
REPORT
OF
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
DECEMBER 5, 1853.

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, *December 5, 1853.*

SIR: I have the honor to present the usual annual report from the Navy Department, exhibiting the condition of this branch of the public service, with a brief allusion to the operations of the several squadrons during the past year. I have ventured also to suggest for consideration certain views touching the increase of the naval force, the reorganization of the navy, and the modification of the laws and regulations for its government, from a conviction that many practical reforms may be introduced promotive of discipline and efficiency.

SQUADRONS.

The Home Squadron, Commodore Newton, consists of the flag-ship the frigate *Columbia*, Commander Pendergrast; the sloops-of-war *Albany*, Commander Gerry, and *Cyane*, Commander Hollins; the steamers *Fulton*, Lieutenant Watson, and *Vixen*, lately commanded by Lieutenant Swartwout. This latter vessel was despatched in the month of May to Tampico, on special duty, and on her return to Pensacola was put out of commission, on account of the appearance of yellow fever on board, which, in its fatal progress, deprived the service of many excellent officers and faithful men. So soon as she shall be thoroughly disinfected, and pronounced in a safe condition, she will be again put in commission and continue attached to the Home Squadron.

In January last the *Fulton*, under the temporary command of Lieut. Alexander Murray, was placed at the disposal of the late Hon. Wm. R. King, for the purpose of conveying him to Havana for the restoration of his health; after performing which service, and after having her machinery repaired, she again joined the squadron.

The steamer *Saranac*, Captain J. C. Long, detailed for duty in the Home Squadron, after having conveyed the Chevalier de Sodr , late Brazilian charg  d'affaires, to the seat of his government, joined the squadron in February, and remained attached to it until July, when, requiring repairs, she was withdrawn and put out of commission.

The vessels attached to this squadron have been cruising chiefly in the Gulf of Mexico, and among the West India islands. Disturbances at San Juan, or Greytown, threatening the property and rights of American citizens, the *Cyane*, Commander Hollins, was ordered to visit that port. The presence of his ship had the desired effect. The conduct of Commander Hollins evinced a gallantry and judgment which entitled him to the commendation of the department. The *Albany* relieved the *Cyane*, and remained at San Juan until her services were deemed no longer necessary.

The Brazil squadron, Commodore Salter, consists of the flag-ship *Savannah*, Commander Mercer, which sailed from Norfolk for her des-

tionation on the 14th of September, and the sloop-of-war Jamestown, Captain Downing.

The brig Bainbridge, Lieutenant Charles G. Hunter, sailed from New York on the 4th November last, to join this squadron, and on her arrival out the Jamestown will return home, by which time she will have been absent from the United States nearly three years.

The Germantown, Commander Lynch, also sailed from Boston on the 2d of December, to join this squadron. The store-ship Relief, Lieutenant Hitchcock, returned from Rio on the 15th of April last, entering the port of New York, and on the 25th July following was again sent out with stores for the squadron under the command of Lieutenant A. B. Fairfax, and temporarily forms a part of it.

The steamer Water Witch, Lieutenant Thomas J. Page, which left Norfolk on the 8th of February, though attached to this squadron, is not considered as one of the available vessels belonging to it, having, after a decree of the Provisional Director of the Argentine Confederation throwing open to navigation the tributaries of the La Plata, been detailed for the survey of the rivers Uruguay and Parana. She arrived out at Buenos Ayres on the 25th May, but was detained from the execution of her immediate duties by the state of civil war existing, unhappily, between the different provinces of the Argentine Confederation, requiring her presence for the protection of the interests of American citizens engaged in commerce, or resident in that region. When last heard from, on the 30th of August, Lieutenant Page was expecting to set out immediately on the appointed expedition.

Commodore McKeever was in command of the Brazil squadron the earlier part of the year; and having completed a cruise of three years' active and efficient service, he returned in his flag-ship, the Congress, Commander Pearson, to the United States on the 20th of July. The records of the Navy and State Departments furnish satisfactory evidence that a portion of this squadron did good service, in promoting the interests of the government and protecting the rights of American citizens.

The African squadron, Commodore Mayo, consists of his flag-ship the Constitution, Commander Rudd; the sloop Marion, Commander Purviance; and the brig Perry, Lieutenant R. L. Page. The Dale, Commander Whittle, sailed from Boston, to join this squadron, on the 17th October.

Commodore Lavalette returned from the command of this squadron in his flag-ship, the sloop-of-war Germantown, Commander Nicholas, on the 30th of March. The John Adams, Commander Barron, and brig Bainbridge, Commander John Manning, having been detached from this squadron, reached the United States—the former on the 23d of July, and the latter on the 26th August.

Commander Lynch was temporarily attached, by my predecessor, to this squadron, for a reconnoissance of the west coast of Africa, for the purpose of ascertaining the localities affording the greatest facilities for penetrating the interior of the country. He returned to the United States in May last. His communication to the department, detailing the results of his reconnoissance, accompanies this report.

The opinion has heretofore been frequently expressed, that there is

no necessity for a squadron of so many guns on the coast of Africa; and that notice should be given to Great Britain, under the terms of the treaty in regard to the suppression of the slave trade, so as to be relieved from its obligations. The commerce on that coast has, of late years, increased so greatly, and American ships trading in that region have multiplied so much, that I am satisfied that the squadron is needed, and is very effective in protecting our citizens, as well as suppressing the slave trade.

The Mediterranean squadron, Commodore Stringham, consists of the flag-ship the frigate Cumberland, Commander Harwood; the sloop-of-war St. Louis, Commander Ingraham, and Levant, Commander Turner, to which vessel he was transferred from the Cumberland upon the return of Commander Goldsborough to the United States to take command of the Naval Academy.

The steamer San Jacinto, Captain Crabbe, formed one of the squadron; but, in consequence of the imperfection of her machinery—rendering her entirely useless as a steamer—she was ordered home, and arrived at Philadelphia on the 5th of July. Her engines have been condemned, and new machinery is being constructed for her, with which it is confidently expected she will prove an efficient cruising steamer.

The steamer Saranac, Captain J. C. Long, left Norfolk on the 19th of November, conveying the Hon. Carroll Spence, our newly appointed minister resident at Constantinople, to his station. After having completed this duty, she will join the Mediterranean squadron.

The vessels of this squadron have been actively coöperating with our representatives in that region—more especially with the Hon. Mr. Marsh, in his efforts to exact justice from the government of Greece to the American missionary, Mr. King. In calling to your attention the movements of this squadron, I cannot omit an especial reference to the conduct of Commander Ingraham, while in command of the St. Louis, at Smyrna. An ocean of thousands of miles separated him from his country; and his small ship was alone in bearing his country's flag. Violence was committed on the personal liberty of a man entitled to the protection of that flag. The perpetrators of the offence outnumbered him in vessels, guns, and men. It was a moment of peril, involving honor and life. With prudence and discretion, yet with promptness and spirit, and marked determination, Commander Ingraham gave the protection, and the man is free. Such conduct, under such circumstances, surely entitles an officer to the most significant evidence of his government's approval.

The East India squadron, Commodore Perry, consists of the steamer Mississippi, Commander H. A. Adams, his flag-ship; the steamers Powhatan, Captain McCluney, and Susquehanna, Commander Buchanan; the sloop-of-war Macedonian, Captain Abbot, Plymouth, Commander Kelly, Saratoga, Commander Walker, and Vandalia, Commander Pope; the store-ships Supply, Lieutenant Arthur Sinclair, Southampton, Lieutenant Boyle, and Lexington, Lieutenant Glasson. Commodore Aulick, whom Commodore Perry succeeded in command of this squadron, returned to the United States early in the year.

The extraordinary revolutionary movements agitating the millions of China and threatening the overthrow of the present dynasty, and the

hope indulged of the dawning of a new era in the history of trade and commerce with that singular people, impart unusual importance and interest to the movements of this squadron. In addition to the ordinary duties of the squadron, Commodore Perry was intrusted with the delicate task of endeavoring to open commercial intercourse with the Japanese government. After visiting several smaller islands and having favorable interviews with their inhabitants, he proceeded with the steamers Mississippi and Susquehanna, and the sloops-of-war Saratoga and Plymouth, to Yedo bay, in Japan, where he arrived on the 8th of July last. After much effort, he succeeded in having an interview with one of the ministers of state, delivered in person a communication from the President of the United States proposing to form commercial relations with Japan, gave notice of his intention to return in the ensuing spring for a reply to his proposition, and, after making considerable surveys of the coast and harbor, he returned with his squadron to China, to give all needful protection to the interests of Americans.

The Pacific squadron, Commodore Dulany, consists of his flag-ship the frigate St. Lawrence, Commander William W. Hunter, and the sloop-of-war Portsmouth, Commander Dornin.

The sloop-of-war St. Mary's, Commander Bailey, left Philadelphia on the 15th of October, to join this squadron.

In addition to these vessels, the receiving-ship Warren, Lieutenant Stanly, at San Francisco, and the stationary store-ship Fredonia, Lieutenant J. D. Johnston, at Valparaiso, are under the command of Commodore Dulany.

The Fredonia was despatched to California, under the command of Lieutenant Chatard, with troops; after which she was sent down to Valparaiso, and Lieutenant Chatard was relieved by Lieutenant Johnston, who had been ordered for this purpose, and returned to the United States.

The sloop-of-war St. Mary's, Commander Magruder, which belonged to this squadron at the date of the last report, returned to the United States; as has also the frigate Raritan, Commander McKean, in which Commodore McCauley, late commander of the squadron, came.

The vessels of this squadron have been actively and usefully engaged in visiting the islands of the Pacific and looking after the interests of our countrymen. It is desirable to enlarge it when the department has the means.

Besides the employment of the vessels of the navy in these squadrons, the expedition for the survey and reconnoissance, for naval and commercial purposes, of parts of Behring's straits, of the north Pacific ocean, and of the China seas, authorized by the act of Congress of August 3, 1852, which was placed by my predecessor under the command of Commander Ringgold, should be mentioned. It consists of the sloop-of-war Vincennes, Lieutenant Rolando, the brig Porpoise, Lieutenant A. B. Davis, the steamer John Hancock, Lieutenant John Rodgers, the store-ship John P. Kennedy, Lieutenant Collins, and the tender Fennimore Cooper, Master H. K. Stevens. This expedition left the United States in June, and when last heard from had reached Simon's bay, Cape of Good Hope, and was doing well.

The brig Dolphin, Lieutenant O. H. Berryman, has recently re-

turned to the United States, having been profitably engaged in special service, under the act of March 3, 1849, "in testing new routes and perfecting the discoveries made by Lieutenant Maury in the course of his investigations of the winds and currents of the ocean." Much credit is due to the officers employed in executing this law.—The hydrographer has, by their efforts, felt justified in materially altering his charts, and much time and distance have been saved to the navigator. The world has been much enlightened as to the depths of the sea, the currents and temperature of the ocean. I am advised that "the deep-sea soundings, taken from on board the *Dolphin*, are the most valuable contributions that have been made to science, touching this interesting question."

The steamer *Michigan*, Commander A. Bigelow, still continues employed on the lakes upon our northern border.

With a view to secure the observance of treaty stipulations and afford protection to our countrymen engaged in the fisheries on the coasts of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland, early in July a special squadron, by your direction, was sent thither under the command of Commodore Shubrick, consisting of the steamer *Princeton*, Commander Eagle, the Commodore's flag-ship, the sloop-of-war *Cyane*, Commander Hollins, and *Decatur*, Commander Whittle, and the steamer *Fulton*, Lieutenant Watson. The three last named vessels were withdrawn temporarily from the Home Squadron for this purpose. The squadron returned to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, about the middle of September, some one of the vessels having visited every part of the regions frequented by our fishermen. No complaints were made to Commodore Shubrick, by any, of illegal or harsh proceedings on the part of the English squadron stationed in those waters, and but one case of seizure was reported to him. This vessel, however, was released upon the payment of the expenses incurred in the admiralty court by the proceedings in the case, notwithstanding the admission by the master of an infraction of the treaty. It is believed that every effort was made to assure our countrymen of protection in the enjoyment of their rights, and that the duties confided to the squadron were executed with fidelity and zeal.

After the return of the squadron, the *Albany*, Commander Gerry, belonging to the Home Squadron, was sent on a cruise to the fishing-grounds, and returned to New York on the 7th of November, having shown the American flag from the mouth of the St. Lawrence along the eastern coast of New Brunswick and Prince Edward's Island, and having passed over all the fishing grounds most frequented by our fishermen.

In the fall of 1852, at the earnest request of Lady Franklin, Dr. Kane, an accomplished passed assistant surgeon in the navy, was permitted to engage in special service, to some extent connected with the search for Sir John Franklin and his companions. He sailed from the United States during the past summer. While the officers heretofore engaged in this interesting search acquired much reputation for themselves and their country, I cannot but express my regret that in certain charts uttered from the English Admiralty Hydrographic Office, on the 14th of October, 1853, an error has been committed, and credit is

given for certain new discoveries of lands to officers of the British navy, whereas, in truth, they had been made, and the lands given a name, by the American expedition under the command of Lieutenant De Haven, which passed the English vessels and led the way up Wellington channel in the fall of 1850.

The Naval Observatory, under the superintendence of Lieutenant M. F. Maury, is doing much for science and navigation, much for the benefit of mankind and the honor of our country. For a few years past, a correspondence had been conducted between the United States and certain other governments on the importance of adopting some plan to secure a more uniform mode of making observations at sea. Ascertaining that various governments designed being represented at Brussels, in pursuance of scientific suggestions with which Lieutenant Maury had been conspicuously connected, I felt it my duty to relieve him temporarily from service at the observatory, with a view to his visiting Brussels. The result of his labors, in conjunction with other eminent persons, will, I have no doubt, prove vastly beneficial to commerce and navigation.

The letters accompanying this report from Professor Espy respecting his theory of storms and his meteorological observations, from Lieutenant Charles H. Davis in regard to the Nautical Almanac, and from Professor Alexander touching the scientific investigation and experiments upon the character of alimentary substances, are referred to for information as to the progress made in their respective works. No further appropriation for this latter object is considered necessary.

Lieutenant James M. Gilliss is actively engaged in preparing for publication the result of his astronomical observations at Santiago, in Chili. The report of Lieutenant Herndon, presenting the results of his exploration of the river Amazon and its tributaries, is nearly ready for distribution. The report of Lieutenant Gibbon, who was of the same party, but explored a different section of the country, and returned later, is nearly completed.

The indefatigable efforts of Lieutenant Dahlgren to give accuracy and greater effectiveness to gunnery, and to improve the ordnance of the navy, have succeeded well, and none can doubt the advantage the service will experience therefrom.

A law was passed on the 4th of April, 1842, authorizing a contract to be made with Robert L. Stevens, of New York, for constructing an iron war steamer, to be shot and shell proof. Difficulties of various kinds occurred, which resulted in a suspension of the work. In 1852 an act was passed by which the Secretary of the Navy was "authorized and required to have completed, with the least possible delay, the war steamer contracted for with Robert L. Stevens, in pursuance of an act of Congress approved April fourteenth, one thousand eight hundred and forty-two." Aware of the great changes which have been made in the power and destructiveness of guns used on board of ships of war since 1842, I expressed an unwillingness to proceed in execution of the contracts without an understanding that the proposed steamer should be shot and shell proof, not merely against those in use at the enactment of the law of 1842, but also against the improved guns in use at the period of the law of 1852. Having come to a

proper understanding in regard to the law, I shall proceed with the execution of the contract.

NAVAL ACADEMY.

This interesting institution is rapidly supplying the navy with numbers of educated and accomplished young men, whose early training, discipline, and instruction, under the guidance of learned professors and experienced officers, peculiarly fit them to adorn the service. The beneficial results already witnessed, demonstrate satisfactorily that it is now sustaining the same relations to the navy that West Point Academy bears to the army.

It is well worthy of the fostering patronage of the government. There are, however, certain facilities not now in existence at the academy, which, in consideration of the fact that steam is being recognised as the powerful agent in naval warfare, I deem all-important to give completeness to the education of an officer. The practice-ship attached to the academy should be a steamer, and there should unquestionably be a machine-shop of cheap and limited character on the premises. If practice in the sailing-vessel has been considered indispensable to improve the students in practical seamanship and navigation, is it not manifestly important, now that steam is the mighty engine for propelling vessels of war, that the practice-ship should display to the inquiring youth, in familiar experiment, the practical working of the machinery, and the art of regulating and controlling it? How much more secure will be the war steamer engaged in delicate and important service, involving victory or defeat, if officered by a corps skilled in the science of engineering, and trained to run and repair an engine; who can manage her destiny, if perchance disease, or accident, or timidity, or other causes, shall have deprived them of the engineer.

I feel that I cannot too strongly invite attention to this subject, as in the progress and advancement of the age this early training of the young officer is peculiarly calculated to improve his fitness for responsible service. The communication of the last board of examiners on this subject is appended to this report.

But in order to familiarize the young midshipman with all the minute parts of the machinery of the steamship, it is proposed that, on a cheap and small scale, a machine-shop be erected on the premises of the academy, embracing a complete collection of the various parts of engines and boilers, with a full set of tools to be used by the proper professor in imparting instruction in his department of mechanics.

There are now at the institution 116 students. The first class under the regulations of 1850, will graduate in June next. Captain Stribling was on the 1st of November last relieved from his command as superintendent, after a connexion with the academy for more than three years. I take pleasure in bearing testimony to the uniform diligence and marked ability with which Captain Stribling has discharged his arduous and responsible duties. The prosperity of the institution and the records of this department attest his fidelity. He is succeeded by Commander Goldsborough, an accomplished officer, who has recently returned from the Mediterranean squadron.

Your attention is invited to the report in reference to the academy from the Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography; the annual report of the board of examiners in relation to the discipline and organization of the academy; and also, the report of the commandant of midshipmen as to the late cruise of the practice-ship Preble.

I concur in the opinion often Expressed in reports heretofore submitted to the Executive, that it would be good policy to authorize the President to appoint annually ten midshipmen "at large." It is well known that this rule exists in regard to cadets at the West Point Military Academy. Its application to the Naval Academy will extend the benefit of the institution to a class of youths who, under the present system of restriction to a residence in Congressional districts and to representative recommendation, are excluded.

YARDS AND DOCKS.

I have visited the navy yards at Kittery, Charlestown, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, and Portsmouth, Virginia. The public property at these several yards was generally in excellent condition under the careful supervision of those in command, and the business of the government conducted with discipline and system.

The contractors for building the dock basin and railway at Pensacola having reported that they had executed the contract, arrangements were made for testing the work in accordance with the terms of the agreement. The frigate Columbia, of the Home Squadron, was the ship appropriated for that purpose; and a board appointed to superintend the experiment. A full report was made by the board, unfavorable to the contractors, who were notified that the works could not, therefore, be accepted. Deeming it of great importance to the ships-of-war cruising in that vicinity, as well as to the commercial marine, that there should be a dock at Pensacola, and in consideration of the money expended, I was unwilling hastily to abandon the works.

It is due, perhaps, to the contractors to state, that notwithstanding the unanimous unfavorable report of the board, consisting of a naval constructor, civil engineer, and an officer of the army and of the navy, they contended that the board had not applied a fair test.

I have consented to suspend taking action against the contractors until repairs are made, and another test applied, at their own expense and risk, which, it is understood, will be made at an early day.

During the late session of Congress, an appropriation was made for erecting buildings at the navy yard at San Francisco, and "to complete and carry into execution the verbal contract for a basin and railway in California, in connexion with the floating dock, as made by the late Secretary." Mare island was the site purchased and paid for on the 2d of March last.

The law provided expressly that the money for the erection of buildings, &c., at the navy yard should not be expended until the Attorney General gave an opinion that the title was good and sufficient. The question was accordingly referred to him, and an opinion given that the title of the United States was not sufficient. Under the circumstances, the money thus appropriated was not expended. Efforts are

being made, however, to perfect the title. A navy yard is very much needed in California, and no time will be lost in accomplishing the work so soon as the legal impediments can be removed.

The question of the necessity and usefulness to the public service of the construction of a basin and railway, in connexion with the sectional dock, in California, became a matter of investigation soon after I entered upon the duties of the department. Fourteen hundred and fifty thousand dollars was the amount originally agreed upon for the sectional floating dock in combination with the basin and railway. Subsequently the contract was suspended as to the basin and railway, and it was agreed that six hundred and ten thousand dollars should be paid for the dock. The construction of the basin and railway, submitted to the discretion of the department by the act of the last Congress, involves an expenditure of eight hundred and forty thousand dollars.

The question as to the *necessity* of the basin raises the inquiry whether this species of dock is so formed that it would be *unsafe* to place a vessel on it for extensive repairs unless protected by that structure. The sectional floating dock is composed of ten separate and independent sections. Unless it has the protection of a quiet harbor, it would necessarily be much affected by the undulating motion of the waves and be much at the mercy of the winds.

When a vessel is placed on the dock and floated into a basin, it may remain there for months' repairs without any danger from storms. My predilections are very decidedly in favor of stone docks; but Congress has decided that a sectional floating dock is preferable in California. I entertain the opinion that a basin is necessary to render it perfectly safe when a large ship is docked for repairs, which may expose it to months of dangerous weather.

As to the usefulness to the public service, my opinion is, that as it is proposed to build but this one dock on the Pacific coast, it would be rendered doubly useful by having the basin and railway, by which many vessels can be accommodated at the same time. Although the *railway* would be *useful* to the public service, I am not of opinion that it is *necessary*.

The opinion having been given by the Attorney General that the title of the United States to the land purchased for a navy yard was not good, I have declined to make any contract for building the basin and railway. On examination, I ascertained that the contractors had entered into a separate agreement with the government to erect a pier to secure the dock for three years only, and dock the vessels of the navy, provided they were allowed to charge for docking merchant ships for that space of time. It is expected that the difficulties as to the title will be removed at the approaching session of the legislature of California; when I shall proceed to execute a contract for the *basin*, unless Congress shall otherwise direct.

The sale of the portion of the land attached to the navy yard at Brooklyn, directed by the act of the last Congress, for reasons set forth in the letter from the Bureau of Yards and Docks, has been postponed. The letter accompanies this report.

The suggestions made by those who have preceded me touching the policy of a naval establishment at New Orleans are commended to a favorable consideration ; provided, however, it is previously ascertained by proper surveys that the bar will admit of the approach of vessels of war. The resolutions of the Senate directing the Secretary of the Navy to report whether it will be advantageous to the government to establish naval depots at Newport, Rhode Island, and at or near Beaufort, North Carolina, will be made the subject of a special communication to the Senate so soon as sufficient information is received from parties now making surveys.

Commander Blake of the navy was despatched to Key West, Florida, in October last, for the purpose of making arrangements for carrying into execution the act of July 21, 1852, for establishing a coal depot for naval purposes at that place. His accompanying letter explains the progress made.

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Attention has been repeatedly invited by my predecessors to the importance of further legislation on the subject of rules and regulations for the government of the navy.

The law for "the better government of the navy" was approved in April, 1800. This law, passed more than half a century ago, still exists for the government of the navy, having been but little altered, with the exception of that part of it relating to corporal punishment. Many amendments of that law, with a view to economy of time and money, have been rendered important and necessary on account of the great expansion of our country. It is not adapted to our present condition. When it was passed, our ships-of-war on the coasts of Florida, Texas, and California, were "acting out of the United States," and its provisions as to courts-martial could be conveniently enforced ; but if a large squadron should be at San Francisco, however important early action might be for convening or dissolving a court-martial, there must now be delay until the department at Washington can issue the necessary orders in each case.

The "Rules and Regulations" were adopted in 1818, under the act of 1815. They need much modification. In December, 1852, a board was convened for that purpose, under an order from the Secretary of the Navy. They reported a system of rules, which were approved by the late Executive in February, and a few copies were issued to officers. A question, however, has arisen as to the authority of the Executive to adopt this system of orders and instructions without the sanction of Congress ; and the opinion of the Attorney General having been, that without the sanction of Congress they were illegal, by your direction an order was issued rescinding them. The regulations of 1818, therefore, are still in force.

Controversies between the sea and civil officers of the navy, in regard to rank, have arisen, and will continue until adjusted by legislation.

I see no objection to the assignment of a proper rank to the civil officers of the navy ; not merely as a gratification of pride, but to prevent discord. It exists in other navies and in our army.

INCREASE OF THE NAVY.

The result of my investigation of this subject is a decided conviction that the maintenance of our proper and elevated rank among the great powers of the world; the just protection of our wide-spread and growing commerce; the defence of our thousands of miles of coast along the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, the lakes, and the Gulf of Mexico; the recent marked improvements in the art of naval architecture adopted by other nations—all unite in demonstrating the policy, the necessity, of an increase of the navy. It is true, indeed, our policy is peace. No lust of dominion, no spirit of aggression, marks out *our* course. Our national mission is, by the moral force of example, to illustrate the blessings of liberty and peace, civilization and religion. But the reasonable inquiry is, can peace be best maintained by the exhibition of comparative weakness, or by a display of strength and a preparation which, while it invites not a conflict, at least defies assault? What are the objects of a navy—what the considerations to guide us to a correct conclusion as to the size and character of the naval force of a republic situated, geographically and politically, as the United States? Do not wisdom and prudence admonish the careful statesman in his calculations for the future, while he takes thought of the commerce, the rights, the coast to be protected by this right arm of defence, at the same time not to be unmindful of the comparative force, efficiency, and character of the navies of the great powers with whom, with all our cherished love of peace, we may have to contend? Is it the suggestion of a sound discretion to rely exclusively upon the sudden preparation of a patriotic people when the perilous emergency starts up before them, and shut our eyes with quiet composure to our real condition? Or is it wiser to make that preparation which a considerate glance at the true state of facts shall persuade us is essential to our security?

I believe that it is only necessary to present the case as it truly exists to the attention of those who have the power to produce the desired results.

The American navy consists of about seventy vessels, embracing all from the ships-of-the-line to the smallest brig, schooner, and store-ship. Of these many ships-of-the-line, frigates, steamers, and sloops-of-war are not only unfit for service, but, I am advised by the Bureau of Construction, Equipment, and Repair, are not worth repairing. There are not now in the navy forty vessels which could be brought into service in ninety days, if needed. There is no steamer in the Pacific or African squadron, but one of two guns in the Brazil squadron, and we have no steamer of more than ten guns. The law only authorizes the enlistment of 7,500 men, which, with an allowance of a proper complement for each vessel, would not man a fleet of fifty vessels, with a fair proportion of large ships. On referring to authentic papers, it will be found that, in *point of size* at least, our navy is much less than one-fifth of that of several of the greater powers of Europe; and, whatever may be its relative superiority and efficiency, is not larger than that of certain other powers of Europe which are not of the first rank in the scale of nations.

And however much we may desire to cultivate terms of amity, these are the powers with whom we are most likely to contend in future conflicts, and the great deep is the theatre on which future contests may be decided. I am not unmindful of the mighty development of strength and force which the patriotism, the energy, the nautical skill, and mercantile marine, of a great nation would soon rally to our assistance. Other nations, in addition to their large navies, have *their* immense mercantile marine, and *their* mail steamships also. But, again, what have we to defend and protect? We have an Atlantic coast of much more than two thousand miles, stretching from the Rio Grande to the St. Croix, studded with magnificent cities and thriving towns. We now have a Pacific coast extending for many hundred miles, from the confines of Mexico to the far northwest; an inviting country, rapidly populating, totally unfortified, separated by mountains and deserts from the military power of the government. A new empire has, as by magic, sprung into existence. San Francisco promises, at no distant day, to become another New York, and our prosperous trade in the Pacific, amid the wonders of commerce, to bear the same relation to China and Japan which that of the Atlantic coast bears to the continent of Europe and Great Britain. We have over four millions of tonnage; American vessels, freighted with the rich fruits of American industry, penetrating every sea; and thousands of our countrymen, whom busy enterprise has borne to distant lands, or whom misfortune has wrecked on some inhospitable shore, all look to their country's flag to protect them. Is our present navy sufficient for all these great purposes of defence and protection? I am very far from intimating an opinion that we should steadily maintain a naval force as large as that of some of the powers mentioned. They have large colonial settlements on islands and continents remote from their seat of government. Their jealousies, their proximity to each other, their peculiar form of government, all combine to require for their purposes a far larger naval force than we need. But while they are annually enlarging theirs, shall we allow the disparity annually to become greater? The following warning admonition on this point by Washington, in his eighth annual message, enforces this view: "To an active external commerce, the protection of a naval force is indispensable. This is manifest with regard to wars in which a State itself is a party. But, besides this, it is in our own experience that the most sincere neutrality is not a sufficient guard against the depredations of nations at war. *To secure respect to a neutral flag requires a naval force, organized and ready to vindicate it from insult and aggression.* This may prevent even the necessity of going to war, by discouraging belligerent powers from committing such violations of the rights of the neutral party as may first or last leave no other option. These considerations invite the United States to look to means, and to set about the gradual increase of a navy. Will it not, then, be advisable to begin without delay to provide and lay up the materials for the building and equipping of ships-of-war, and to proceed in the work by degrees, in proportion as our resources shall render it practicable without inconvenience, so that a future war of Europe may not find our commerce in the same unfortunate state in which it was found

by the present?" I take it to be a fair proposition that our navy should, *at least, be large enough to command our own seas and coast.* Otherwise, it would seem to be not only a useless appendage, but fall an easy prey to the enemy and add to his strength. And, in view of this point, it may be well to remember the positions overlooking our home commerce, the Bermudas and West Indies, well fortified and held by other nations. It may be said that we have strong fortifications, and that they can be relied upon for defence. But our fortifications, with their conceded importance, without a navy, have well been compared to a shield without a sword. Perhaps it may be alleged that our navy was comparatively small in the war of 1812, when our gallant officers achieved brilliant victories, won for themselves imperishable renown, and broke the charm of the enemy's naval invincibility. Those were, indeed, great achievements, and we still have proud spirits in the navy whom opportunity would call forth, and who would again accomplish all that valor and patriotism could accomplish. But without enlarging upon the circumstances which helped to occasion success then, or dwelling upon the disasters that then befel our commerce, when we call to mind the formidable, growing, and, in numbers at least, the overwhelming strength of the navies of the many great nations with whom we claim equal rank, may it not be well to consider that it may even be possible to tax too severely the valor and skill of our small navy, however gallant? As, however, we have enjoyed a season of profound peace, with the exception of the war with a nation without a navy, it is, perhaps, not to be regretted that we have deferred enlarging ours thus long, as we can now advantageously avail ourselves of the vast improvements suggested by the tests of experience and the inventive genius of the architects of our own and other countries.

Steam is unquestionably the great agent to be used on the ocean, as well for purposes of war as of commerce. The improved system of screw-propellers, instead of side-wheels, is one of the grand desiderata to render the use of steam effective in naval warfare—the one being exposed to the shot of the enemy, the other submerged and comparatively secure. When the bayonet was added to the musket, the invention was applauded, for placing in the hands of the soldier, at one time, two engines of *destruction*; and the introduction of the screw-propeller has been similarly appreciated, as combining, without confusion, two elements of *progress*—the sail and the steam-engine. Side-wheel steamers are much impaired in their capacity for sailing, and consume too much coal for distant cruises. Those now on hand can be made to answer well for short cruises and as despatch vessels. The screw-propeller, being upon a principle not so much interfering with the sailing capacity, with the improved models of the present day, can be so constructed as to sail as well as the best clipper-ships, and reserve the use of steam for emergencies when greatest speed is required, or when, in a calm, a desirable position can be the more promptly and surely taken. The great necessary expense incident to the expedition to Japan could have been materially, indeed one-half curtailed, had it been in the power of the department to have supplied the squadron with screw-propellers instead of the side-wheel steamers, now costing so much from the consumption of coal.

I recommend, therefore, that the department be authorized to have constructed at least six first-class steam-frigate propellers. The opinion is entertained that that number may be built in our several yards in addition to the work now going on, and the repairs usually needed on the return of vessels from long cruises. It is estimated that they will cost between four and five millions of dollars, and can be built in about twenty months. With the exception of some deficiency in the supply of white oak and yellow pine, which can be without much difficulty procured, we have on hand at the various yards ample material to accomplish what is recommended. It will be perceived, on referring to the estimates of the Bureau of Construction, &c., that an estimate is made of the entire cost—of the cost without purchasing any material, and of the probable amount which would be expended during the fiscal year without regard to great despatch. This was done in order that the subject might be understood properly, and that such action might be taken as appeared wisest. As it is deemed desirable to make this addition to our naval forces as early as practicable, in consideration of the number of vessels which will soon be unfit for service and not worth repairing, and as it is important to retain on hand for emergency a reasonable supply of building material, I venture to suggest the policy of making the appropriation at an early day, to enable the department to build them with despatch, and purchase a supply of material so as not to diminish the amount on hand.

There are two frigates—the Santee, at Kittery, and the Sabine, at New York—which have been on the stocks since 1819. They can be altered and made to conform to modern improvements, and be most useful substitutes for two frigates of the same class withdrawn as worthless. I recommend that they be thus reconstructed and launched. Estimates of the cost will be furnished, should the suggestion be adopted. The old ship-of-the-line, the Franklin, is being repaired at Kittery, and her model much changed, with a view of converting her into a first-class steam-frigate.

Should these recommendations be adopted, our naval force will be materially strengthened by the addition of two first-class sailing frigates and of seven first-class steam-frigates, capable of mounting fifty guns each—there being no steamer at present of more than ten guns. My opinion is, that it would be sound policy to dispose of such vessels as are deemed unfit for service as vessels of war.

I cannot allow this occasion to pass without an allusion to the repeated failures in our steamships of war to fulfil the public expectation. I deemed it my duty to order a searching investigation into the causes of these deplorable disasters, and appointed a board of three engineers and one constructor to inquire and report to the department the causes of the failures, and the parties who were responsible. Their report is on file in the department, which may profit from the facts which it discloses.

Although I have endeavored to throw around recent contracts safeguards, by reserving the payment of one-half of the contract price until the work is completed and *successfully tested*, which I trust may insure good results, I unhesitatingly renew the recommendation heretofore made, of the importance of establishing machine-shops at several

navy yards on the Atlantic, and at San Francisco on the Pacific coast, for the construction and repair of machinery for steamships of war. Recent occurrences have multiplied cogent arguments in favor of that policy. With the exception of limited arrangements in the Washington navy yard, the government is entirely dependent upon private contracts. The yard at New York is regarded as large and useful, and well adapted, by its plans, for purposes of naval construction; yet when the steamer Princeton returned from her cruise on the fishing grounds, to be repaired merely, she had to leave the navy yard for a private establishment. The government can avail itself, when necessary, of the skill of private establishments; but it is submitted whether it is not wise to have a few machine-shops, in which the supervision and judgment of its own superintendents may be exercised as to material, workmanship and time.

It is submitted, also, that it is important that the department be authorized, when expedient, to increase the enlistment of men from the present number of 7,500 to 10,000.

The suggestions of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery on the propriety of increasing the number of the medical corps of the navy, are commended to a favorable consideration.

The recommendations in the report from the commandant of the marine corps are entitled to consideration. For the preservation of discipline on ship-board and active service in emergency on shore, the importance of this corps cannot be too highly appreciated. The improvement of the barracks at the several stations specified in the report, the increase of the corps, the policy of adopting some plan for securing the services of officers educated and disciplined as the officers of the army and navy, are subjects deserving attention.

This corps has ever been found faithful and useful. I am clearly of opinion that it should be enlarged; for, in its present limited condition, the active service of officers and men is frequently demanded before it is possible to qualify them properly with sufficient drilling.

I have thus frankly presented my views of the policy and importance of enlarging our naval force.

REORGANIZATION OF THE NAVY.

I cannot withhold the expression of my opinion that the present organization of the navy is not only essentially defective and unwise, but is, in its practical operation, working palpable and serious mischief to the efficiency and character of that branch of the public service.

I am not insensible to the fact that proposals for radical reform, however much suggested by the results of experience, observation, or reflection, are often viewed with distrust and doubt, as rash innovations upon familiar and long-established systems—clung to, sometimes, with tenacity, and abandoned, generally, with reluctance. From a sense of justice to the service and duty to the government, I venture to expose to view some of those defects, and briefly recommend remedies, by which it is hoped they may be, to some extent, removed. This subject has long attracted the attention of those whose occupation or association has brought them in contact with the navy; and, as it

has more recently won the consideration of Congress and the public, great solicitude is felt, great hope is entertained, that the much needed relief will be no longer delayed.

The great evil in our present system is, that neither merit, nor sea-service, nor gallantry, nor capacity, *but mere seniority of commission, regulates promotion and pay.* The gallant, chivalrous men of the navy feel subdued, dispirited, discouraged; their ardor is chilled; the fire of their young ambition and pride is well nigh extinguished. Many are leaving the service to which they have so long fondly clung; many remain only because of the cherished expectation of reform. The officer who encounters all the perils of the deep, wins the admiration of the world for his brilliant achievements, and makes his countrymen prouder than ever of their country, returns to rest awhile from his toils, but to feel mortified in seeing the indolent, the imbecile, who have known no toils, and have never met the enemy, daily promoted over him. It is true that the Executive has power to some extent to interfere and exercise a discretion as to promotion; but so fixed and well settled has been the almost uniform course, since the organization of the navy, of promoting according to seniority of commission, that the effort, by any Executive, to deviate from it without the sanction of law, could only be made at the hazard of charges of favoritism and prejudice, productive of a discontent as injurious, probably, as the evil itself. It is true, also, that the Secretary of the Navy has the discretionary power to place officers on furlough, and thereby reduce their pay. It has frequently been done. I have exercised the power myself. But in the absence of some uniform rule, sanctioned by law, the effort at discrimination, however sincere and disinterested, is so embarrassed with difficulties, by no means diminished by the interposing appeals of the friends of the parties, that this power, if not paralyzed, is divested almost entirely of its salutary and corrective virtue.

To illustrate the unfairness of the present system, permit me to mention a few facts, not with the view of invidious comparison, but solely to elucidate the subject. There are officers who have been in the navy more than *forty* years, whose total sea-service is *less than ten years*, who receive the same pay with those of their grade whose sea-service is *fifteen, eighteen, and more than twenty years*. These officers who are thus receiving pay prevent the promotion of those below them who have seen more than twice their service at sea, and have helped to give their country a name. There are inefficient officers, who have not done duty on sea or shore for *twelve, fifteen, and twenty years*. There are *lieutenants* who have seen *double* the service of some of a higher grade, and receive but *half* their pay. There are many *passed midshipmen* of more than *ten years' sea-service*, whose pay on leave is *six hundred dollars*; and there are their superiors in rank, of *less than ten years' sea-service*, whose pay is *twenty-five hundred dollars*.

The pride of rank and position is the animating element that imparts vigor to the arm, courage to the heart, buoyancy to the spirits of the faithful officer, and there is a peculiar sensitiveness to the slightest neglect. But in a country like ours, so full of rich fields inviting the enterprising, presenting so many paths through which the aspiring may advance to fame and fortune, what is there in the above outline of the

picture which our naval system exhibits to attract the accomplished young men of the day? The timid and the laggard are promoted as rapidly as the brave and active. The officer who has borne himself well in twenty years' service, amidst the storms and dangers of the sea, beneath tropical suns and near unfriendly coasts, on obtaining his few months' leave of absence, finds himself only receiving the same pay with those of his own grade who have lingered amid the comforts of home and rarely ever touch the deck of a ship. But it may be said that pay should be increased with rank, and that the officer of the lower grade should be content until he attains a higher rank. This reasoning, however, is met by conceding the correctness of the principle, but protesting against the system which blocks up the path to rank by imbecility or incompetency, and thus deprives merit and hard service both of rank and pay. I am aware that it is an easier task to point out defects than to prescribe remedies. But the evils of our system can hardly be diminished by time, and no reform can be expected without effort.

I entertain the opinion that *a retired list, on reduced pay, for the faithful who have become infirm; the discharge of the inefficient, who have no claim on the bounty of their government for services rendered; promotion regulated by capacity, merit, and not by mere seniority of commission; pay to some extent controlled by sea-service,* are reforms not only demanded by the condition of the service, by considerations of justice, but absolutely necessary to the preservation of efficiency and usefulness. There are officers whom the infirmities of age or the ravages of disease incident to the exposures of a rough seafaring life have rendered unfit for duty. They have been faithful public servants, ever ready to obey orders, and, from their vocation, improvident for the future. On retiring such men, to secure the aid of the more vigorous and active, a grateful country may well deal generously, and thus at the same time administer kindness to age and fidelity—justice to the deserving. I believe this plan of a retired list can be so arranged as to protect the treasury from the heavy drains of an odious pension system. They are now *all* on pay. Reduce the pay of the retired, stop the pay of the discharged, organize thus a corps of efficient officers, and, as a question of economy, this system, with proper guards and restrictions, may be one rather of retrenchment than extravagance. To apply these principles and reduce them to practical operation, may, at first, seem inconvenient and embarrassing; but in common with many who have bestowed much consideration on this subject, I am persuaded that the difficulties are far from being insurmountable.

A board of officers of various grades, carefully selected by the President, can be convened periodically, to report to him the names of those who, in their judgment, should be made subjects of the rules prescribed. Their report may be subject to the approval, or reversal, or modification, of the President. To enable them to act intelligently and impartially in this delicate task, the Secretary of the Navy can lay before them, not merely the Navy Register and the records of the department, but may materially contribute to their enlightenment by inviting, in the least offensive and most delicate mode, the opinions of the officers them-

selves, touching the fitness of those of their own grade and those below, whom association and opportunity have enabled them to know.

But I forbear to enlarge upon the details necessary to give shape and effectiveness to the proposed reform.

In the present system of pay, experience and observation convince me that there is a radical error. Although pay should not be, and is not, the chief incentive to activity, yet every consideration justifies the policy and propriety of, to some extent, regulating pay by service. The difference between leave of absence and duty pay is so very small, that it practically invites the officer to avoid sea-service, and really makes it more profitable to be idle than to labor. If *sea-service* gave a certain per cent. increased pay, under proper limitations and restrictions, the beneficial effects would be twofold. It would be but a just reward to diligence, and would stimulate officers to go to sea, so as to swell their income for themselves and families. I recommend, therefore, a modification of our present pay system in accordance with these views, and I am satisfied it will promote a *desire* for sea-service, instead of a reluctant obedience to orders. The pay of the forward warrant officers also needs regulating. They are useful officers.

The specifications, however, of the various changes which appear to me all-important in regard to rank, promotion, and pay, would unnecessarily extend this report; and with the expression of a hearty willingness to co-operate with Congress in arranging the details of measures to accomplish what may to it seem needful, I proceed to throw out a few suggestions touching the

MODIFICATION OF OUR SYSTEM IN REGARD TO SEAMEN, WITH A VIEW TO ENCOURAGE MORE PERMANENT ENLISTMENTS, TO IDENTIFY THEM MORE THOROUGHLY WITH THE NAVY, AND ELEVATE THEIR CHARACTER BY A PLAN OF REWARDS AS WELL AS PUNISHMENTS.

While the vigor and reform incident to our happy American institutions have been successfully infused into almost every department of government, and penetrated almost every fibre of the body politic, the neglected sailor, if we except the generous munificence of asylum and hospital, has too rarely felt the friendly touch of the legislative hand, and has continued to toil on under a code of discipline and laws but little modified since the days when the press-gang dragged the unwilling victim from the hovel to the man-of-war.

With a population approaching 30,000,000, full of enterprise and adventure, the difficulty of procuring sailors to man our ships-of-war, more particularly the difficulty of enlisting the young men of our own country, is not only attracting the attention of the public, but seriously embarrassing the efforts of the department to maintain even the small naval force now allowed by law. Hundreds of merchant vessels are almost daily darting forth from our busy marts readily filled with cheerful seamen, courting danger upon the element on which they love to live, while our ships-of-war are lingering in port until the recruiting officers, by hard effort, can manage, by the aid of the exacting landlord of the sailor-tavern and a small bounty, to procure tardy enlistments.

Our cities, towns and villages are thronged with athletic young men, struggling anxiously for employment in petty offices, and in every department of labor; and when disappointment and idleness beget dissipation, and dissipation reduces to degradation, and friends regard them as burdens to family and nuisances to society, then, and often not till then, do we hear the remark that they are now only fit to become sailors in the navy!

Why are the laboring young men of our country so reluctant to sail and serve under their country's flag? Is it a dishonorable calling? Why do our merchant marine find comparatively so little difficulty in procuring seamen? Is it because they care more for them—encourage them more—pay them better?

While I am far, very far, from proposing to relax discipline, to tolerate insubordination, to hesitate at administering punishment, sure punishment to correct the offender and to deter the innocent, I do propose some reform of our system, so as to *reward* the meritorious, to elevate the character of our seamen, to give more respectability to their pursuit, to cause them to become identified with, incorporated into, and a part of, the navy itself; to pay them better, to encourage them to love the flag under which they sail; and when they walk the deck of the man-of-war in a foreign port, and compare their condition with the sailors of other governments, to feel some pride in being American sailors, under American colors.

There is much in the character of the sailor to excite our admiration, much to enlist our sympathy. He is brave, generous, self-sacrificing. And when, after a long cruise, far from home and friends, tempest-tossed and weather-beaten, he treads upon the soil of his country again, discharged from the service, improvident and wasteful, unfit for land service, the victim of the more cunning, soon bereft of his hard earnings, surely it is but natural that this wanderer should look to his government to *care for him* and invite him to return to a service for which alone he is fitted, and in which he is so much relied upon to protect the commerce, the rights, the honor of that government. Without well disciplined, *contented* and efficient seamen, to man our ships, we may have officers of gallant bearing, vessels of storm-defying strength and beautiful symmetry, but the vital spirit will be wanting.

It becomes, therefore, a matter of grave inquiry, how shall this branch of the public service be modified so as to secure the best seamen and prevent expensive delays in despatching vessels whenever ready for commission?

In the first place, I deem it indispensable that some plan be adopted by which our seamen shall become more *distinctly and permanently a part of the navy and attached to the service*. Whenever a ship-of-war now returns from her three years' cruise, the *officers* are detached and granted a leave of absence for three months, with leave of absence pay, but the seamen are peremptorily *discharged—disconnected from the service*. If they have been meritorious, I propose that on their return they be granted an "honorable discharge," (to be considered a leave of absence on pay,) if within a certain time they choose to re-enlist in the service. This would possess a twofold virtue: of fair and generous treatment at parting—an invitation to continue a member of a family caring for them

during a temporary absence. They will soon regard the ship-of-war as their home; they will feel that they are part of the navy of their country; they will compare their condition with that of the seamen of the mercantile marine, appreciate their advantage, and cling to the service.

It may be also worthy of consideration whether it would not be wise very gradually, and never beyond a reasonable limit, to increase the pay of the seaman in proportion to the number of continuous cruises he makes, thereby creating an additional incentive to remain in the service. It is believed that by the officers in command, on returning from a cruise, filing in the department a certified list of those who are honorably discharged, there will be but little difficulty in simplifying and executing this plan, and so systematising it by registration as to produce the good results incident to making them a regular part of the navy, and thus touch their pride as well as their hearts. Many interesting suggestions on this subject were commended to the consideration of Congress by my immediate predecessor.

Another change, indispensable to the prompt securement of the services of first-class seamen, is to *pay them at least as much as their skill, experience, and character will command in the merchant service*. It is the effort of the department to regulate the pay of the hundreds of mechanics and laborers in the various navy yards, so as to correspond with the pay of similar employes in private establishments outside of the yards. Such, however, is not the case in regard to seamen. The appropriation will not permit it. It is true that necessity has recently driven the department to paying a bounty, which will be suspended so soon as the vessels indispensable to the service are manned.

Busy enterprise is dotting every ocean, and sea, and river, with vessels. The demand for seamen is proportionally increased. The wages now range from fifteen to twenty dollars per month; whereas, in the navy, the best seamen are paid but twelve dollars. Can we expect, therefore, to command *readily* any seamen, much less the best, under this state of things? My opinion is, therefore, that the pay should be increased.

But perhaps the most practical and important reform to promote efficiency in the corps of mariners is the blending together a system of *rewards and punishments—to encourage the meritorious, and to subdue the disorderly*.

The abolition of punishment by flogging, without legalizing some substitute therefor, has already occupied the attention of Congress and the country, and severely tested the forbearance and ingenuity of officers, and the character of our seamen. This subject has engaged my earnest and anxious inquiry, and I have no hesitation in expressing an opinion against its restoration. Having recently visited many of the ships in commission, conversed with the veteran sailors, and listened to the narratives of officers who have had the command of large crews since the law of 1850, my decided conviction, concurred in, too, by many officers who originally opposed its abolition, is, that its restoration would create discontent and desertion, and prove positively prejudicial to the efficiency of that branch of the public service.

But, at the same time, I cannot too seriously urge the policy of legalizing some substitute therefor.

It is said that the confinement of the disorderly and refractory seamen is but little punishment to *them*, but rather burdensome and oppressive to the *faithful*, whose increased labors make *them* the sufferers, and create a reluctance on the part of good sailors to remain in the service. This suggestion merits consideration. I propose a remedy, by which the punishment of the indolent and deserter will *increase* the pay of the faithful, and thereby tend to promote his *contentment* instead of *murmurs*.

The sailor on shore is reckless and wasteful; afloat he is remarkably avaricious, and daily counts over the balances due him, and estimates his reckonings of pleasures at the end of his cruise by the amounts he hopes to realize.

If the good sailor does the work of the indifferent, punish the laggard by a forfeiture of pay—not to the *government*, but to the *faithful* sailor—and he will do the additional labor with additional good will, and without a murmur.

If the *deserter* leaves his shipmates overtasked with increased burdens by his desertion, change the present regulation—let the deserter's pay be forfeited to the *faithful portion of the crew*; and not, as now, to the government.

Instead of investing the commander of the ship with this responsibility, in cases involving either a forfeiture of pay or a discharge from the service, let a commission of a certain number of the officers of the ship be detailed and constituted a court, whose decisions shall be subject to the approving power of the commanding officer. This would be very simple—would break the force of captious cavilling at the single judgment of the commander, and would obviate the necessity, expense, delay, and demoralizing influence of frequent courts-martial for minor offences upon the arrival of every ship in port. In very aggravated cases, this minor court could recommend a more solemn court-martial, composed, as at present, of a higher class of officers.

Let this minor court on every ship, with the approving, reversing, or mitigating power of the officer in command, have plenary power to confine offenders, with a reduction of rations, with or without pay. Empower the commander, upon the recommendation of this commission, to *discharge* offenders, with forfeiture of pay. Let the fund accruing from the forfeited pay of the imprisoned, the discharged, and the deserters, constitute a *merit fund*—not to be distributed until the termination of the cruise, and then to be distributed according to the judgment of this commission, based upon the conduct of the crew, to those who are by them adjudged on the homeward-bound passage to have been meritorious, and faithful, and loyal to their flag. The fund thus accruing from various sources, at the end of a long cruise would constitute a prize sufficient to stimulate the crew to win a share by fidelity to the end. And the forfeiture of pay, with confinement and reduction of rations, would diminish offences.

The establishment of this tribunal on each ship-of-war on a cruise would tend much to secure obedience from the crew to those in command, and thus, instead of flogging and other degrading punishments,

substitute close confinement, forfeiture of pay, reduction of rations, denial of liberty and shore privileges. These would punish the offending. Let the "honorable discharge," temporary leave of absence pay, the distribution of the merit fund, liberty and shore privileges, be the reward of the meritorious and true.

The estimates for the support of the navy and the marine corps for the year ending June 30, 1855, and for all objects coming under the control of this department, are, in the aggregate.....	\$11,730,515 19
From which deduct special objects, including transportation of the mails in steamships.....	3,379,344 00
	<hr/>
Leaves for the support of the navy and marine corps.....	<u>8,351,171 19</u>

The total amount drawn from the treasury during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1853, as exhibited by the statement of appropriations for the naval service, prepared by the Second Comptroller of the Treasury, was	\$12,091,120 87
From which deduct repayments.....	1,111,454 79
	<hr/>

Gives as the total expenditure for all objects under the control of the Navy Department.....	10,979,666 08
But of this amount there was expended for special objects the sum of.....	4,039,942 37
	<hr/>

Leaving as the legitimate expenditures for the support of the navy and marine corps for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1853.....	<u>6,939,723 71</u>
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On the 30th June, 1853, the unexpended balance of all appropriations coming under the cognizance of the Navy Department, was \$2,220,276 45. This amount will be required for the expenditures for the current fiscal year, in addition to the appropriations made for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1854.

Attention is invited to the reports of the several bureaus, embracing suggestions and estimates bearing on the portion of the public service belonging to each respectively. Experience confirms me in the propriety of concurring in many of the important changes in the present contract system, particularly presented in the report from the Bureau of Provisions and Clothing.

Under the existing system, contracts are taken too often by speculators, who, not being regular dealers in the article they propose to supply, merely embark in the business for the purposes of either selling the contract, or only complying with its terms if the state of the market will admit of large profits being made. Suits are often brought on the bonds, but a successful recovery is far from being generally the result of the trial. I trust that the embarrassments which surround this subject may be relieved by salutary legislation.

In the present organization of the Navy Department, there is a de-

gree of labor burdensome and embarrassing to the Secretary of the Navy, and severely distracting his attention from important business, which might, with great propriety and advantage, be otherwise distributed. The establishment of a Bureau of Personnel would merely add to the expenses of the government the difference between the present pay of an officer, and what Congress might deem a proper salary for one discharging the delicate duties of such a bureau. No additional clerks will be needed. It is hardly possible that a Secretary of the Navy can be sufficiently familiar with the character, fitness, and service of the officers of the several grades, to enable him to detail them satisfactorily for duty. If the head of such a bureau should bear the same relation to the Navy Department that the Adjutant General does to the War, it would, in my opinion, contribute much to perfecting the organization of this department.

I have thus, sir, taken the liberty to present for consideration many changes, which, in my opinion, will promote organization, discipline and economy. There are practical reforms connected with this branch of the public service which need not be obtruded on your attention in this report, but which every effort will be made to effect.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, your obedient servant,
J. C. DOBBIN.

To the PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.