas, or to Havana, in order to make them safe that far on their journey, but the courts held that the ultimate destination of cargoes determined their character, and then the goods were nominally sold to merchants in the ports mentioned. Men on barren coral reefs began importing shiploads of military supplies, if one could believe the papers on ships trading to these reefs. Of course the papers were a mere blind; every blockade runner found perjury easy. But it must be remembered that the pilots of the blockade runners were usually Confederate citizens, and believed they were engaged in a righteous war. The foreigners were an infamous gang ready to sacrifice honor and risk lives for gain, while the pilots were running risks for principle.

Swift vessels were in demand from the first. Steamers of the lightest frames and most powerful engines were built for the trade. These were loaded to the last gasp and then sent toward the Confederate port. Every sail and every smoke seen were avoided when possible and the runner was so handled that she arrived off her destined port at night. The lone light always displayed on the flagship of the blockading squadron was as good as a lighthouse to the enterprising skipper and the runner was driven through the line or around its end as seemed most convenient.

The captain of a blockade runner commonly received \$5,000 for a round trip, the mate and the engineer \$1,000 each, while the deck hand got \$40. The *Banshee*, a noted runner, received \$250 per ton freight in her first voyage.

A record of 425 runs from Nassau showed sixty-two failures only. Between March 1, 1864, and January 1, 1865, the Confederate authorities shipped out cotton that sold for \$5,296,000, and imported 1,507,000 pounds of lead, 1,933,000 pounds of saltpetre, and 8,632,000 pounds of meat—a most significant item, that, for it shows that the Confederacy was starving to death. While some few blockade runners were able to ply with almost packet-like regularity, they were vessels of small capacity, and with all their success they were able to supply but a small fraction of the needs of the beleaguered people. The stories told by blockade runners prove the efficiency of the blockade. Moreover more than a thousand runners were captured.

Of the blockade as seen from the National ships it may be said, that to lie, month after month, doing nothing but keep a bright lookout was trying to the soul. Food spoiled. The water was never fresh. The heat of the stoke hole varied from 110° to 150°. Many vessels were built by contractors who were thieves at heart, and were constantly out of repair. The opportunities to incur disgrace through the escape of a runner were abundant; the opportunities to win renown were almost wholly lacking. It is impossible to do justice to the men who served faithfully on the blockade.

The action of the war that was most important was the capture of New Orleans, because the success there attained saved the Nation from foreign intervention. The expedition was suggested to the Navy Department by Lieutenant David D. Porter, late in 1861. Capt. David Glasgow Farragut was assigned to the command, and on February

20, 1862, he arrived at Ship Island, the rendezvous of the West Gulf Blockading Squadron, in the sloop *Hartford*, which had been given him for a flagship. A fleet that included five steamers approximately equal to the *Hartford* (which now carried twenty-four guns), three that carried from seven to ten guns and nine gunboats of two guns each assembled in the lower reaches of the river, together with a flotilla of twenty schooners that carried a big mortar each and four gunboats to guard and handle them.

Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip guarded the river, and 109 guns were found in the two. Moreover a raft or boom had been built across the river at Fort Jackson to hold any ships trying to run up the river. A British warship that was in the river steamed up for a look at the raft, and after it had returned to the National fleet its officers persistently volunteered their opinion that no fleet in the world could pass the forts.

It was then that the greatness of Farragut as a naval commander first became conspicuous. His orders said distinctly: "You will proceed up the Mississippi and reduce the defences which guard the approaches to New Orleans." In obedience to this part of his orders he placed the mortar fleet in position, and for three days the mortars spouted useless shells at the forts. Then Farragut called a council of his officers, not to ask them if it were expedient to try to pass the forts, but to learn if they could suggest any improvements on his plans for doing so. More than half the captains believed passing the forts impossible, but Farragut had the firmness to persist. The little gunboat *Itaska*, Lieut. C. H. B. Caldwell commanding, broke the boom, and then, early in the morning of April 24, 1862, the fleet steamed up and passed the forts easily. The converted merchantman *Varuna* was sunk by the

Confederate converted merchantman *Moore*, Capt. Beverly Kennon (a most capable officer), but the National losses were unimportant, while all the Confederate defences, afloat or ashore, were rendered worthless. For, as Farragut had foreseen, the position of the forts and of an ironclad floating battery that was moored at Fort St. Philip, was rendered untenable after the fleet passed up, because the Mississippi was the only route by which the Confederates could send down supplies.

A word concerning the defences of the river is worth while. There were 109 guns in the forts, but of these fifty-six were old 24-pounders. Because the fighting men of the region had been eager for battle, they had nearly all gone to the fighting line at the north side of the Confederacy, leaving the forts to be garrisoned to a large extent by foreigners. The junior officers of the forts were young and inexperienced. But the worst feature of the defences was found afloat. A floating dry-dock had been converted into an ironclad floating battery, but its engines were worthless simply because there was a lack of good mechanics in the South. A huge ironclad scow, called the *Mississippi*, was in hand. It was designed and built by planters. Some of the ablest officers of the old navy had joined the Confederate forces, but the Confederate Government had placed them in the army; or had sent them cruising after American merchantmen, the destruction of which could have no influence on the result of the war; or at best had put them at work on makeshift ships in the swamps, here and there, with second-hand machinery and other materials of like character to work with. If the two ironclads at New Orleans had been built by the naval officers whose energies were wasted, and with materials that might have been concentrated there, Farragut would have failed. What that failure would have meant to the Confederacy may be

learned by a consideration of the results of Farragut's victory.

For Napoleon III of France had been urgent in his efforts to induce England to unite with him and end the war. On April 18, the day that Farragut's mortars began bombarding Fort Jackson, Napoleon had a conference with a member of the British Parliament, with a view to arranging for intervention. The Emperor knew, however, that the National fleet was in the Mississippi, and he thought it better to postpone urgent action until he had learned the result of the expedition. And when he heard of Farragut's success the matter of intervention was postponed still further, and then abandoned altogether. By ignoring a part of his orders—that is to say, by obeying the ultimate intention of his orders and ignoring one of the details therein, Farragut won a decisive victory.

After the flag once more floated over New Orleans, Farragut was sent up the Mississippi with his huge sea-going ships to blockade the river. At Washington it was supposed that the navy could thus complete an anaconda-like coil around the Confederacy and strangle it. But as no force was sent along with which to hold the towns occupied, the expedition was like a stroke in the fog. And at Vicksburg the Confederate batteries were on bluffs 200 feet high—far above the guns of any naval ship. It was only when the army and navy could unite their efforts, as was done in 1863, that the great work of controlling such a navigable water-course could be accomplished.

The occupation of such points as Hatteras Inlet, Port Royal, and New Orleans was in a way an extension of the blockade. A port occupied was a port effectually closed. It was also a part of the territory of the Nation restored to the control of the flag, and a very large part of the navy's work was made up of this extension of the blockade. Nat-

urally the energies of the Confederate naval authorities were constantly employed in efforts to lift the blockade, and the most notable of these efforts proved to be in its ultimate results, the most important ship duel known to naval history.

On April 21, 1861, the Norfolk Navy Yard, through the weakness and lack of decision of the Federal authorities, fell into the Confederate hands. The Confederates thus obtained 2,000 cannon, a fine dry-dock, and the forty-gun frigate *Merrimac*, the sight of which in an English port at an opportune moment had helped to preserve peace. The upper part of the hull had been burned off, and she had sunk at her moorings; but the machinery was not much injured nor was the hull strained. As the pressure of the blockade was felt, and the Confederate looked around for relief, they thought of the hulk of the *Merrimac* at Norfolk. But it was as an ironclad floating battery, not as a steam frigate, they restored her to service. Iron armor had already been used in Europe. The French had a frigate with iron armor called the *Gloire*; the British had a *Warrior*. Both of those ships carried sails, as well as steam, and were of the old frigate model. But when the Confederates had placed the *Merrimac* in dock they decked her over and then built on the deck a casemate with timber walls two feet thick, over which they placed two layers of two-inch iron plates. She was also provided with a ram. She was armed with six 9-inch Dahlgrens and four rifles, two of which were of 7-inch calibre and two of 6-inch. Work on her was begun in June, 1861. In March, 1862, she was ready for battle, and S. R. Mallory, Confederate Secretary of the Navy, planned "a dashing cruise on the Potomac as far as Washington." On March 8 the *Merrimac* steamed out of Norfolk for her trial trip. As she opened the broad waters of Hampton Roads the National

frigate *Congress* was seen over at Newport News, with the sloop-of-war *Cumberland* not far away. Nearer Fortress Monroe were the steam frigates *St. Lawrence*, *Roanoke*, and *Minnesota*. The *Merrimac* (she had been renamed the *Virginia* and ought to be called so) crossed over to the Newport News end of the Union line of ships, intending to begin there and destroy the entire squadron. Ignoring the harmless fire of the ships as she came within range, save only as she fired a few shot in return, the *Merrimac* rammed the *Cumberland*. The wound was mortal. But when the *Merrimac* demanded that she surrender, Lieut. George U. Morris, the senior officer present, having within him a spirit like that of John Paul Jones, replied, "Never! I'll sink alongside!" And the *Cumberland* went down with her flag flying, while her crew worked their guns until the rising water wet their feet.

The *Congress* was then run ashore where the *Merrimac* could not follow, but she was set on fire by hot shot and burned. Having accomplished this much, the *Merrimac* was obliged to return toward Norfolk and leave the other Federal ships for another day; for the ebb of the tide left the water too shoal for an attack on them. But as she steamed away it seemed to those who had seen her work, and to those, too, who had heard of it, that she carried within her iron-clad walls the fate of the Nation.

But as night came on and the flames of the *Congress* illuminated the waters of Hampton Roads, a new defender of the flag appeared. In August, 1861, Congress had authorized a commission of naval officers to consider any plans of iron-clad vessels that might be submitted to them. Among those submitted was one by John Ericsson, of New York, who had brought the screw propeller into use on warships. No sailor could have invented the *Monitor*. Ericsson began by designing a hull with rounded ends. It



The Confederate ironclad *Merrimac* ramming the *Cumberland*, Hampton Roads, March, 1862.

was 124 feet long 34 wide and 6 deep. On top of this he laid a great box, wedge-shaped at each end, and 172 feet long 41 wide and 5 deep. A single row of rivets united the two. This superstructure projected 3 feet 8 inches beyond the sides of the lower hull and 24 feet beyond each end. The combination was like a raft on a canoe. A revolving turret 9 feet high and 20 feet in diameter, inside measurements, was placed on the centre of the deck, and it revolved on a spindle turned by steam-engines. Two 11-inch Dahlgrens were mounted, side by side, in the turret and fired through ports cut in the wall, which was composed of eight 1-inch iron plates. The commission expressed the opinion that she did not have the properties which "a sea-going vessel should possess," and that opinion has been fully sustained, but she was devised on a plan that would "render the battery shot and shell proof," and a contract was made for a trial vessel. It should be said that the revolving armored turret had been invented by Theodore R. Timby, in 1841, but it was Ericsson who first made a practical application of the device. When completed the *Monitor* was placed under the command of Lieut. John L. Worden, with First Assistant Engineer Isaac Newton at the throttle. This *Monitor* was the new defender of the flag that appeared at Hampton Roads.

The battle between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* was begun by a shot from the *Merrimac* at 8.30 o'clock on the morning of March 9. It missed the mark, but in a short time the *Monitor* was alongside where the *Merrimac's* broadside would bear, and then the guns of both ships were worked with energy. Nevertheless no shot from either ship penetrated the other, and the battle was really a draw. The *Monitor*, however, remained on the battlefield, and in its moral influence on the minds of the people everywhere the conflict was a victory for the revolving turret

as against the casemate, and of the Union forces against the Confederates. Moreover the brilliant cruises of the *Merrimac* up the Potomac, and as far as New York, that had been planned, were blocked.

In one point of view the *Monitor* saved the Nation, at least from a fiercer struggle, if not absolutely. For the monitors built after this battle were for the time the most formidable ships of the world, particularly when they were armed with 15-inch Dahlgrens and 150-pounder rifles. Such ships were easily and rapidly built. We soon had a fine fleet of them in actual service, and we could have built many more had a necessity arisen. These facts were well known in Europe. And that is to say that the moral influence of the *Monitor* was far and away stronger than its actual power in battle. When the American Minister to England and the American Minister to France protested against the building of armed ships for the use of the Confederates, the protest was heard because of the power of the American battleship, and not for any other reason. The rulers of both France and England were anxious to see the growing power of the American people broken by a dismemberment of the Union, but neither thought it good policy to take sides in the dispute. Having the most powerful battleships of the day we had peace with Europe.

The *Monitor* is called a battleship because it was placed in the fighting line. The battleships now afloat are developments of the two ironclads that fought for supremacy in Hampton Roads, a combination, after a fashion, of the *Merrimac's* iron-clad walls and revolving turrets.

In the course of the Civil War the Confederates had afloat more than twenty cruisers, all told, that were commissioned for the purpose of destroying the merchant ships of the Union. It has been believed that commerce-destroyers, in modern navies, have had considerable influence

in preserving the peace of nations, but it is certain that such vessels never ended a war. The *Sumter*, Capt. Raphael Semmes, was the first of the Confederate cruisers to raid Union commerce. She was a merchantman that was fitted out at New Orleans with five small guns. She escaped through the blockade at the mouth of the Mississippi on June 30, 1861, captured eighteen vessels, of which eight were burned, and was eventually blockaded at Gibraltar by three Federal cruisers, when she was sold to a Liverpool merchant who made a blockade-runner of her.

The *Florida* was the first Confederate cruiser built by the British. Under the name *Oreto* she sailed from Liverpool on March 22, 1862, bound for the Bahamas. Her guns and stores followed in another ship, and at an uninhabited island of the group Capt. John Newland Maffitt took command. Yellow fever prostrated all hands except Maffitt and five others, but he steamed over to Cardenas Bay to recruit. There he was stricken down with the fever, and was then ordered to Havana by the Spanish authorities. Knowing that trouble awaited him there Maffitt got out of his bed, and with a pluck that was never surpassed, he ran his ship across to Mobile. He arrived in sight of the blockading fleet in broad day. With the British flag flying he steered into the midst of this fleet, and then substituting his own flag for the foreign, he made a dash for port and won. It is hard to kill a man like that with yellow fever or anything else.

In Mobile he gained health and a crew. Then he went cruising again, crossed to France, came back to the West Indies, and after having captured thirty-seven merchantmen he anchored in Bahia, Brazil. The United States steamer *Wachusett*, Commander Napoleon Collins, was in port, and Collins would not respect the port of a neutral

nation that was not able to compel respect. While Maffitt was on shore he captured the *Florida*, as she was then called, and took her to Hampton Roads. The Government agreed to return her to Bahia, but while she lay in the care of three common sailors she sank at her moorings. One of the men opened the sea-cocks.

The most famous of all the cruisers was the *Alabama*, a steamer built by the British for the purpose of destroying American merchantmen. She went to sea on July 29, 1862, and for two years she cruised the seas from the American coast to India, destroying ships and cargoes to the amount of \$6,547,609. On June 11, 1864, the *Alabama* reached Cherbourg, France, where she was blockaded by the *Kearsarge*, Capt. John A. Winslow, until the 19th. Then she steamed out to make a fight. The *Alabama* carried a 100-pounder British rifle and an 8-inch British shell gun for her pivots, while the *Kearsarge* carried two 11-inch Dahlgrens. The men before the mast on the *Alabama* were also British subjects, as a whole. Save for the officers she was a British ship fighting against an American. For an hour and ten minutes after the battle opened the crews worked their guns, and then Semmes headed the *Alabama* for the beach. She was in a sinking condition, however, and when the *Kearsarge* ranged up within 400 yards and continued the fire, the water soon drowned the fires in the *Alabama's* stokehole. The Confederate flag was then hauled down, the wounded were sent off in two boats that remained able to float, and then, after throwing his sword into the sea, Semmes and the remainder of his crew leaped overboard. Then the ship went down. Mr. John Lancaster, an Englishman, picked up Semmes, and a number of the *Alabama's* crew, and carried them to England with his steam yacht, called the *Deerhound*. Farragut, who never forgot the bearing of the British Govern-

ment toward his country in the early days, said of this battle:

“I would sooner have fought that fight than any ever fought on the ocean.”

In addition to the cruisers the British built for the Confederates two double-turreted battleships with armor from $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, and carrying two 9-inch rifles to each turret. Lord Russell declared that “her Majesty’s government cannot interfere” in any way with the vessels; but when it was found that to let them go was to bring on war with the United States, a way to stop them was found. As Farragut used to say in those days, any European government would have found the United States “a hard nut to crack,” in spite of the Civil War.

An ironclad called the *Stonewall*, built in France, got to sea, but the war ended before she could do any damage. The American whaling fleet of the Pacific was wiped out by the *Shenandoah*, a ship fitted out in Great Britain. Through the Confederate cruisers the British ship merchants were able to sweep the American merchantman from the sea. The British Government afterward paid \$15,500,000 for the actual damages proved to have been done by British-built cruisers to American merchantmen and cargoes. For that price the British were able to get rid of their only rival upon the high seas. And from that day to this the American people have allowed the British ship merchant to enjoy his success unmolested by any effort to give the American flag its old-time standing.

The Federal control of the Mississippi was obtained in 1863 by the capture of Vicksburg and Port Hudson. The most important naval event in connection with this work was the dash Farragut made past Port Hudson on the night of March 14 of that year. At that time General Grant

was at Vicksburg and General Banks was before Port Hudson. The Confederates held the river between the two towns, and they were drawing the greater part of their supplies of food from the Red River region. It was to cover this part of the Mississippi that Farragut prepared to pass Port Hudson.

The squadron with which Farragut purposed going up the river included the *Hartford*, the *Monongahela*, the side-wheeler *Mississippi*, and the *Richmond*, besides three small gunboats. The gunboats were lashed alongside the large screw ships in a fashion that would protect them from the fire of the forts. At the same time they could aid the larger vessels as tugs, in case the larger ones were disabled. In fact, each combination of a big ship and a little one could be handled much as a twin-screw ship is handled.

Though unnoted at the time a sentence written by Farragut when preparing to pass the forts has had a great influence on the navy in late days, and its influence is likely to increase in future. In the course of his general orders to his captains occurs this sentence:

"I think the best protection against the enemy's fire is a well-directed fire from our own guns."

When John Paul Jones was asked if he had surrendered, he replied: "I have not yet begun to fight." Said Perry, when told that the British had the weather gauge on Lake Erie: "To windward or leeward they shall fight to-day." Equally inspiring, and full of instruction as well, were the words of Farragut. No other instance is on record where the whole art of war was described in a single sentence. And if properly considered it describes the art of maintaining the peace.

In the effort to pass the batteries the steamer *Mississippi* grounded and had to be fired and abandoned. Capt. Melancton Smith and his executive officer, Lieut. George

Dewey (the present admiral), were the last to leave the ship. Of the other vessels only the *Hartford* and her consort, the *Albatross*, succeeded in passing the forts. But these served to blockade the river until Vicksburg and Port Hudson surrendered, July 3 and 9, 1863, when the authority of the flag was finally restored to the whole river.

The stretching of the navy in an anaconda coil, which had first been attempted in 1862, was now completed. Even the worst enemies of the American people that Europe afforded saw that the restoration of the Union was within view, though for the sake of lessening what has been called in late years "the American peril," the Confederates were encouraged to keep on. In that way only could the American people be weakened. It was not until after Farragut entered Mobile Bay that our European enemies would acknowledge that the secessionists were beaten. The story of the battle is also interesting on other accounts.

The channel into Mobile Bay lay directly under the guns of Fort Morgan, and it had been blocked with three lines of torpedoes save for a narrow space left open for blockade-runners. Beer kegs and tin cans were used to a considerable extent in making the torpedoes placed here (and elsewhere) for the defence of channels during the Civil War. Some were anchored by chains that held them just under the surface of the water. Others were secured to the ends of long poles fixed in frames that were sunk to the bottom. The ships that approached were supposed to explode them by contact. Several Federal ships were destroyed by torpedoes in the course of the war.

The fort was armed with ten good rifles of the day, beside fifteen smoothbores of 8-inch calibre or better. Afloat within the bay was a casemated ironclad, the *Tennessee*, carrying from five to six inches of iron plates over heavy

wood backing and armed with six rifles of 6-inch and 7-inch calibre. There were also three poor steamers armed with excellent guns, including some 7-inch rifles and 9-inch smoothbores. This fleet was under the command of Admiral Franklin Buchanan, who had been a captain in the old navy, while Fort Morgan was commanded by Brig.-Gen. R. L. Page, who had been a commander in the old navy.

In making a dash past the forts below New Orleans Farragut had seen that when once he was above them he would have them cut off from their base of supplies while he could obtain anything needed through the bayous. At Mobile, however, a dash past the forts would not surely cut off the Confederates from supplies, because it was conceivable that supplies could be sent around by land. Moreover when once in the bay Farragut would have great difficulty in securing supplies unless he first reduced Fort Morgan, or another one called Fort Powell that commanded Grant's Pass leading to New Orleans by the inside route. To pass Fort Morgan and maintain himself when within, Farragut had, in all, eighteen ships carrying 159 guns besides howitzers. Of these ships two were large single-turret monitors carrying two 15-inch Dahlgrens, and two were shoal-draught, double-turreted monitors, built for use in the Mississippi, and carrying four 11-inch guns each. Of wooden ships Farragut had the *Hartford*, the *Brooklyn*, and the *Richmond*, carrying from twenty to twenty-four guns each, the others being of much less power, though 11-inch and 9-inch guns were well sprinkled through the fleet.

In preparing for the order of battle the monitors were placed in advance and a little to the right of the wooden ship line, the single-turret monitor *Tecumseh*, Commander Tunis A. M. Craven, leading all. At the head of the wooden ships Farragut placed the *Brooklyn*, partly be-

cause she could work four bow guns, partly because she carried a sort of derrick that was supposed to be able to pick up torpedoes, and partly because the other officers wanted him to put the *Hartford* in a less exposed position than he naturally would have taken. The wooden ships were arranged in pairs, as at Port Hudson, and the general orders declared that "if one or more of the ships is disabled, their partners must carry them through, if possible; but if they cannot, then the next astern must render the required assistance." A subsequent order said that all ships must pass between the fort and a prominent red buoy seen in the channel, in order to avoid the torpedoes.

Finally six gunboats were detailed to go to the east and south of Fort Morgan and shell it while the fleet passed in.

It was at four o'clock on the morning of August 5, 1864, that Farragut called his men for the battle of Mobile Bay. At 6.30 o'clock the column was formed in the channel, and at 6.55 the whole line moved forward while Craven, of the *Tecumseh*, fired her two guns in his eagerness to begin the battle. The fort replied ten minutes later, and then the Confederate ships formed in line across the channel just within the fort.

As the ships drew near and the smoke fogged in the fort, Farragut climbed up the port main rigging of the *Hartford* to the top. A little later a quartermaster came up and passed a bit of rope around him so that in case he were wounded he would not fall to the deck; and when the people heard how he had gone into battle "lashed to the mast," they were thrilled as never before. But a far more splendid exhibition of courage was to come.

As the *Tecumseh* neared the fort the brave Craven grew so impatient to attack the Confederate ironclad *Tennessee*, lying just to the west of the proper channel, that he could not wait to pass to the east of the red buoy as he had been

ordered to do, and with helm to starboard, the monitor was driven across the torpedo line. In a moment she began to rock in the water and then with her stern rising in the air until the wheel was seen whirling, down she sank. A torpedo had exploded under her.

It was a frightful disaster, and the captain of the *Brooklyn*, leading the wooden ship line, ordered her engines stopped. A little later, although the other ships were closing in on her, and the line was rapidly becoming confused, the *Brooklyn* began to back up in a way that closed the open channel. With the Confederate gunners hurling their shot into the disordered fleet as never before, the supreme moment of the battle had come, and leaning out from the shrouds of the *Hartford*, Farragut hailed the *Brooklyn*.

"What is the matter?" he said.

"Torpedoes," replied her captain.

"Damn the torpedoes! Full speed, Jouett! Four bells, Captain Drayton," shouted Farragut to the captains of his own ship, and that alongside, and then he headed straight for the torpedo line. And when the crew of the *Hartford* heard those orders they leaped as one man to the starboard rail, facing the fort, and gave three yells of defiance. It was the good vigorous "Damn the torpedoes" that inspired that crew with the joy of battle. It was the determination to *force the fighting* in the face of the most appalling danger that saved the day. For the whole fleet followed the *Hartford* into the bay, passing the ironclad *Tennessee* as if she were no more than a fort, and driving the smaller Confederate vessels out of the battle. Buchanan, with characteristic determination to fight it out promptly, followed the Federal fleet to the wide water of the bay. But there his ship was fairly mobbed. Her smokestack was shot away, flooding the fighting deck with unbearable gases. Her steering gear was destroyed.

Her port shutters were rivetted fast by the impact of shot so that her guns were put out of action, and finally the relentless hammering of the solid shot from big guns began to knock the casemate to splinters. But it was not until she was a helpless target that her flag was hauled down.

Having conquered the freedom of the bay, Fort Gaines, a structure on an island west of Fort Morgan, soon surrendered. The fort commanding Grant Pass was next abandoned by the Confederates, and Farragut was then safe, while Fort Morgan was cut off from available succor, by the landing of a detachment of soldiers. General Page held up his flag till the last gasp, but the end was inevitable once Farragut had won the bay.

Two incidents of the battle are worth consideration by way of contrast. The six gunboats sent to bombard Fort Morgan from eastward were held at such long range that their projectiles failed to reach the fort. The commanding officer was of the small number that always remember well and obey with care all orders forbidding them to risk their ships unduly, and so he lost his only opportunity to earn the gratitude of his country. On the other hand Craven disobeyed the letter of his orders in order to get at the enemy—and so gained immortal glory. It is also memorable that after the victory at Mobile Bay such papers as the *British Army and Navy Gazette*—European periodicals that had done everything possible to aid in the destruction of the Union—were ready to admit that the end was within view.

The naval conflicts that followed the battle of Mobile Bay need no description here. Charleston and Fort Fisher were both taken by combinations of the army and naval forces early in 1865, and the people of all the States were to begin, soon thereafter, the work of building anew the Nation.

BUILDING THE WHITE SQUADRON

FOR a brief interval at the end of the Civil War the monitors with their 15-inch Dahlgren guns (some had a rifle each, made of cast-iron with a wrought band shrunk over the breech), made the American navy the most powerful in the world. But political considerations, of which it need be said only that the good of party seemed to be something different from and of more importance than the good of the country, led Congress to neglect the navy. The ships that had done good service in the war wore out. Repairs became expensive. To save money it was thought best to build nothing new and let the old ships go to the scrap heap. A secretary of the navy who was ambitious to build made the mistake of constructing ships on the false pretence of making repairs. But what was of greater weight than all else was the fact that, naval ships being just then in a period of transition, it was confidently asserted that it would be good policy to allow European countries "to make the experiments for us." While European nations developed breech-loading rifles, and battle-ships of vastly greater size and power than our monitors, we did nothing, and within ten years after the Civil War ended the American navy was the standard of inefficiency among the seamen of the world.

It was a period to recall the days before the War of 1812. Because we had no navy a Spanish coast-guard seized an American ship on the high seas, and held her in

Cuban ports under guard for ninety-eight days because the captain of the coast-guard supposed that she might have been carrying arms to Cuban insurgents. The protests of the American Administration were treated with contempt; they were even left unnoticed and unanswered. American citizens found on a ship that belonged to a Cuban filibuster were shot to death without trial, and while the shooting party was at its work (it was at Santiago de Cuba), the American consul at the port was held a prisoner in his office by soldiers who were stationed at his door. This happened within eight years after the end of the Civil War—so rapidly did the respect of foreign nations fall away as our navy was allowed to decay. It was the lack of a navy that almost brought on a war with Spain in 1873.

We saved a few dollars while other nations were “experimenting for us,” but there are those who understand that what we lost in the development of the brains of our mechanics and inventors by letting the other nations “do the experimenting for us” was of infinitely greater value than the whole revenue of the Nation. Even that is not all of the evil of the policy then followed. For Congress voted \$15,000,000 to prepare the navy for war, after the *Virginius* affair, as the trouble was called, but the money was not used for the purpose. Somebody spent it—nobody knows who, or how, apparently.

On June 29, 1881, eight years after the American citizens were murdered at Santiago de Cuba, the United States for the third time began the work of building a naval fleet. On that day a board, of which Rear Admiral John Rodgers was the head, was appointed by the Secretary of the Navy to consider the state of the navy, and report what action ought to be taken by Congress. The board recommended the building of twenty-one battleships and seventy cruisers, besides torpedo-boats and rams. Of the programme thus

proposed Congress built, in due time, one worthless ram. But the subject was before the people and a host of naval officers who could handle the pen as well as the sword, kept the agitation going until the Nation saw that the condition of affairs then existing was not only humiliating and destructive of the moral fibre of the people, but it steadily invited aggressions and actual war. In consequence the Nation was finally aroused to a point where Congress provided money for beginning work on two cruisers.

For seventeen years we had allowed foreign countries "to do the experimenting for us." In that time England had learned how to build an *Inflexible* with armor from 18 to 24 inches thick, and carrying four built-up rifles of 16-inch calibre, firing a projectile of 1,700 pounds weight that exerted a muzzle energy of 27,213 foot-tons and was able to pierce 27.5 inches of wrought iron armor at a range of 500 yards. Our best naval ship was a monitor carrying smoothbore guns that fired a shell having a muzzle energy of 7,997 foot-tons—something as little able to penetrate the armor of the day as a flint-lock musket would have been. The *Inflexible* could fight on water rough enough to compel the monitor to close all ports, and she could steam almost twice as fast as the monitor.

But we had a complete book knowledge of the best of the British ships, and now we were to begin using the advantages we had gained by allowing other nations "to do the experimenting for us."

The Secretary of the Navy appointed officers to plan and build the ships that Congress had authorized, but when they got together they found that the only facilities that the country afforded for their work included draughting boards, pencils, pens, and India ink. There was not a shipyard in the country adapted to the construction of a 5,000-ton cruiser, not to mention an armorclad. There was not a

mill in the country that could make the steel plates and frames required, let alone armor. There was not a hammer in the country that could make a forging for the smallest rifle needed. Instead of building a 5,000-ton cruiser fit to meet anything of the kind afloat, we began perforce by building a despatch boat and two little 3,000-ton cruisers, and we could not do even that much until facilities for making steel plates had been provided. We had to do some experimenting for ourselves. We could not serve an apprenticeship by proxy.

In 1884 the Secretary of the Navy, having no confidence in the ability of our own naval architects, sent to England for plans for further shipbuilding that had been authorized by Congress. Plans for the *Texas*, the *Charleston*, and the *Baltimore* were thus obtained. But the English designers in every case sold him gold bricks, so to speak—plans that were defective—and it was only after many alterations that ships fit for duty were provided. The error of buying plans abroad was a continuation of the error of allowing other nations to do the experimenting for us. The people who made the error failed to see that what the Nation needed first of all was men able to build ships, not merely as good as those of Europe, but ships with enough new ideas in them to make them the best afloat, as the *Constitution* was in her class.

Nevertheless this Secretary of the Navy did one thing that atoned for all errors. By skilful handling of the appropriations he accumulated a fund wherewith he was able to induce a steel-making company to erect a plant for the production of armor and the forgings for high-power guns.

By the contract signed with John Roach, on July 23, 1883, for the building of the despatch boat *Dolphin*, the 3,000-ton *Atlanta* and *Boston*, the mills for the making of

such steel plates as were needed for ship hulls were guaranteed. By the contract of June 1, 1887, with the Bethlehem Iron Company, facilities for making the best of steel armor and forgings for the largest of steel guns were provided. It is well worth recalling that the enormous steel industry of the present day was begun and made possible by the building of the modern navy. For the battle of Lake Champlain Macdonough built a very good ship in thirty days. During the Civil War we built some good fighting machines of that period in ninety days. But between June 29, 1881, and June 1, 1887, it was demonstrated that we had to build steel mills before we could build modern battleships, and it was thereafter demonstrated that even with the best of facilities it was not possible to build a battleship in less than a year, though the work was driven at the highest practicable speed.

We began our new navy with a despatch boat. Our first armored ship worth mention was the lamented *Maine*. She carried side armor twelve inches thick, and she had two 10-inch guns in each turret. Her keel was laid on October 17, 1888, and she was launched on November 18, 1890. Up to that date we were experimenting for ourselves, and we had learned how to do the work. The time had then come when we were ready to begin to set a pace in the design and construction of fighting ships for the world to consider. On August 28, 1890, the contract for the construction of the armored cruiser *New York* was signed. She was launched December 2, 1891. She was 380.5 feet long by 65 wide, and she displaced 8,200 tons. Under the contract the speed was to be twenty knots an hour, but a premium was allowed for any excess of speed. On May 22, 1892, she was at sea for her official trial, and if we consider the effect of that trial upon the navy and the Nation we shall find few other days to compare with

it. For because of the pessimistic habit of thought cultivated during the dark ages of the navy even the officers who were to test her had not full confidence that she would make good the record for which she was designed. But when with eager eyes they watched the swift beating of connecting rods and the smooth whirr of shafts, and in the midst of the perspiring heat of the air they found the bearings cool, while the indicator cards showed such power as they had never seen before, their fears faded away. For four hours they kept their eyes on engine-room and taffrail log and clock, and then when the time was done the whole crew burst into cheers while a sailor climbed aloof and lashed a broom to the mast-head. She had covered twenty-one sea miles an hour. No such ship as that had ever floated the "gridiron flag"; no such ship of the class floated any flag. The shame that for twenty-five years had rested on our navy was wiped out. The *New York* was the *Constitution* of the new navy we affectionately called the White Squadron.

And then came the battleship era. By the act of June 30, 1890, Congress provided for three battleships—"coast defence," of course. It is said that when the bill had been signed, Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy sent for Lewis Nixon, then in the Constructors' Bureau, and said to him informally:

"Now, sir, what you've to do is to design a ship that can lick anything afloat."

And Nixon designed the *Oregon*. Two 13-inch guns, the most powerful then made, were put in each of two main turrets located over the keel at bow and stern. Two turrets were then located over each rail, and in each of them two 8-inch guns were mounted. Along the side armor walls were placed four 6-inch guns. The ship displaced nearly 10,300 tons and the speed attained was

15.547 knots. The armor varied from fifteen to eighteen inches in thickness.

The *Oregon* and her class are out of date now, though that is due chiefly to the fact that the designer was hampered by the ancient idea that when we go to war we must invite the enemy to come to our harbors and coasts to do the fighting—it was imperative that these battleships should be for “coast defence.” They have but a small coal capacity, nevertheless in their day, if able to get into the battle line, there was no ship afloat equal to them.

In the development of guns the records show that in those of the largest calibre for ship use we have usually led the world as we did with the Dahlgrens and with the 24-pounders of 1812. But in the broadside batteries, we have been frequently behind the European standard of efficiency. For instance the *New York* carried 4-inch guns in broadside; the *Brooklyn*, a greater *New York*, carried 5-inch guns; English ships of the period carried 6-inch guns. But that condition of affairs was changed when in 1901 the Bureau of Ordnance developed the 7-inch rifle for use in broadside batteries. And following that, Congress, by the act of July 1, 1902, authorized the construction of two ships, since known as the *Louisiana* and *Connecticut*, which were designed to carry four 12-inch, eight 8-inch, and twelve 7-inch guns, besides twenty 3-inch guns, thus once more giving the American navy ships that for the moment were the world's standard of fighting efficiency.

When our people did finally cease to allow other nations to do the experimenting for us and thus gave our navy men opportunity to exercise their inventive talent and enterprise, the efficiency of our navy was assured. Through their work the time came when, in our dealings with other peoples, we would “not be influenced, or even be suspected of being influenced, by a consciousness of weakness on the sea.”

XI

THE WAR WITH SPAIN

As every reader of the present time knows, the war with Spain grew out of the infinitely cruel and destructive efforts of the Spanish Government to quell the struggle that the Cubans were making for liberty. In the course of the revolution the Spaniards built lines of forts across the island, with barbed wire entanglements from fort to fort in order to stop the migration of Cubans from point to point. The plantations of men supposed to be in sympathy with the revolution were desolated. At the last the rural population was brought to the cities and held there in idleness to starve. The whole island was in a state of anarchy, and not for a moment did the Government forces control an inch of soil beyond the ranges of their guns. The island being entirely "within the economic orbit of the United States," its people appealed to us for help.

At that cry many who dreaded the influence of war said that the Cubans were as cruel as their masters; that they were incapable of self-government, and that therefore we ought not to interfere. But others replied: "If what you say be true we ought to drive from the Americas the barbarous government that could produce such a people."

It was plain to the thinking people of the United States, as Ruskin said, that "the principle of non-intervention, as now preached among us, is as selfish and cruel as the worst frenzy of conquest, and differs from it only by being not only malignant but dastardly."

President McKinley saw that it was his imperative duty to interfere, and in 1897 he said to the Spanish Government in diplomatic but unmistakable language:

“You must improve the state of affairs in Cuba or we will do it for you.”

Being unable to do this without giving the Cubans freedom, the attitude of the whole Spanish people became menacing toward the United States. The Spanish minister at Washington declared that the President was “weak, and catering to the rabble, and, besides, a low politician.” The Spanish papers, particularly in Cuba, were filled with matter calculated to rouse a hatred of all Americans. Cartoons were spread among those who could not read to effect the same end. So much ill feeling was aroused at Havana that, at last our little battleship *Maine*, Capt. Charles D. Sigsbee, was sent to Havana for use as a refuge for American citizens there in case of mob attacks upon them.

The contrast between the two peoples at that time is instructive: the one was so vituperative and so ready with adjectives expressive of contempt, while the other was so incredulous about the threat of war, and withal not a little amused by the Spanish antics. Moreover the Spanish were poorly informed as to the real sentiment in the United States, and what was worse they did not know the real strength of the American navy. They believed that we were too much absorbed in making dollars to fight, and that we could not fight well if we would. Many people in Havana—even commissioned army officers—supposed that the *Maine* was our best battleship, and some supposed that she was our only one. It was their belief that our navy was weak that led the Spanish to commit the aggressions which made war unavoidable, and that is one of the most important facts in the history of the war.

The *Maine* was moored at a buoy where no man-o'-war had been moored before, and at 9.40 o'clock, on the night of February 15, 1898, she was destroyed by a torpedo that was exploded under her bottom. When an official count was had the total number killed was found to be 267.

Captain Sigsbee and the survivors were brought before a court of inquiry—Capt. W. T. Sampson, Capt. French E. Chadwick, Lieut.-Commander William P. Potter and Lieut.-Commander Adolph Marix. This court found “that the loss of the *Maine* was not in any respect due to fault or negligence on the part of any of the officers or crew”; but that on the contrary she was “destroyed by the explosion of a submarine mine.”

The testimony taken by the court was made public, and since that time all fair-minded people throughout the world have been fully convinced that the men of the *Maine* were murdered by the act of the Spanish in Havana.

At the time the report of the court of inquiry was made public we had a considerable squadron at Key West. It included the *New York* (flagship), the battleships *Iowa*, *Massachusetts*, *Indiana*, and *Texas*, and a number of cruisers, gunboats, and torpedo-boats. Capt. W. T. Sampson was promoted to the command of this force. A coast-defence squadron was gathered in the Chesapeake with the *Brooklyn* for flagship, and to it were added the *Massachusetts* and *Texas*, and the swift commerce destroyers *Minneapolis* and *Columbia* for scouts. Commodore W. S. Schley was placed in command of this. At Hong-Kong Commodore George Dewey gathered a squadron of six cruisers and gunboats. The *Olympia*, an unarmored cruiser of 5,870 tons displacement, armed with four 8-inch and ten 5-inch guns, was the flagship.

It should be noted, however, that as war drew near,

the battleship *Oregon* came around from the Pacific coast by the way of the Strait of Magellan, and arrived fit for battle soon after the war began. A cruiser, built in England and renamed the *New Orleans*, was added to the squadron at Key West; to which point, also, was brought the little cruiser squadron that had been on the South American station.

Having counted and prepared our naval ships as best we could we found the number insufficient, and many merchantmen were purchased or chartered and converted to war uses, as well as possible. They ranged in size from a 16,000-ton liner to a yacht of 100 tons. The swifter of the vessels were commissioned as despatch boats, while a few, including the old yacht *Corsair*, that was taken into the service as the *Gloucester*, were fitted as torpedo-boat destroyers.

On April 18, 1898, Congress, having made as thorough preparation for war as possible, passed a joint resolution (the vote in the House was 310 to 6), saying that "the people of Cuba are and of right ought to be free and independent," and that it was the duty of the United States to expel the Spanish Government from that island. This resolution was signed by the President at 11.24 o'clock on Wednesday morning, April 20. The same day a final demand on the Spanish Government was made as a matter of form, and the same night the Spanish minister left Washington. The American minister at Madrid left for home on the 21st. At sunrise, on Friday morning, April 22, the American squadron sailed from Key West under the command of Rear Admiral W. T. Sampson, bound with orders to establish a blockade off a part of the Cuban coast, beginning at Havana. As the squadron headed toward Havana a steam cargo ship, loaded with lumber, appeared off to westward. Her captain hoisted his colors to a flag-

staff at the taffrail. One glance showed the red and gold colors of Spain. Under orders from the *New York*, the *Nashville* started in pursuit and fired first a blank shot, and then a solid projectile across the bows of the merchantman—the first shots of the war—at exactly 7.02 o'clock. Gunner Patrick Malia fired the shots. It was the steamer *Buenaventura* (though her luck belied her name), of Bilbao.

The eager zest of the officers of the navy during the days that followed on the coast of Cuba was most inspiring. The little gunboat *Nashville* started with flags flying to meet a cruiser of four times her size, one morning, only to find that it was a British instead of a Spanish ship, and therefore friendly. The yacht *Osceola*, with a 6-pounder and a machine gun, started to meet and hold our own *New Orleans* in order that a transport in convoy might escape, for in the haze the *New Orleans* was supposed to be a Spaniard. The torpedo-boat *Winslow* steamed boldly under the batteries at Cardenas Bay. Lieut. C. M. Winslow and Lieut. C. W. Jungen, with their men worked for hours, under the close-range fire of Spanish batteries, in order to cut cables at Cienfuegos and Santiago. The torpedo-boats on the blockade at Havana used to hunt for still water inside the harbor at night so that the watch below could rest in comfort. But space is lacking to describe more than the two important battles of the war—Manila and Santiago—and those only in brief.

The battle at Manila was what Farragut would have called one of "the elegancies of the profession." Having gathered his squadron at Mirs Bay, thirty miles from Hong-Kong, Commodore Dewey headed away for Manila on April 27, 1898, and on Sunday morning, May 1, his squadron was lying in Manila Bay at a point about seven miles west of Manila city, and an equal distance from Cavite Point. Within and behind Cavite Point lay a Spanish

squadron of eleven vessels and two torpedo-boats. The vessels were not of the best quality, and some were undergoing repairs, but most of them could work their guns, of which thirty-one were of 4.7-inch calibre or better. As a fleet it was decidedly inferior to the American, but it was supported by a battery of heavy Krupp guns on Cavite Point, while Dewey's ships were obliged to steam within range of the heavy batteries at Manila to get at the Spaniards. Dewey had come under orders which said "You must capture or destroy the Spanish squadron." In view of the strength of the forts he needed battleships for the work; but what he lacked in armor plate he made up with Harveyized grit. The Spaniards opened fire on the American fleet at 5.15 o'clock with a big gun at Manila, but the shot fell short, and then the *Olympia* led the way toward the Spanish ships at Cavite while the men at the guns stood ready "with set teeth and the smile that one sees so often on the faces of men in the prize ring."

At a range of a little more than two miles the firing began and the speed of the ships was slowed down to give the gunners a better chance. After passing the Spanish ships and the fort at Cavite at a range of a mile and a half the squadron turned and came back to pass at the same range, or less, four times more. The Spanish flagship, the *Reina Christina*, a 4,000-ton cruiser, started out to meet the *Olympia*, but the guns of the entire American squadron were turned upon her and she soon headed back to the shelter of Cavite Point. And as her stern was pointed toward the Yankees one of Dewey's gunners fired an 8-inch shot that raked her from stern to bow, as Commodore Macdonough raked the enemy on Lake Champlain, killing and wounding sixty men, the captain being among the killed. At the same time the woodwork was splintered and fired so that the ship had to be abandoned.

A moment later two torpedo-boats came out to attack the *Olympia*, but the small guns were turned upon them, and one sank with all on board while the other hastened to the beach.

At 7.45 o'clock the American fleet drew off to rest the men. Two of the Spanish ships had been destroyed and it was plainly seen that the remainder of the work would be easy. For three hours the men stretched out in comfort on deck, eating a bite, and in many cases sleeping to make up for what they had lost the night before while coming into the bay. Then at 11.16 o'clock the battle was renewed. Special attention was now paid to the Cavite forts. The water under Cavite Point was too shoal for the larger cruisers but the little gunboat *Petrel* steamed right in among the Spanish squadron and at short range worked her old-fashioned 6-inch guns most effectively. The *Boston* grounded off Cavite Point, but that only served to steady her as a gun platform; and while she lay there she dismantled three of the guns in the fort.

During all this time the Spanish fought most desperately. When the *Don Antonio de Ullao* went down in flames, her crew kept her guns firing until her deck was under water and the guns sank hissing out of sight. But the gunners had never learned to shoot, and a thousand shots flew wild where one reached its target. It was not the superior guns of Dewey's fleet that won; it was the superior gunners. At 12.30 the Spaniards gave it up. They reported 78 killed on the ships and 23 in the forts, while 235 were wounded afloat and 45 ashore—a total loss of 381. On our side 8 men were slightly wounded.

How the victory of Commodore Dewey led to the capture of Manila and the end of Spanish dominion in the Philippines need not be told here. But since some stress has been laid heretofore on the hostile attitude of the Brit-

ish during and before our Civil War it is worth noting that when the American squadron left Hong-Kong the British sailors showed their sympathy for the Yankees; and later when certain continental naval ships showed hostile feelings in Manila Bay the British crews present manifested their belief that blood was thicker than water.

Dewey's victory was most important for various reasons, but chiefly because it was the first battle of the war (it was also the first battle between squadrons of ships in which Americans had had part in many years), and it was a complete victory. The power of Spain was annihilated in that part of the world. Neither our Pacific coast nor any of our commercial interests in any part of the Pacific could be injured thereafter by the enemy. Later it led to the extension of peace and American liberty to the people of the group. But it was the destruction of Cervera's squadron at Santiago that was the decisive battle of the war.

In the days immediately before war was declared, and while the Americans were concentrating their ships at Key West, the Spanish sent a fleet to the Canary Islands. This was regarded as a threat something like that which we were making by concentrating ships at Key West, but subsequent facts showed that it was done rather to defend the Canaries; for the Spanish thought we would send a squadron to those islands and then to attack the Spanish coasts. Later, when it was seen that the Americans would not push the fighting the Spanish determined to do so, in a way, and this squadron was in part ordered to Cuban waters. It was supposed here that these ships were coming to invade the United States, and a most disgraceful panic developed along the Atlantic coast. It was a natural panic, however—just what might be expected among men who had always talked of preparing for war by build-

ing "coast defences" only. In consequence of this state of public opinion swift cruisers were kept patrolling the coast, and Admiral Sampson with a heterogeneous fleet that included the *New York* of twenty-one knots, the *Indiana* of fifteen, with the old monitor *Miantonomoh*, that had a speed of six knots and had to be towed, was sent as far east as San Juan, Porto Rico, in search of the Spanish.

We had been talking, during many years, of the advantages the Atlantic Ocean would afford us, "in case of war," but now we found ourselves obliged to go a thousand miles to the coast of the enemy. Perhaps it was worth while; at any rate it showed the utter inefficiency of the monitor class of ships for any use outside of a port.

When this expedition had returned to Key West it found Schley's "Flying Squadron" there. The Government had learned that the Spanish squadron had reached the West India waters, but just where it was, however, no one then knew. As it was reasonable to suppose that the Spaniards would be obliged to enter some large port of Cuba in order to coal, and as it was supposed that they were carrying supplies for the blockaded forces at Havana, it was concluded they would steer either to Cienfuegos, on the south side, whence a railroad led to Havana, or more probably to Havana itself. Accordingly Sampson undertook watching the north shore and sent Schley to the south coast.

On April 19 Schley left Key West with the *Brooklyn* (flagship), the *Massachusetts*, and the *Texas*. Other vessels, including the *Iowa*, joined him later. Cienfuegos was blockaded from May 21 to May 24, and then, beginning on the evening of May 28, a blockade was established at Santiago. On June 1 Rear Admiral Sampson with the *New York*, the battleship *Oregon*, that had arrived from the Pacific coast ready for battle, the auxiliary *Mayflower* and

torpedo-boat *Porter*, arrived off Santiago, and took charge of the blockade.

The Spanish squadron had arrived at Santiago on the 19th. It consisted of the three 20-knot cruisers of 7,000 tons, each of which carried two 11-inch guns and ten 5.5-inch guns. They were named the *Maria Teresa* (flag), the *Viscaya*, and the *Oquendo*. A fourth cruiser was named the *Colon*. She was of 6,840 tons displacement. She had been built to carry ten 6-inch guns and six 4.7-inch, but the main battery was not on board—a fact that describes the Spanish naval administration sufficiently. The torpedo-boats *Pluton* and *Furor* were with the cruisers, a third torpedo-boat that had crossed the Atlantic with them having gone to San Juan, Porto Rico. The squadron was under the command of Admiral Cervera.

Mounted in the forts at the mouth of the harbor were two modern guns and no more, the calibre of each being just under six and one-half inches.

As the entrance to the harbor was but 350 feet wide, it was obviously impracticable for the American fleet to force its way in. By day, therefore, Sampson formed his squadron in a half circle at a range of several miles from the mouth of the harbor. By night the squadron closed in to a range of two miles. Two battleships then steamed in another mile and stopped there. One of these did not show a light. The other kept her searchlights constantly trained on the entrance of the harbor while the darkened ship by the aid of these lights kept her guns pointed at the same spot. Inside of these two battleships three small auxiliaries were kept in line to watch for and meet any torpedo-boats that might come out, while still farther in, and usually less than a quarter of a mile from the beach, were three steam launches armed with 1-pounders, and kept ready for any emergency that might arise. This invincible

blockade was maintained until the enemy was destroyed; for Sampson's whole habit of mind "was to be in close touch with the enemy."

At three o'clock on the morning of June 3, 1898, the collier *Merrimac* was sent into the harbor entrance in charge of Lieut. Richmond Pearson Hobson, with a crew of seven men, and she was sunk there to block the channel. It was a most perilous exploit, but as usual with such expeditions, it did not quite accomplish the intended object.

On June 7 Admiral Sampson sent the *Marblehead* and the converted merchantman *Yankee* to Guantanamo Bay, forty miles to the east of Santiago. They took possession of the bay and a little later an encampment of marines was established there. The bay then became a convenient station for ships needing coal and when making repairs.

On June 14 an army of 16,000 men sailed from Tampa, Fla., and on the 22d they began to land at Daiquirá, to the eastward of Santiago. As this army (it was under General Shafter) was sure to besiege Santiago, and thus, as Captain-General Blanco pointed out at the time, bring starvation upon Cervera's squadron as well as upon the city, the Spanish authorities were in a quandary as to what should be done with the ships. The ships certainly were not in an efficient state for battle, but to remain was to face destruction in any event, and on July 2 Cervera received definite orders to leave within twelve hours.

At sunrise the next morning the American squadron lay in a semicircle off the port at a distance of from two to four miles. The armored line included the *Indiana*, the *New York*, the *Oregon*, the *Iowa*, the *Texas*, and the *Brooklyn*, in the order named, beginning at the east side of the harbor. The auxiliaries *Gloucester* and *Vixen* lay much closer in, the *Gloucester* to the east and the *Vixen* to the west side of the harbor entrance.

It was a beautiful morning, but much like other mornings that had passed. The lookout on the flagship had seen nothing to indicate a change of purpose among the enemy in the harbor. In the meantime the admiral had made an engagement to visit the headquarters of the army, on that day, and at 8.50 o'clock the *New York* left the squadron and steamed east under three boilers of steam. Throughout the fleet the Sunday inspection was taken in hand at 9.30.

But while the men were lining up for this purpose a lookout on the *Texas* stood with his hand on signal haliards, to which were bent signals that would announce the approach of the enemy, and on the *Oregon* a sailor stood with his finger on the trigger of a 6-pounder, ready to announce the enemy's approach by firing a shot. It was in that fashion that watch was kept and the keen lookouts were rewarded. At 9.31 the sharp bow of the Spanish flagship was seen coming from behind Smith Cay, and at the first glance the lookouts began to bawl:

"The fleet's coming out!" The signals were hoisted on the *Texas* and the gun was fired on the *Oregon*. With that the gongs on all the ships called all hands to quarters, and breaking ranks the men ran shouting for joy to gun-breech and stoke-hole. At the same instant the engineers on watch opened wide the throttles, and the American squadron began to close in for battle at close quarters, according to the plan that had been given to each captain in the squadron by Admiral Sampson.

The *Oregon* had fired the first shot on the American side. The *Maria Teresa* began to fire in return as she rounded the shoal at the entrance of the harbor, and then the whole American fleet joined in. The Spanish ships formed a homogeneous squadron. Had they been concentrated on any one of the American ships there is no

telling how much damage they might have done. But Cervera had come out to escape only, and as fast as each of his ships arrived far enough outside she headed to the westward. All of them fired their guns with as much vigor as possible, but the "well-directed fire from our own guns" proved far better than any armor; it simply overwhelmed the Spanish squadron. Within a short time after the *Maria Teresa* was seen at the harbor entrance she was set on fire and so badly cut up that she was turned toward the rocks on the beach to save the remainder of her crew from a frightful death. At 10.20 o'clock the *Oquendo* followed. Within forty-nine minutes from the time the enemy's squadron was sighted two of them had been mortally injured. Then Captain Eulate of the *Vizcaya*, seeing that running would not alone save him, turned out to meet the *Brooklyn*, apparently intending to ram her. But the *Brooklyn*, with her helm hard aport, turned out to sea and avoided her, while the *Vizcaya* was soon shot to pieces by the other ships, and had to seek refuge on the beach as the *Teresa* and *Oquendo* had done.

Last of all to come from the port were the two torpedo-boats—certainly a bad bit of tactics, for they might have found shelter under the *Colon*. But there they were in full view of the American fleet, while the *Gloucester*, with steam bottled up, was waiting for them. The Spaniards carried two 14-pounders, two 6-pounders, and two 1-pounders each, while the *Gloucester* carried four 6-pounders and four 3-pounders only. Rarely has a captain sought battle with such odds as that, but Commander Richard Wainwright drove his converted yacht in to close range. Other ships fired at the torpedo-boats at ranges of from 4,000 to 4,500 yards, but Wainwright sank one and drove the other sinking to the beach. If the reader is ever in doubt as to the conduct of a naval officer let him ask what

would Nicholas Biddle or John Paul Jones or Oliver Hazard Perry or David Glasgow Farragut or Richard Wainwright have done under the circumstances.

In the meantime the *Colon* was making the best of her way to westward. She had held a course inside of the other Spanish ships, and having been sheltered by them somewhat had passed through the blockading line. But the *Brooklyn* and the *Oregon* were in chase. For weeks Chief Engineer Milligan of the *Oregon* had "made a sweat-box of her"; the crew had endured it, and now they had their reward. For while the other ships had been under steam too low, Milligan was able not only to drive the *Oregon* at her full speed, but he exceeded the best record that any of that class of ships had made. As the *Colon* fled, Milligan went down into the stoke-hole and in a short time the *Oregon*, though built for fifteen knots, was logging seventeen an hour. And when Captain Clark allowed one of his junior officers to fire a gun at the enemy, Milligan came up on deck and thanked him, saying that his men were fainting below, but if they could hear a shot, now and then, they could live through and keep her going. The swift *Brooklyn* was in the chase, as said, and both ships were gaining on the enemy, but it was when a shot from the *Oregon's* 13-inch gun fell beyond the *Colon* that the Spanish gave it up and turned ashore to meet the fate on the rocks that had befallen the other ships of the Spanish squadron. She was beached at the mouth of Rio Tarquino.

The American squadron lost one man killed and one wounded. The Spanish squadron lost at least 350 killed and 160 wounded, while 70 officers and 1,600 men were taken prisoners. Superior speed carried our ships within range and superior gunnery, not superior armor, protected our men and destroyed the enemy. None of the Spanish ships was saved, though at least two of them might have

been by prompt effort, but the Spanish naval power was wiped out. The Spanish authorities did, indeed, start a squadron eastward as a threat to Dewey at Manila, but it was not an effective squadron, and a threat of a Yankee squadron on the Spanish coast stopped it. The destruction of Cervera's squadron decided the war.

Nevertheless it is useful to point out that when the hulls of the wrecked Spanish ships had been examined it was found that out of more than 8,000 shots fired at them, only 123 struck home. To reach 123 hits the holes made by 6-pounders in the smokestacks were counted. If compared with what our gunners now do that record is but little short of ridiculous.

XII

OUR NAVY AS IT IS

As a result of the war with Spain we found ourselves in possession of the Philippine Islands and Porto Rico. It has been definitely determined that we shall retain the government of these islands until the people thereof are fully capable of governing themselves, and the chances are that as fast as they reach that state of enlightenment they will rejoice that they live under the flag that first gave them opportunity for development. These islands we must protect. For many years we have had the Monroe Doctrine to uphold. No foreign nation shall obtain control of another foot of soil on either of the Americas. And in defence of this doctrine we are as likely to be obliged to send a squadron to protect Rio Grande do Sul in southern Brazil as to any other part of the continent. We are building the Panama Canal and we shall have to defend that as well as the new-made republic of Panama. We have determined that our merchants shall not be shut out of such markets as China and other similar powers afford by unfair "spheres of influence."

In view of the obligations that we have assumed as a world Power the old-time talk about the advantages of our situation with an ocean dividing us from the other great Powers of the world, and of needing coast-defence ships only is puerile.

When we had no navy worth mention before the War of 1812 we suffered from aggressions that drove us to war.

When our navy was strong after that war even the slaver pirates that carried the flag on the coast of Africa were unmolested by foreign warships. When at about the year 1848 our navy was again weak, aggressions were begun once more, but the building of the *Merrimac* and the *Hartford*, and the casting of the Dahlgren gun saved us from the horrors of a foreign war. During the Civil War we were saved from intervention and foreign aggression solely by the strength of the navy. Eight years after the Civil War our citizens were murdered in Cuba, the flag was outraged, and the whole Nation humiliated because our navy had been allowed to dwindle and all but die. When in 1893 the territory of Venezuela was threatened the mere fact that we were building and had facilities for continuing to build a new navy made the aggressor willing to leave its dispute with the little South American republic to a just tribunal.

As we have had war or dastardly submission to wrong when our navy was weak, and peace when our navy was strong, so in future shall we have peace, or war and humiliation, according as we build or neglect our guns afloat. After Japan's war with China the Powers of Europe gathered around the weak little brown "heathen" and robbed him of the fruits of his victory. His navy was then weak. After the war with Russia the whole world gathered to applaud the little brown giant. His navy was strong. Because of the strength of her navy Japan will have peace hereafter.

Our navy *materiel*, to which we must look for the preservation of peace, consists of four types of ships: battleships, cruisers, torpedo-boats, and auxiliaries. There are subdivisions, also, of each of these classes. Thus, we have battleships like the *Louisiana* (16,000 tons), that is now afloat, which have powerful guns, ample armor, and a suf-

ficient coal capacity to enable them to steam across the ocean and arrive in fighting trim. These are sea-going battleships. Then we have the *Oregon* class (10,524 tons), that carry heavy guns and thick armor but have a coal capacity that keeps them near a base of supplies. With them are to be classed the monitors, though the monitor is fit only for smooth water. These are coast-defence ships.

All of our battleships carry 12-inch guns in the main turrets except some of the older ones which carry 13-inch. For the turrets on the rail 8-inch guns are provided while the broadside guns vary from 5-inch in the *Iowa* to 7-inch in the later, like the *Louisiana*. All carry torpedo tubes also. The water-line armor varies from eighteen inches in the *Oregon* class down to nine in the latest. The turrets are thicker or thinner according to the gun. The 12-inch guns are now protected by 12-inch armor, and the 8-inch by 6.5. Acting on the theory that a battleship should depend on armor instead of gun power for protection, engine power has been sacrificed to thickness of plate. Our very latest ships that have been laid down are designed for nineteen knots; all others for eighteen or less.

In the cruiser class of ships are found the armored cruisers, the protected cruisers, the gunboats, and the scouts. In the armored cruiser speed is of the first consideration, guns second, and armor third. We built the *New York* with a speed of twenty-one knots; we put 8-inch guns in her turrets and 4-inch in the broadside, and we gave her a broadside belt of armor four inches thick. Our latest, the *Montana* class, are designed for a speed of twenty-two knots; they carry four 10-inch guns in turrets and sixteen 6-inch in broadside, and the armor belt is five inches thick. All these cruisers are provided with torpedo tubes.

All the cruisers, and all the battleships as well, have an

armor deck curved over the vitals. The *New York* has a displacement of 8,480 tons and the *Montana* of 14,500.

Neither the protected cruisers nor gunboats need be described here. For while Dewey made the *Olympia* do a battleship job at Cavite Point, it is to the battleships that we must look as peace-makers. But a word must be said for a new class of cruisers recently designed and called scouts, because scouting for the enemy is their business. These vessels displace 3,750 tons, they are engined for twenty-five knots an hour, and they carry a battery of 3-inch guns.

The torpedo-boat must also have mention because the editors of our periodicals who go off at half-cock were quite confident, at the beginning of the Japanese-Russian war, that the torpedo-boat was to take the place of the battleship. The torpedo-boat whether it is built to work on the surface of the water, or beneath it, is a most useful little ship. In the night or in thick weather it can work havoc among an enemy's ships that are found within reach. The well-handled submarine can probably do more to keep a blockader awake than any other style of small boat. For the defence of coal stations in distant parts the submarine boat seems to be well adapted. We have sixteen torpedo-boat destroyers, which are large torpedo-boats, thirty-five torpedo-boats, and twelve submarines, besides the old wooden *Stiletto*.

Since the Japanese-Russian war it has been seen that the battleship is the only ship worth building for battle purposes, and that such a ship ought to be armed with the most powerful guns only—should carry no intermediate calibres such as the 7-inch and the 8-inch guns. The British, the French, the Germans, the Japanese and other nations have planned ships of 18,000 tons and upward, which are not only to carry full batteries of the heaviest

guns, but they are to have engines to give them cruiser speed, a speed that will enable them to get into battle with even the most modest enemy. If we are to defend the Rio Grand do Sul and Panama—if in our dealings with other peoples we would “not be influenced, or even be suspected of being influenced, by a consciousness of weakness on the sea,” we must have a few units of battle not only equal to the best but a little better than any. We already have in hand two ships—the *South Carolina* class—designed to carry eight 12-inch guns on a displacement of something over 16,000 tons. The guns are so placed that all can be fired in either broadside. They are able ships for the size. But if either was to meet a 12-inch-gun ship as designed in Europe she would rank about as the *Essex* ranked with the *Phæbe* in the battle of Valparaiso. For they are under in size, under in the number of guns and, what is worse, they are so slow that they could get into the battle line only by favor of the enemy. Appreciating these facts Congress, in the session of 1905-6, provided for one ship that should be more powerful than any then designed abroad. And at this writing (February, 1907), a bill has just been passed providing for one more of the same desirable power. The day when we will allow the other nations of the world to do the experimenting for us has passed, presumedly, and we may therefore hope that the reputation which our battleships have had in times past will be maintained.

In the matter of cruisers our *Montana* class has a speed of twenty-two knots, and each is armed with four 10-inch guns and sixteen 6-inch. The corresponding class in the British navy carries four 9.2-inch guns and twelve 7.5 inch in the broadside, while their speed is at least twenty-three knots, and because turbine engines have been adopted, it is probable that they will attain to twenty-five knots.

Even in the submarines we are behind. Where we have

twelve small ones that are able to make six or eight miles an hour under water and eight or nine awash, the British have built a number that make ten miles under water and fifteen awash, while plans have been drawn for others that are not only still more efficient in these respects, but that are to carry guns so that they can be used as surface torpedo-boats as well as submarines.

These facts are of particular importance. At the end of the Civil War we had a navy that, as compared with other navies, was stronger than our present navy, and yet eight years of neglect placed it so far behind all other navies that the Spanish felt safe in slaughtering American citizens in cold blood, and in placing armed soldiers to imprison an American consul. If we neglect our navy now it will more rapidly fall behind than it did at the end of the Civil War. But if we continue to build a few ships, from year to year, each to be the most efficient possible in its class, we shall maintain the position we have held since the Spanish war—we shall be so strong at all times that no people or ruler, however ambitious and aggressive, will dare to make war upon us.

XIII

ORGANIZATION OF THE NAVY

THE President of the United States is the commander-in-chief of the navy, but for the immediate supervision of the naval work there is a Secretary of the Navy, who is a member of the President's Cabinet. The Navy Department was established by the act of Congress dated April 30, 1798. Theretofore the naval forces were under the War Department, or the direct control of Congress.

For the good of the service the work of the Navy Department is divided among eight bureaus. The Bureau of Yards and Docks has charge of all the naval stations, including the shops and machinery and coal storage.

The Bureau of Equipment provides for the outfit of the ships; it supplies the coal which the Bureau of Yards and Docks keeps on storage, and all other ship equipment, such as anchors, cables, rope, canvas, electrical apparatus, etc. The department of astronomical observations is a most important branch of its work.

Under the direct control of the Bureau of Navigation are found the Office of Naval Intelligence, the Naval Academy, the Naval Home, the Naval War College that gives the officers a post-graduate course, the Naval Training Stations, and all the ships that are in commission.

The Bureau of Ordnance provides the guns, torpedoes, and ammunition.

The Bureau of Construction and Repairs has immediate charge of the building of the ships, whether in the navy

yards or by contract, and it repairs the ships, for which work the Bureau of Yards furnishes the facilities.

The Bureau of Steam Engineering has charge of all the machinery of the navy.

The Bureau of Supplies and Accounts might be called, perhaps, the paymaster's bureau. It outfits the crews as the Bureau of Equipment outfits the ships.

Last of all to be named, but by no means of small importance, is the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, the name of which sufficiently describes its functions.

Remembering that the quality of the men behind the guns is the matter of most importance in time of battle, it is apparent that the Bureau of Navigation has the most important part of the work of the Navy Department, and that the training of the crews is the most important work done by this bureau. In the early days of the navy boys of from ten to fifteen years of age were placed on the ships as midshipmen and learned their duties by practising them. Farragut at twelve was for a brief time captain of a whaler that the *Essex* had captured. The chaplain was the schoolmaster. The system had some advantages. It worked well for the training of captains of frigates, and in exceptional cases, like that of the studious Farragut, most capable fleet commanders were developed. In 1813 Congress provided for the employment of teachers for the midshipmen, but all efforts to induce Congress to build a school such as the Military Academy was for army officers failed. In 1845, however, Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft, having observed that he might do it without violating any statute, secured from the War Department old Fort Severn, at Annapolis, Md., and gathering the midshipmen of the navy that were then not actively employed on ships in commission, he placed them under Commander Franklin Buchanan in the old fort for instruction. The professors

previously employed, and who had been scattered about at dockyards and on board ships, were concentrated there, and on October 10, 1845, the school was formally opened. On August 10, 1846, Congress approved the project by making an appropriation for "repairs, improvements, and instruction." The course of instruction was then five years long, but only two were spent at the school.

At the present time (1907) the Naval Academy still occupies the old ground, but every facility is now provided for training officers fit for all duties. The rules require that candidates should be between sixteen and twenty years of age, and perfect specimens of physical manhood. The mental examination requires a high-school education in candidates. The course of instruction includes everything useful, or at any rate necessary, for a naval officer, but he is made capable, first of all, to build and handle ships, build and handle guns, and build and handle marine steam-engines. With these studies, too, must be classed international law, for a naval officer must be a diplomat, while a study of French and Spanish, the two most important maritime languages of the world, is, of course, added. To those who are familiar with the books which many naval officers have had published it will be unnecessary to say that they learn to use the English language in such a way that what they write or say is not likely to be ignored, misunderstood, or forgotten. Better yet—indeed, best of all—the young men cultivate and are governed by an ideal sense of honor.

At present each Representative and each Senator has a right to appoint two midshipmen, while the President appoints two from the District of Columbia and five at large, besides one who is appointed from Porto Rico on the recommendation of the governor of that island.

To say more of the officers of our navy as a class seems

superfluous, for their work speaks and has always spoken for them.

In recent years it has been apparent that the people of the country have had as much pride in the bluejackets of the navy as in any other part of the *personnel*. Time was when the old naval sailor was trained only in the work that immediately came to his hands: he could make and shorten sail, steer the ship, handle the guns, and use the palm needle and marlinspike, but he was a drunkard so often that "Jack" was called a sorry dog at best. But all that has been changed by the apprentice system in the American navy. When boys enter the navy now the training they receive starts them in a fair way to become officers and gentlemen. The ambitious youth who enters the navy in these days is no longer a "Jack"; he is a bluejacket and he has a most honorable career before him.

By the act of March 2, 1837, Congress provided for an apprentice system, but it was based on the theory that a bluejacket should be a "Jackie" and nothing more. After the Civil War the system of enlisting and handling sailors was so little liked by American young men that more than half the crews of our ships were foreigners. It was then, however, that Rear Admiral S. B. Luce organized the system that has developed into that in vogue. The young men who enter the navy now must be from seventeen to twenty-five years old, and prime specimens of manhood physically. After signing articles they are sent to one of three training stations, Newport, R. I., Norfolk, Va., and San Francisco, Cal., where they are kept under observation in a detention building for twenty-one days to see whether any latent disease will break out. After that each receives from three to six months active training. During this time he receives pay at the rate of \$16 a month and is supplied with clothing to the value of \$45. Having

passed this course of training successfully the apprentice has opportunity to choose whether he will go into the seaman branch of the service or the engineering. If he will try the engine-room he will be rated as a coal passer and receive \$22 a month until he has mastered the work, when he will receive \$30 a month. Thereafter he may work his way up to chief machinists' mate with pay at from \$50 to \$70 a month, provided he has the ambition to qualify himself. And then he may become a warrant machinist with pay from \$1,200 to \$1,800 per year.

In the seaman branch of the service the youth may readily qualify as a seaman with pay at \$24 and rations. Then a number of petty officer berths are before him, such as seaman gunner (with special training at schools provided for the purpose of training), quartermaster, master at arms, etc. The pay varies from \$30 up to \$70 a month, a chief petty officer having a permanent appointment receiving the latter figure. In all cases the petty officers in both branches of the service receive rations and medical attendance in addition to their pay. Further than that the best of the men in the seamen branch have the warrant grades of gunner, boatswain, and carpenter before them, wherein the pay is from \$1,200 to \$1,800 a year.

When one considers the number of men who will pass their lives working for from \$1.10 to \$1.35 a day, passing many a day without work, and at all times paying for their food, lodging, and medical attendance, out of their scant earnings, the wonder is that the naval recruiting stations are not overrun with applicants. Rare indeed is the skilled mechanic who in civil life makes \$840 a year even when his daily wage is better than \$3. The proportion of enlisted men in the navy who receive \$600 a year and better is far greater than the proportion of mechanics in civil life who do. With an enlisted force of 30,000 men there

are nearly 9,000 petty officers. If in connection with the pay we consider other features of life, such as the education, and the culture that comes with travel and a knowledge of the world, it appears that the career of a man-o'-war-man is one of the most desirable in the world.

The facilities for enabling all apprentices to advance in their work are excellent, among them being certain schools to which they may go after a prescribed period of service. Particular attention is paid to the instruction in gunnery, to the handling of torpedo-boats, and to electricity. The apprentice with a taste for the work may become an expert electrician, or an expert in any other branch of the work of the service. And he may be certain that he will be respected in the service, and elsewhere, in proportion to his attainments.

But the whole of the opportunity of the apprentice has not yet been told. Under the present laws a certain number of warrant officers receive the commission of ensign every year, on passing a prescribed examination. This prospect is by no means delusive; there are a number of lieutenants besides junior lieutenants and ensigns now in the navy who have worked their way up from the grade of apprentice. There are also paymasters who have risen from the ranks through the grade of yeoman. The senior lieutenant who was an apprentice will be a lieutenant-commander in 1910, in the usual flow of promotion, and therefore well on the way to the rank of rear admiral. Let the ambitious and energetic young man who has a taste for the sea enter the navy. There is no career on shore where he can find more chances for advancement.

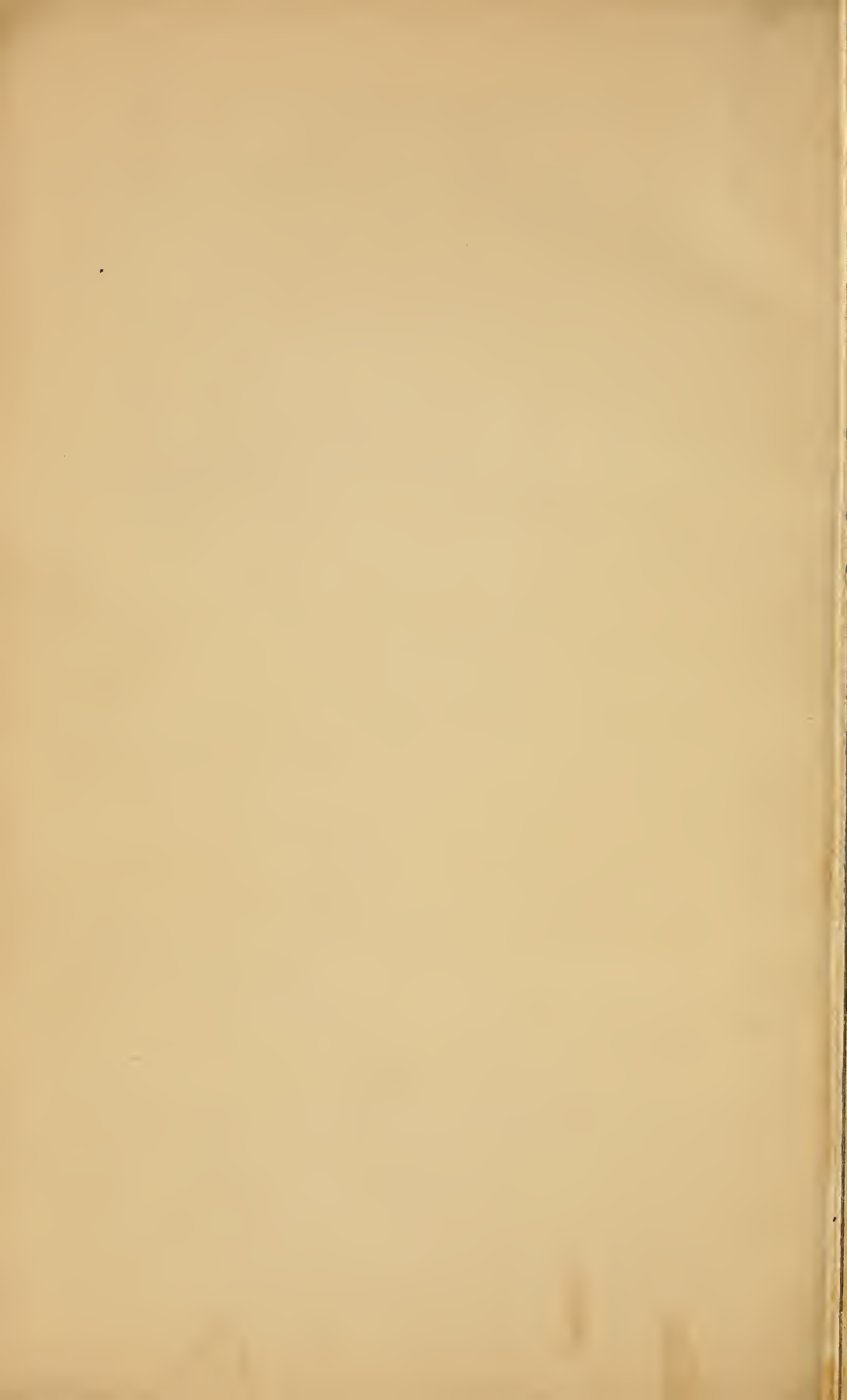
And even that is not all that is to be said on this matter; for when a man grows old in civil life he loses his position. From year to year the chances of an old man getting work grow less, no matter how he has lived. But the man-o'-

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warsman who serves his country faithfully is not thrown aside in his old age. On the contrary, he is splendidly cared for. For after thirty years of faithful service in the navy the bluejacket may retire and receive for the remainder of his life three-fourths of the pay to which he has attained. The chief petty officer with \$70 a month, though he be but fifty years old, can retire on a pension of over \$500 a year for the remainder of his life, when he has served thirty years. And let it not be forgotten that with the growth of the navy the opportunities of the ambitious apprentices will be more numerous and success more quickly attained.

THE END.







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