







[See p. 174

FARRAGUT AT MOBILE BAY

From a painting by J. W. Ehninger, 1872

THE STORY OF OUR NAVY

BY
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PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH
U. S. NAVAL ACADEMY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
AND MAPS



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INTRODUCTION

THE purpose of this book is to tell the story of our navy from the modern point of view. It is an inspiring history, and its tales of individual prowess against great odds and of devotion to country and to duty in the face of death are emphasized, as they should be. But the author believes that the reader of to-day is interested in something more than a mere eulogy of our naval heroes; that he would like to know the real reasons for successes and failures, the importance of "sea power" in war, the changes brought about by steam, electricity, and armor, and the less familiar services rendered by the navy in the years of peace.

In these days, when "efficiency" is demanded in every occupation, young readers can readily understand that, where forces are even, victories in war come about, as a rule, not because one side is so much braver or more patriotic than the other, but because one side does better thinking and better shooting. Now the modern historical spirit is based upon research and guided by impartial inquiry, and the application of modern methods gives a broader view than the older naval histories which emphasized blood and smoke and victory, and exalted one side at the expense of the other.

The modern view-point adds much to the picture, for it shows not only the pre-eminent influence of brains, science, discipline, and target practice, but also the vital importance of freedom from political influence, and the high part which "sea power" plays in general history. It is certain that the splendid record of our navy will gain in brilliancy when set against the larger background.

W. O. S.

ANNAPOLIS, *August, 1914.*

THE STORY OF OUR NAVY

THE STORY OF OUR NAVY

I

HOW WE CAME TO HAVE A NAVY

Beginnings in ship-building, commerce, and sea-fighting in the colonies—Types of ships and guns in the sailing-ship days—Causes of the Revolutionary War—Early naval attempts against Great Britain—Paul Jones and the *Ranger*—Capture of the *Drake*.

IN modern times the United States exports quantities of farm products and still greater amounts of manufactured articles. But notwithstanding all the exports which are to be carried abroad the American flag is rarely seen on the high seas. Before the Revolution it was different. Crops were raised chiefly to satisfy the needs of the settlers themselves and there were no manufactures worth mentioning, but there was a large and constantly increasing carrying-trade. In fact, as late as the Civil War a large number of the American people followed the sea, and our flag was known in every port in the world.

The conditions of life in colonial days developed the seafaring habit. In the first place, the early settlements were naturally made along the coast within reach of ships from the home country. Secondly, the sea was the natural highway for travel and trade between the colonists, because roads through the wilderness could be cut only by the greatest labor and expense, and were much more

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exposed to attack from Indians. Thirdly, one of the natural means of livelihood was fishing, and that meant not only catching mackerel or bluefish along the coast, but long cruises to the Grand Banks for cod and still longer voyages hunting the whale.

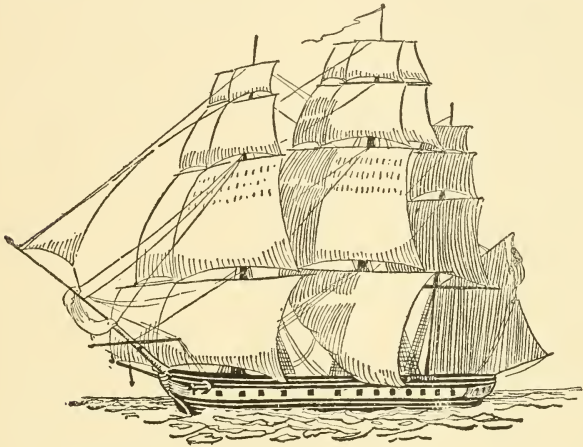
Even when the settlements were thin and poor the colonists began building ships for themselves out of the forests that grew to the water's edge, and by the time trouble broke out with Great Britain the Americans had whole fleets of vessels, big and little, busy in the fisheries and commerce. Indeed, the American carrying-trade grew so large as to rival in the Atlantic that of England herself, and the mother country laid severe restrictions on American ships.

The colonists had experience in sea-fighting also. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were pirates from the Barbary states or the Spanish Main hunting the seas for defenseless merchantmen, and some of these rovers were bold enough to pick up their victims on the American coast within sight of land. This state of things meant that every ship had to go armed and every sailor had to know how to handle a cannon and shoot a musket. During the wars with the French the colonists fitted out fleets to attack towns in Canada like Port Royal, Quebec, and Louisburg, sometimes acting with British men-of-war, sometimes operating by themselves.

Before going a step further let us see what ships and guns were like in the days of wood and canvas. From the time of Paul Jones to that of David Farragut there were three main classes of ships in the navies of the world—the ship of the line, the frigate, and the sloop of war. All three types were ship-rigged—that is, they had three masts, square-rigged, called the fore, the main, and the mizzen, respectively. The topmost deck of a ship was called the spar-deck. The after part of the spar-deck, between the stern-rail and the mainmast, was the quarter-

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deck, which was sacred to the commissioned officers. The forward part of the spar-deck, between the foremast and the bow, was the forecastle, the territory of the enlisted men. Between the mainmast and the foremast was usu-



A FRIGATE

ally an open space revealing the deck below, with gangways along the sides connecting the quarter-deck with the fore-castle.

The ship of the line was the battle-ship of those days. A ship of the line was distinguished by having two or more gun-decks below her spar-deck. Gun-decks were indicated by broad bands of white along the sides of the ship. It was the custom to grade ships according to the number of guns they carried, and ships of the line varied from "74's" to "120's." As a matter of fact, ships always carried more guns than their actual rating.

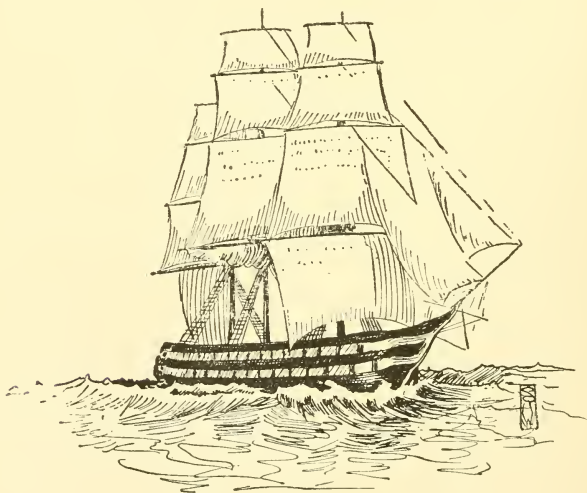
The frigate was the cruiser of the period. A frigate was distinguished by the fact that she had only one gun-deck

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below her spar-deck. Frigates were rated from "28's" to "44's."

The sloop of war, or corvette, as she was sometimes called, had all her guns mounted on her spar-deck. She was the smallest type, and corresponded to the gun-boat of to-day. Smaller vessels of this class were called brigs, schooners, etc., according to the rig. The largest sloop of war carried about twenty guns.

The cannon mounted on these ships were cast-iron tubes set on wooden carriages. They were all muzzle-loaders, and were fired by means of a vent near the breech. Some had flintlocks, but these were so unreliable that usually a quill filled with powder was thrust down the vent. A slow match touched off the powder in the quill, and that in turn set off the charge in the gun. The cartridge of those days was a woolen bag holding powder. About the time of the War of 1812 the Americans invented a better type of cartridge, which was a case of

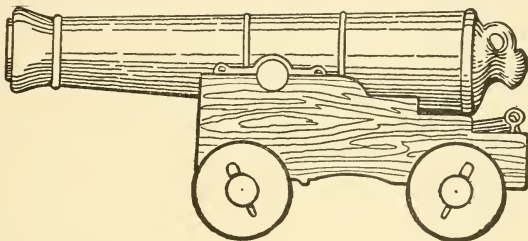


A SHIP OF THE LINE

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thin sheet lead. Just before inserting the quill, or primer, as it was called, the gunner ran a wire down the vent to prick through the cartridge casing, so as to make sure that the priming charge would explode the powder in the cartridge.

When the gun was discharged a heavy hawser, run through the ring in the breech of the gun, checked the

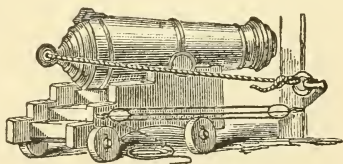


LONG GUN

recoil. Then the gun crew swabbed out the piece, loaded it, and ran it out again by hauling on side-tackles. There were, as a rule, no sights at all, and all the aiming was done by jacking up the breech with a handspike and pushing in or out a wooden wedge, called a quoin, until the gun was tilted at the right angle.

Shortly after the Revolution a short, wide-mouthed gun, the carronade, became popular for use on the spar-deck.

The value of this type lay in its deadly splintering effect at close quarters, but it had no range. The "long gun" was relied upon for shooting at a distance, and the gun-deck batteries of ships were usually composed



CARRONADE

of long guns. The heaviest long guns on our frigates threw a ball weighing about twenty-four pounds. In the year 1812 a gun cast in 1700 would have been just as useful as

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any other. Imagine the cannon of 1812 on a battle-ship of to-day! The combined broadsides of all of Perry's fleet on Lake Erie scarcely weighed as much as a single shell from one of our big turret-guns! And in accuracy, range, and rapidity of fire there can be no comparison at all.

The crew of an old-time man-of-war was divided, as it is to-day, into two classes—sailors and marines. This division came from the fact that in early naval warfare ships were crowded with soldiers for fighting purposes, but carried only enough seamen to handle sails and steer. In the course of time the number of sailors increased, and they were used to work the guns as well as the yards, but down to the present day a force of marines, or sea-soldiers, is also kept. Of their services to-day we shall say more in the concluding chapter. In the days of which we are speaking marines were used in battle chiefly for musketry. Since the sailors were brutally treated in those days, particularly in the British navy, tyrannical captains used to foster a bad feeling between sailors and marines so that they should not join forces in mutiny. The life of an ordinary sailor on board a British man-of-war in Nelson's day was the most degraded form of slavery. Flogging, even for petty offenses, was horribly brutal. In the American navy the sailor's life was no bed of roses, but twelve lashes was the limit any captain could inflict. In the English fleets men were sometimes flogged to death.

Thus we see that the sailing man-of-war of one hundred years ago, compared with the battle-ship of to-day, was a clumsy and crude affair; so much so, in fact, that a stout merchantman could be transformed into a fair man-of-war simply by putting a battery of cannon on board. That fact was a great help to the colonies in their fight for independence. To-day a makeshift navy would be impossible on account of the tremendous difference between ships of war and ships of peace. On the other hand, as the Americans manufactured neither cannon nor powder, guns and ammunition for the ships were

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hard to get, and, what was equally important, the Continental navy lacked organization and discipline, as we shall see. In that respect an armed ship is not a real man-of-war any more than a mob with guns is an army.

Now let us consider why it was that the American colonies should have found it necessary to equip men-of-war against the mother country.

As late as the French and Indian War the American colonists showed themselves loyal Englishmen by freely contributing ships and men. Why was it that soon afterward the feeling against England became so bitter that the same men were willing to lay down their lives for independence? The cause of the trouble goes back a long way. In the early years of the American colonies the mother country naturally left the settlers unhindered because they were unproductive and they had trouble enough as it was. In the later years, when the tiny settlements had grown to prosperous colonies, the same "let-alone" policy went on with few interruptions, and Americans learned to govern themselves without help or hindrance from England. At the end of one hundred and fifty years they had managed their own affairs so long that they had developed a very independent spirit about what they considered their rights. In fact, they had gone far ahead of their brothers in England along the road of democracy and self-government, and they were unwilling to turn back for any Parliament or king with old-fashioned ideas.

After 1760 this independent spirit of the colonists was interfered with by two things. For years there had been heavy trade restrictions on American commerce, but these had seldom been enforced. When, under George III. and the Tory party, these laws were enforced and others were added to prevent the Americans from manufacturing anything that might rival British products, the colonists of the seacoast towns became angry. They felt that these laws were unreasonable and unfair, and the more the king's

THE STORY OF OUR NAVY

officers tried to enforce them the more Americans hated the very uniform of the king.

In the frontier settlements of the West the colonists also felt that they were being meddled with. Their eyes turned longingly to the fertile plains on the other side of the Alleghanies, but the king, by a proclamation of 1763, forbade them to buy any of that land from the Indians or settle there in any way whatsoever. The frontiersmen felt that they had a natural right to spread westward, and any king or Parliament that tried to stop them had no claim on their loyalty.

These were the deep-seated causes of the trouble. They caused a smoldering resentment that needed only the stamp and tea taxes to set it afire.

And yet all this growth of feeling had been so gradual that Englishmen in America and Englishmen in England did not realize how differently they felt about these things until Parliament in 1765 tried to lay a small stamp tax on the colonies. Many Englishmen, realizing that Great Britain was becoming a great empire, especially after Clive's conquest of India, asked that the prosperous American colonies do their share in bearing the heavy burden of taxes. The Americans answered that they were loyal, but that they would not submit to paying a tax ordered by a Parliament in which they had no representation.

"This is impudent talk!" exclaimed the Ministry. "Isn't that just what colonies are for, to pay taxes for the home government? Who ever heard of a colony being represented in Parliament?"

At that time the civilized world was ringing with new ideas about the "rights of man," and the great Whig statesmen of England agreed with the American patriots that the attitude of the Tory government was tyrannical. But the king and his Parliament refused to recognize the principle involved. Where a little tact and statesmanship could easily have smoothed things over, they took to persecution instead. The result was that the refusal to

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pay a tax grew into an insurrection, and then into a successful war for independence.

When fighting began Great Britain was the greatest sea-power in Europe, while the American colonists had not a single man-of-war. But, as we have seen, they had a large number of merchant vessels which could be transformed into passable fighting-ships by mounting a row of cannon along their decks and cutting a corresponding row of ports along the sides. Of course such a ship could not stand up against a three-decker, but if skilfully handled she might hold her own against the smaller men-of-war and could become a formidable commerce-destroyer.

We need only touch on the well-known story of the beginnings of the Revolution. By 1775 the people of Boston had grown so rebellious that as a punishment the British government had closed the port and quartered on the citizens a force of redcoats under General Gage. But these tactics did not make the Massachusetts colonists love King George any the better; and the other colonies, instead of taking warning, sent the Massachusetts patriots encouragement and help.

On the night of April 18, 1775, General Gage sent a detachment of soldiers to Lexington and Concord for the double purpose of capturing the two arch rebels, John Hancock and Samuel Adams, and destroying the military supplies which the patriots had collected. The result the following day was the battle of Lexington and Concord, the first armed conflict between the British troops and the American colonists. The news of the day's fighting spread like wildfire, and the patriots sprang to arms.

Although the Revolutionary War had to be fought out chiefly on land, the people of the coast towns were quick to take the sea against England, and before the end of the war they had destroyed or captured about eight hundred ships. The first naval encounter of the war was brought on by some lumbermen of Machias, Maine, a few weeks after the battle of Lexington. In May, 1775, General

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Gage sent to Machias two sloops and an armed schooner in order to get some lumber that he needed for the British troops in Boston. When they arrived Jeremiah O'Brien, with about forty of his fellow-citizens of Machias, decided that the lumber must not be delivered to the redcoats in Boston, and called on the midshipman in command of the schooner to surrender. But he only laughed and sailed away. At this O'Brien and his men seized one of the sloops lying at the wharf, already loaded with pine, and made sail in pursuit of the British schooner. As the latter was very slow, it was not long before she was overhauled.

Among the Americans there were a good many more axes and pitchforks than muskets, but they piled up breastworks of the pine boards, and as soon as they came within musket-shot of the schooner fired away, with such guns as they had, to good effect. The English were full of fight, too, and the two little vessels banged away at each other, hammer and tongs, for over half an hour, at the entrance of Machias harbor. By the end of that time the English middy lay mortally wounded and the schooner surrendered.

When you realize that the latter had three 3-pounder cannon and 4 light swivels to use against the lumber-sloop, with nothing better than its few muskets, O'Brien's capture was something to be proud of. The victory must have been due to the backwoods marksmanship behind those pine breastworks. Shortly afterward O'Brien refitted his prize, raised the pine-tree flag over her, and made a very successful cruise against British commerce.

O'Brien's example was quickly followed by others, and swarms of little vessels darted out from New England ports, intent on plunder. It was easy enough to get a "letter of marque," as the privateer's warrant was called, and a good many did not even bother themselves about a trifle like that. In the earlier months, before English shipmasters knew about the breaking out of war, these priva-

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teers did a good deal of damage, but most of them were afterward captured by the British blockading squadrons.

It was not so easy to collect a Continental navy, because there was a great difference between the hard discipline and small pay of a man-of-war and the happy-go-lucky ways of a privateer with its tempting chances of booty. This is a point to be remembered when we read later on of the poor class of men who formed the crew of the *Ranger*. Another difficulty was the jealousy of the colonies toward one another, which time and time again would have wrecked the cause of independence had it not been for the genius and patience of Washington. Several of the colonies organized navies of their own and kept their ships and men in home waters for selfish reasons. So it was that those who toiled to build up a Continental navy had to make the best of materials that were left by the privateers and the colonies.

But the Revolutionary leaders saw from the first that a Continental navy was indispensable, and early in 1776 a fleet of eight small vessels was put together under the command of an old sea-captain named Esek Hopkins. Great things were hoped of this force, but it made a cruise to the Bahamas and back again much after the style of the King of France and his four thousand men, "who marched up the hill and then marched down again." In short, the whole expedition was a fizzle.

This was very discouraging, but the men who guided our affairs during the Revolution were not the kind to give up at the first failure. They went doggedly to work again, scraping together money, ships, men, and supplies as best they could. Many a timely capture of arms, clothing, and powder was made by these little vessels, especially in the early months of the war, that enabled Washington's army to keep on fighting.

Besides the difficulties already hinted at there was the greatest confusion in the management of the Continental navy. For example, there was no proper record kept, and

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if an officer lost his commission there was nothing to prove his claim for pay after the war. Gustavus Conyngham, one of the most daring of American sailors, one day had to turn over his commission to Ben Franklin in Paris. Somehow it got lost there, and after the war Conyngham never got any recognition of his rank or full payment of the

money due him from the government. The missing document turned up in a Paris book-shop nearly a hundred years after the poor old hero had gone broken-hearted to his grave.

There was no organization. Almost any official could make out a commission for a naval officer. At the same time there was no method of promotion. For instance, Paul Jones was the senior lieutenant in Hopkins's fleet, and from the first showed so much ability that the old commodore became very jealous of him. Thirteen men were promoted over Jones's head simply because they had political influence behind them.



UNIFORM OF A CAP-
TAIN, REVOLUTION-
ARY WAR

Notwithstanding all its drawbacks, the little Continental navy had no lack of heroic commanders. Men like Barry, Biddle, Wickes, and Conyngham left in

their deeds a fine tradition for the American navy to follow. But one man stands above all—John Paul Jones—and his wonderful story should be known by every American.

Of his career before the Revolution only one point need be touched on here—namely, that while he was a youngster, long before he emigrated to America, he served some time as acting midshipman in the royal navy. When he realized that there was no chance for a poor boy in the British navy he left to enter the merchant marine, but his experience with the organization and discipline of an

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English man-of-war must have been worth a good deal to him when he was fighting under the Stars and Stripes.

At the outbreak of the war he threw himself into the cause of his adopted country, and from the first distinguished himself by his courage and skill. The enmity of old Hopkins kept him more than once from receiving the command that he deserved, and when in the summer of 1777 he at last obtained command of the *Ranger* it was the first pleasant experience after a long period of injustice. He was glad, too, to receive general orders to attack the enemy in foreign waters, where he could use his own judgment without the meddling of politicians. It is said that he was the first to raise the Stars and Stripes over a man-of-war when he hoisted the colors of the *Ranger*, and it is certain that he was the first to obtain a salute for that young flag from a foreign power. Early in 1778 a secret treaty was made between America and France; and Jones, after much argument with the commander of a French man-of-war in Quiberon Bay, succeeded in getting the first formal salute of guns to the American flag.

In April, 1778, Jones started out from France on the first of his two cruises around the British Isles, and proceeded to take ships and even make landings on the coast right under the nose of King George. On one of these expeditions Jones tried to capture the Earl of Selkirk, whom he wished to hold as a hostage for the better treatment of American prisoners. The earl was not at home, and the sailors consoled themselves by taking all his silverware instead. This was in keeping with the practice of the British in their raids in America, with a difference that the English and Hessians usually burned the house down as well. But stealing silver was not to Paul Jones's taste, and he bought it back from his men out of his own purse and returned it to Lady Selkirk with elaborate apologies. There in the castle to-day the American visitor may still see the silver service, and in the bottom of the tea-urn lie the very same

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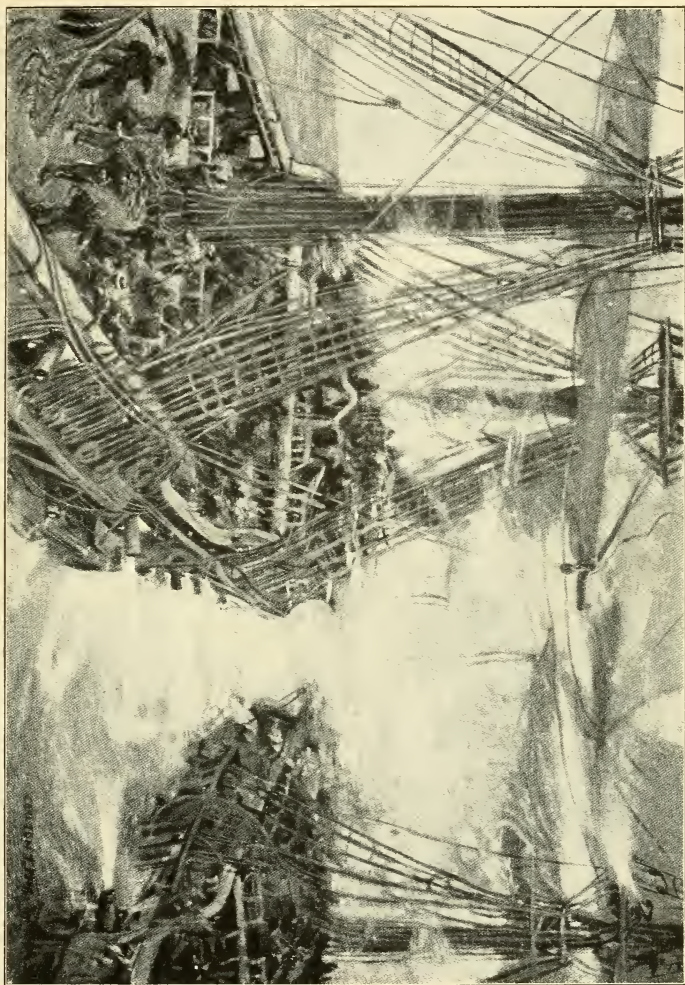
tea-leaves that were left in it when the sailors of the *Ranger* carried it off.

This piratical feat of the *Ranger's* crew was only the least of their offenses during this cruise. Officers and men were inspired simply with the idea of booty. They were inefficient, mutinous, and cowardly. One exception was a Swedish officer who had entered the American service, and showed more patriotism and decency than these Americans themselves. It was he who revealed to Jones the dastardly plot to kill him, put a craven lieutenant in his place, and run back to America. In fact, things were so bad on the *Ranger* that her commander scarcely slept at all during the entire cruise, and two or three bold attempts that he made against the shipping of the enemy were ruined by the cowardice and treachery of his crew.

Two days after one of these daring attacks, April 24, 1778, the *Ranger* appeared off Carrickfergus, Ireland, and lured the English sloop of war *Drake* into coming out to fight. Not long before Captain Jones had sighted this vessel in a harbor on the English coast and would have captured her by a surprise attack had it not been for the bungling of a drunken quartermaster on the *Ranger*. As it was, the crew wanted to avoid fighting the *Drake* and were almost on the point of mutiny when the *Drake* came on the scene offering battle.

But the English captain had made the fatal mistake of underestimating his enemy. He hurried out to catch "that pirate Jones," but neglected to make the proper preparations for battle, and from the first he was outmanœuvered by the American commander. Jones deftly threw his ship athwart the *Drake's* bows for a raking position, kept her there, and shot his enemy to pieces. The English fought stubbornly, but at the end of an hour and a quarter the *Drake* lay helpless, with forty of her crew dead or wounded. Both the captain and the first lieutenant died of their wounds shortly after the surrender. On the American side only two were killed and six wounded.

THE "RANGER" AND THE "DRAKE" IN ACTION



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It was a square, stand-up fight, for the *Ranger* and the *Drake* were well matched in point of size; but the important thing about the victory is the fact that Jones was able to accomplish it with his contemptible crew. After the battle the lieutenant who was put in charge of the captured *Drake* tried to run off to America with her and had to be hunted down and caught like an enemy.

In spite of his mutinous company Paul Jones succeeded by this cruise of the *Ranger* in bringing about the chief thing on which he had set his heart—namely, compelling Great Britain to exchange prisoners. Up to this time American prisoners had sickened in horrible prisons or prison-ships, with no hope of being exchanged, but when the *Ranger* carried off hundreds of Englishmen to France it put another face on the matter. The first exchange gave Paul Jones the backbone of his crew on the *Bonhomme Richard* the following year, as we shall see in the next chapter.

II

THE "BONHOMME RICHARD" AND THE "SERAPIS"

Fitting out the *Richard*—Cruising around the British Isles—Battle with the *Serapis*—Assistance of France and French sea power in the Revolutionary War—Yorktown campaign.

WHEN Paul Jones returned to France with the captured *Drake* he became the hero of the hour. Everybody had a compliment for him; and, as France was just then on the verge of war with Great Britain, the French Minister of Marine promised him a fine squadron. Just how much these promises and fine speeches amounted to he had to learn during a whole year of dreary waiting in France.

At last he took the hint from Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*—"If you want a thing done, do it yourself; if not, send." Acting on this advice, Jones went directly to the king in person and told him his story of broken promises and hope deferred. The result was that the king pledged his royal word that Paul Jones should have a command at once. The Ministry obeyed the king's order, but managed to give Jones an old hulk of a merchantman, named the *Duras*. By that time the American commander was thankful to get anything, and he renamed the ship *Bonhomme Richard*, in honor of Franklin's Poor Richard. Then he made long and exhausting journeys from one end of France to the other, collecting cannon for his ship. At last, when he thought all was ready, instead of receiving the guns he had worked so hard to get together, he was sent a lot of wretched

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pieces that, as he afterward discovered, the government had already condemned.

In addition to the *Richard* he obtained four other ships, the *Alliance*, the *Pallas*, the *Vengeance*, and the *Cerf*, all under French captains. The *Alliance* was a fine new frigate built in America and turned over by Congress to the command of one Pierre Landais, whose only claim to distinction lay in the fact that he had already been kicked out of the French navy. During a little preliminary cruise that Paul Jones made with this squadron in June, 1779, he had a taste of the clumsiness of his own ship and the insubordination of Pierre Landais. Once this rascal actually smashed the *Alliance* into the *Richard*, badly injuring both ships, because he preferred a collision to obeying a signal from an upstart American.

On August 14th the squadron put out from l'Orient on a longer cruise around the British Isles. Just before sailing the American commander was forced by the French government to sign a paper that practically took away all his authority over his squadron and left the French captains to do about as they pleased. As Jones walked his quarter-deck that day his thoughts must have been bitter indeed. He had just been robbed of his proper authority, his commanders were jealous and insubordinate, his own ship was a lumbering old tub that was slower than any other vessel in the squadron, and so rotten and worm-eaten that it was impossible to repair her. His crew were the sweepings of a seaport town, including Malays, Portuguese, raw French peasants, and even a lot of British prisoners, some of whom were already in irons as the result of an attempt to take the ship. The only men he could rely on were about eighty Americans—mostly exchanged prisoners—out of a crew of two hundred and twenty-seven officers and men. One of these American prisoners was the gallant young Richard Dale, whom Jones made his first lieutenant.

Nothing of great importance happened during the earlier

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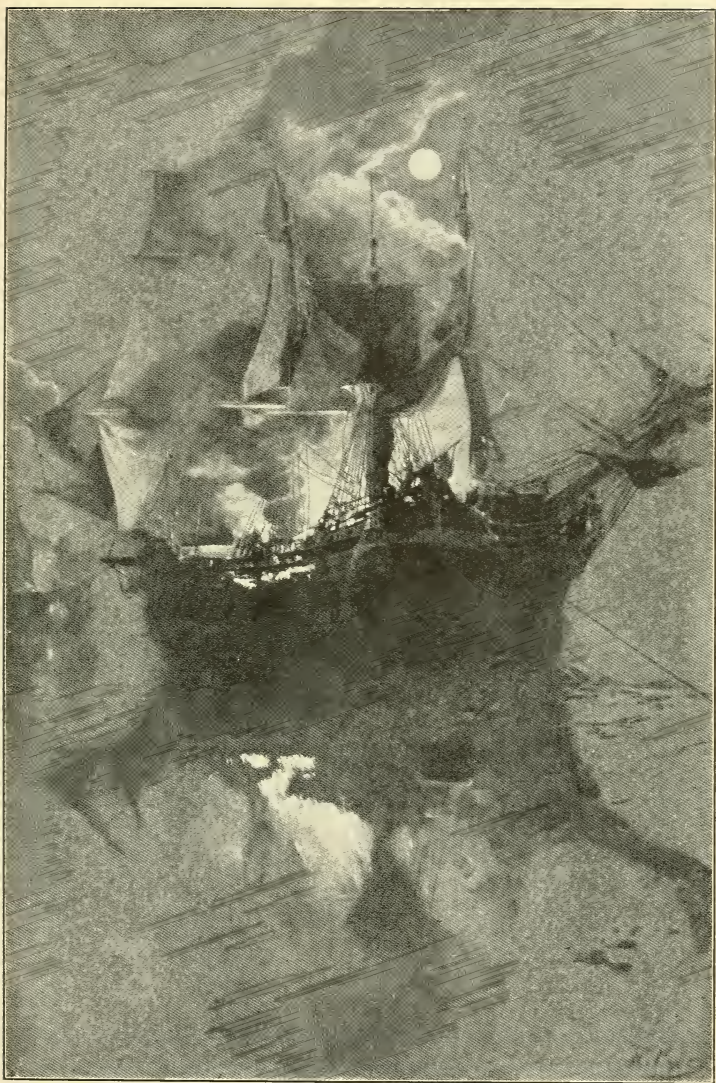
weeks of the cruise. The squadron rounded the British Isles from the south, taking prizes on the way. An attack that Jones planned on the shipping of Leith, Scotland, was spoiled by the inefficiency of two of the French captains, and all of them had shown insubordination during the entire voyage. One of them, the captain of the *Cerf*, had taken advantage of a fog to run away.

Early on the morning of September 23, 1779, the Americans sighted a fleet of forty merchantmen heading northeast from Flamborough Head on the English coast. These ships proved to be under the convoy of two men-of-war, one, the *Serapis*, a brand-new frigate of fifty guns, the other, the *Countess of Scarborough*, of twenty. The merchantmen promptly turned about and scurried back to port like a flock of frightened birds, while the two fighting-ships waited for the allied squadron to come up. Paul Jones, heading the *Richard* for the *Serapis*, signaled his captains to form line of battle; but Landais, taking advantage of the speed of his ship, sailed ahead till he could judge just how strong the English ships were, then turned about and ran away to a safe distance! The other ships held off also.

As the wind was very light, it was not till evening that the *Serapis* and the *Richard* came within striking-distance of each other; and meanwhile the English cliffs were black with people who had gathered from far and near to watch the battle.

"What ship is that?" cried Captain Pearson of the *Serapis*, as the *Richard* loomed near.

"I can't hear what you say!" answered Jones, hoping to drift a little nearer his enemy before the firing began. Again the *Serapis* hailed, and a moment later both ships thundered their broadsides into each other. At the same instant a red jet of flame shot up through the *Richard's* deck. Two of the rotten old cannon in her main-deck battery had burst at the first discharge, killing nearly every man stationed at them. After that the crews of the other guns in the battery refused to serve them.



THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE "BONHOMME RICHARD" AND THE "SERAPIS"
From a painting by Howard Pyle

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What a disaster for the American captain! Before that first broadside the *Serapis* was a far stronger ship in guns as well as in every other respect. Now, at the very first blow, all of the big guns in the *Richard* were silenced, leaving only a few light cannon on the upper deck to answer the full broadsides of the enemy.

Each side now tried to rake the other, and the *Serapis*, being able to sail two feet to the *Richard's* one, had all the advantage. She repeatedly got a position across the *Richard's* stern and raked the Americans with deadly effect. This went on for an hour, at the end of which the poor old *Richard* was a thoroughly beaten ship. There was a great chasm in her deck and sides where the explosion had torn its way and where, also, a number of British broadsides had smashed through. If there had been any sea running, the old hulk would have been swamped in a minute, but, fortunately, the water was as smooth as a pond. The slaughter on the *Richard's* decks had been terrible as well, and any officer would have been honorably excused for surrendering his ship then and there.

But Paul Jones was one officer in a million. There was no idea of surrender in his mind. He was watching his enemy like a skilled fencer, tense and alert to thrust hard at the first opening. The only chance left—and that a desperate one—lay in grappling with the *Serapis*. On that Jones set his heart. Once he almost succeeded, but the grappling-irons broke loose and dropped into the water. A few minutes later he succeeded in swinging his ship across his enemy's bow. As the jib boom of the *Serapis* ran between the shrouds of the *Richard's* mizzenmast Jones sprang to the place with the shout:

“Well done, my brave lads. We have her now!”

At the same instant with a few deft turns he had lashed the bowsprit so fast that when Pearson dropped his anchor to drift free the hawser held like a vise. Then the two ships swung together bow to stern, and the roar of battle went on at such close quarters that there was hardly

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room enough between the ships to use a rammer in loading the guns.

Meanwhile Captain Jones had called up his men from the useless gun-deck to fight on the upper deck, or in the rigging, but the gunners of the *Serapis* kept thundering away at the sides of the *Richard* till they had shot away great wide holes, through which after a while the shot passed harmlessly and splashed into the sea beyond. Luckily some of the stanchions were out of the reach of these guns, otherwise the whole upper deck would have crashed down upon the wreck of the lower.

Jones had now only three little cannon available—9-pounders—but he made wonderful use of them. One he aimed himself against the mainmast of the *Serapis*, the other two, filled with grape and canister, swept her upper deck. Meanwhile he had sent the pick of his crew, American marksmen, into the rigging and tops, and their musketry fire, combined with the grape and canister of the 9-pounders, succeeded in driving the English sailors below.

Things were looking hopeful for the Americans, and it is said that Pearson was about to yield when the master-at-arms, a gunner, and the carpenter of the *Richard* suddenly ran up from below in a panic and bellowed, "Surrender!" Jones promptly knocked down one with the butt of his pistol and sent the other two scampering down the hatch faster than they had come up; but Pearson, having heard the cry, took heart and shouted to Jones to know if he had surrendered. And Jones answered with the immortal words, "I have not yet begun to fight!"

The battle roared on; from the *Serapis* came the heavy thunder of her big guns, and from the *Richard* the sharp crackle of musketry. Once both sides had to stop fighting at the same moment because both ships were on fire. This was put out only by desperate efforts on both sides, and then the din of battle broke out anew. And all the while Paul Jones seemed to be everywhere on the shattered

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deck of the *Richard*, shouting encouragement here, directing a gun there, laughing and cheering, inspiring every one with his unconquerable courage.

Suddenly a ship loomed up in the moonlight. It was the *Alliance*. Exhausted, powder-blackened men straightened up to draw breath. Surely the battle was over now! But to the horror of the Americans, the dastardly Landais fired right into the *Richard*. A great cry of rage went up from the stricken ship, but the villain coolly sailed off again, having done all the damage he could with one broadside. There was no possibility of mistake, for the full moon made the difference between the black hull of the *Richard* and the yellow one of the *Serapis* plain enough.

Here was a fresh disaster, but it was quickly followed by a worse. The treacherous master-at-arms, shouting that the *Richard* was sinking, had released the English prisoners, and they suddenly came tumbling up in a mad panic, five hundred of them! Instantly Jones sprang to the hatch and with a loaded pistol drove them back, telling them at the same time that their only chance of life lay in keeping the *Richard* afloat by working the pumps, because the *Serapis* was sinking. Richard Dale was right at his captain's elbow in this moment of peril, and he held the prisoners to the pumps for the rest of the battle. By this stroke Paul Jones turned a disaster into a real benefit, for as the prisoners bent their backs to the pumps the gang of Americans who had been struggling there were released for fighting up on deck, where they were sorely needed.

One of the prisoners, however, had succeeded in escaping to the *Serapis*, and there he encouraged Pearson to keep on fighting by describing the desperate condition of the *Richard*. For a few minutes the English redoubled their fire. But by this time the American sailors had climbed even to the enemy's rigging and had cleared the upper deck of the English ship of almost everybody but Captain Pearson himself, who escaped by a miracle. One of them, sitting astride the end of the *Richard's* mainyard, was

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tossing grenades at an open hatchway of the *Serapis*. At last he dropped one fairly, and it disappeared hissing and smoking down the hatch. The next instant there was a terrific explosion. The grenade had touched off a pile of cartridges, ripping up a good part of the quarter-deck and blowing a score of men to atoms.

At this the British defense broke down. But suddenly the *Alliance* returned, and again Landais fired on the helpless *Richard*—two broadsides this time—killing and wounding many of her crew. At this point several officers advised Jones to give up, saying there was no use trying to fight the *Serapis* and the *Alliance* too. Surrender? Jones laughed at the idea.

Meanwhile, some of the shot from the *Alliance* had fallen aboard the *Serapis*, and Pearson, not realizing Landais's treachery and discouraged at the prospect of fighting a fresh ship, hauled down his flag with his own hands.

The surrender took place at ten-thirty. Meanwhile, the commander of the *Pallas*, shamed into bravery by Jones's example, had attacked the *Countess of Scarborough* and taken her after an hour's fight. The *Vengeance* had done nothing but look on, and the conduct of the *Alliance* we already know.

All the following day and night the *Richard* was kept afloat only with the greatest difficulty, until the wounded and the prisoners were removed to the *Serapis*. On the morning of the twenty-fourth the battered old hulk sank, carrying down with her the flag she had so gallantly defended. The damage to the *Serapis* during the battle had been chiefly in the slaughter of the crew by musketry and grape; her hull had never been struck after that first broadside which silenced the *Richard's* main battery. So it did not take much repairing to get the captured ship into condition to square away for the Dutch coast. Jones skilfully avoided the British squadron that was hunting for him and arrived safely in the Texel. Again he watched

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his chance and, although British ships were waiting for him, he dashed through the Channel and arrived safely in the shelter of a French port.

For this brilliant victory over the *Serapis* Paul Jones was knighted by the King of France and presented with a sword, and Congress gave him a vote of thanks, which was about all that Congress could give in those days. Landais was dismissed for his conduct, and would have fared worse but for the general opinion that the fellow was more than half insane. However, he always boasted that it was he, not Jones, who was the real hero of the battle.

After the Revolution Paul Jones had a brief and unhappy experience in the Russian navy. He died in Paris in 1792. In 1905 his ashes were brought to this country and they lie in the crypt of the chapel of the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

Little remains to be said about the Continental navy, because after 1779 there was practically none of it left. After that the French navy came to the rescue. But we must remember that, tiny as it was, the Continental navy rendered very important services in the early years of the war: first, by capturing supplies for the army, and, secondly, by keeping open the line of communication with France, the source from which most of our military supplies had to come.

The more we read about Monsieur Landais the blacker appear his cowardice, jealousy, and treachery. But we must not let our feelings about that particular Frenchman blind us to what his country did for us during the Revolutionary War. True, the French government cared little for America or Americans, but the fact remains that as a nation we owe France far more than we are accustomed to think. We are used to the idea that the Revolution was a war between the thirteen colonies and Great Britain, and that "we beat the British." But the truth is that after the battle of Saratoga the Revolution developed into a

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European war. In this it was chiefly the French who "beat the British," and we got the benefits.

This is the way it came about. In 1763, at the end of a war in which the French had lost everywhere, the French government had to submit to a treaty of peace which every patriotic Frenchman felt was an insult to his nation. Some of these men would not rest till they had got revenge, and in the growing troubles between England and her American colonies they saw their opportunity. Two of these Frenchmen really did more to bring about American independence than any one else except George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. We honor, and always have honored, the memory of another Frenchman, Lafayette, because he came personally to help us in the war. He was a very agreeable and warm-hearted gentleman, but he never really did anything. Yet these other two compatriots of his who accomplished so much for us are as unknown to Americans as if they had been Zulu chiefs. And we must not shut our eyes to their services simply because we know that they were moved by a hatred of England rather than by any love for America.

One of these men was Beaumarchais, a very clever man, who was a wit, a writer, a musician, a merchant, a diplomat—whatever he did he did well. During the first two years of the war this man poured quantities of military supplies into America. In the years 1776-77 he shipped thirty thousand rifles and two hundred cannon, together with a large amount of equipments, tents, and provisions, all of which were absolutely necessary to Washington in order to make his raw volunteers something like an army. Besides investing his own money Beaumarchais handled a secret fund contributed by France and Spain, at first amounting to two million francs and later still more. This money he spent with great skill and foresight.

It is scarcely too much to say that the skill, courage, and resourcefulness of this man Beaumarchais kept the Revolutionary War going during the first two years when the

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Americans had to stand alone. America owed more to him than she could ever repay, but years afterward, when he and his daughter applied for help in his old age, the country he had done so much for was so taken up with its own troubles that it had no further use for him, and he died miserably poor.

The other Frenchman, who perhaps did even more for us, was the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vergennes. His work was in diplomacy. He had been watching and waiting for a chance to get revenge for that treaty of 1763, and as soon as the rebellion broke out in the American colonies he began quiet talks with the ministers of other nations to get their agreement to his plan of making another war on Great Britain. The other countries of Europe, jealous of England's growing position, were only too glad to see her lose those rich colonies in the west. Accordingly France declared war against England in 1778, Spain followed in 1779, and Holland in 1780.

With Spain, Holland, and France attacking British possessions and British commerce from Jamaica to Calcutta, it was clear that England could never subdue her rebellious colonies in America. This war alliance with Spain and Holland, which had been so craftily engineered by Vergennes, proved disastrous to England.

Let us see how it worked out in America. At first the English fleets enjoyed full sea-control. After 1778 they had to reckon with the French in their operations on the American coast, and later with the Dutch and Spanish fleets in European waters. In this way the sea-power that had at first threatened to make short work of the rebellion became seriously weakened.

The campaign that practically ended the war was, as we all know, the capture of Cornwallis at Yorktown. The most important part of this story we hear little about. It was a loose, running sea-fight of five or six days in September, 1781, between the French fleet under De Grasse and a British fleet under Graves off Cape Henry. The

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French fleet had taken a position in Lynn Haven Bay just inside Cape Henry, in order to control the entrance to Chesapeake Bay. On the morning of September 5th the British squadron under Graves stood in to attack the French. De Grasse sailed out to meet the enemy, and at four in the afternoon a sharp action began which lasted till sundown. Both sides suffered considerably; and, though the fleets continued to manoeuvre within sight of each other for five days, it was evident that neither side was anxious to force the fighting. At last Graves took his ships north again, leaving De Grasse master of Chesapeake Bay.

As far as actual damage to ships and men is concerned, this was a drawn battle, but considered in regard to purpose and results it was a decisive victory for the French. De Grasse had succeeded in his aim—namely, to keep the British fleet from making a juncture with Cornwallis.

Meanwhile Washington was making his famous dash southward. On the 28th of September the allied French and American army moved upon the English army entrenched at Yorktown and began a spirited siege. The allies drew their lines steadily closer and poured in a fire that the British found increasingly hard to withstand. Finally, as Cornwallis was unable to retreat or to get relief, as long as the French fleet controlled the bay, he was forced to sue for terms of surrender. The capitulation took place on the 19th of October, 1781, and, although two more years dragged by before the treaty of peace was actually signed, Yorktown is rightly considered as the conclusion of the war.

As we have seen, the colonists during the Revolution had the greatest difficulties in building up a naval force. With their ill-organized, makeshift vessels the Americans were able to do little but attack the transports or the commerce of the enemy, and the record of Paul Jones in capturing two British men-of-war was a brilliant exception to the rule. Fortunately, when our ships were nearly all taken or destroyed in the unequal contest with the British

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navy, the French fleets arrived to challenge British control of the sea. Meanwhile, however, there had been plenty of experience to develop veteran sea-fighters of proved courage and ability, and therefore, when the nation had to revive the navy to fight the French in the West Indies—as we shall see in the next chapter—there was no lack of experienced officers to place in command.

III

A NAVAL WAR WITH FRANCE

Extinction of the Revolutionary navy — Building of new navy to protect commerce from Algerian pirates — Treaty with Algiers — Difficulties with England and France — Squadron sent to West Indies — The *Baltimore* incident — The *Constellation* and the *Insurgente* — The *Constellation* and the *Vengeance*.

AFTER the capture of the *Serapis* the best command in America was none too good for Paul Jones, and on his return he was appointed to the new ship of the line *America*, which was then being built.

As it happened, peace came before the vessel was quite finished; and then, out of gratitude to France, Congress turned her over as a present to the King of France. There were at that time three other men-of-war left in the American navy—the *Alliance*, the *Deane*, and the *Washington*—but they were all sold in the two years after the treaty of peace, so that by 1785 the United States had no navy at all.

The country was so burdened with its war debts and other troubles in the years between the close of the Revolution and the election of George Washington as the first President that a navy was felt to be an unnecessary luxury. Most people honestly believed, too, that the very existence of a navy was dangerous to the liberties of a free country, and for years many prominent Americans always opposed a navy on this principle.

But in such questions facts are far better than theories, and it was not long before the need of a navy began to be felt. The people of the Barbary States, living along the

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African coast of the Mediterranean, had for centuries been carrying on the business of piracy. Sometimes the European nations fought them, at other times they bribed them to hold off, but these pirates always remained the pest of the Mediterranean.

In 1785 Spain opened the Strait of Gibraltar to the Algerians, and their corsairs were soon roving the Atlantic. In a short time they had taken two American ships and sold their crews into slavery.

Instead of despatching a squadron with loaded guns to treat with the Dey of Algiers, all that the United States could do was to send an envoy. Naturally, the Dey thought the United States a wholly contemptible little country and gave our envoy nothing but insults for his pains. At this time England was "paying tribute" to the Barbary countries, especially Algiers, but the policy really amounted to hiring them to prey on the ships of rival nations. In 1793 the English consul-general at Lisbon arranged a treaty between Portugal and Algiers which opened still wider the road for the pirates into the North Atlantic. During the next thirty days the freebooters captured eleven American ships and imprisoned all their crews.

This was too much to stand, and in the spring of 1794 Congress authorized the building of six frigates to chastise the Algerians. The law made it very clear that it did not mean the organization of a permanent navy, because, if in the mean time a treaty were concluded with Algiers, work on these frigates was to stop. Fortunately, the design of these frigates was left to the ablest ship-builder in the country, Joshua Humphreys. Not content to copy the frigates of the English navy, he went ahead with new ideas. He made his frigates with cleaner lines and thicker sides, he gave them heavier batteries and longer and thicker spars than could be found in any frigate of the royal navy. These "Yankee" frigates were the subject of endless chaff from British naval officers up to the time of the War of

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1812, but directly after that war England built frigates exactly like them.

Toward the end of the year 1795 the Senate ratified a humiliating treaty with Algiers, by which the United States pledged itself to pay \$21,600 every year in ship supplies, and agreed to give a large ransom for all Americans then in captivity besides. The cost of ratifying that treaty the first year, including the ransom, amounted to over a million dollars. The same amount of money put into frigates would have been enough to dictate an honorable peace at the cannon's mouth. Fortunately, three of the new frigates were so far under way in their construction that Congress ordered that they should be completed. In 1797 these three frigates were launched: the *United States*, 44 guns, July 10th, at Philadelphia; the *Constellation*, 36 guns, September 7th, at Baltimore; and the *Constitution*, 44 guns, September 20th, at Boston. These fine old ships, each famous for its victories, mark the real beginning of the American navy.

Although Congress had ordered work on the other ships discontinued, more troubles soon arose which set the hammers ringing on them again with all speed. Long before our quarrel was settled with Algiers Congress had worse difficulties on its hands. England and France were fighting each other, and war-vessels of each side took and plundered American ships with scarcely a word of excuse. In 1795 Jay's treaty with England relieved the pressure from that country, but only increased the enmity of France. French cruisers regarded American merchantmen as lawful plunder, and finally French privateers had the impudence to make captures in American harbors.

The country was stung into resistance. During the spring of 1798 Congress passed several acts authorizing a naval force not only to protect American shipping in the West Indies, where most of the trouble lay, but also to attack the French privateers and men-of-war. On April 30th the first Secretary of the Navy was appointed.

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Most of this new American fleet were hastily converted merchantmen, for the other three frigates were not finished in time, but they served the purpose well. Their chief service was in cleaning out the nests of privateers—really pirates—in dozens of little harbors in the West Indies, and the smaller and lighter merchant vessel could go where a heavy frigate could not.

All this while the American and English were supposed to be working hand-in-glove against France, but the following incident will show the contemptuous attitude of the English toward the United States and the new-born American navy. In November, 1798, Captain Phillips in the twenty-gun sloop *Baltimore* was accompanying a fleet of American merchantmen from Charleston to Havana. On nearing Havana he ran into a British squadron. Knowing the way English captains had with American ships, he signaled his convoy to scatter and make port as fast as they could. At the same time he changed his course to meet the British squadron, intending to divert attention from his merchantmen.

Captain Phillips was invited on board the British flagship, and there he was curtly told by the English commodore that he was going to impress into the English service every American on the *Baltimore* who did not have "protection papers." Now, "protection papers" were not considered necessary on men-of-war. Phillips protested vehemently, but he was helpless. He had been ordered to avoid any hostile act toward the English even if they were seizing an American ship, and he lay under the guns of the whole fleet. So he felt that he had to submit; fifty-five men were taken off the American ship, though fifty of these were afterward returned.

When Phillips returned to the United States and reported the affair he was promptly dismissed from the service for not resisting. And yet the American government itself was in much the same plight as poor Phillips whom it had dismissed, because it did not dare to show

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fight for the insult to an American man-of-war, and meekly ate humble pie. But the *Baltimore* incident was one of those things that rankled in the minds of Americans and made the War of 1812 unavoidable.

Meanwhile, the fine new frigate *Constellation* was bowling over the seas looking for bigger game than the little French corsairs. Her captain was Thomas Truxtun, a bluff old sea-dog of Revolutionary days and a born fighter. About noon of February 9, 1799, when the *Constellation* was off one of the Leeward Islands, the lookout reported a sail to the south,^p and Truxtun put about in chase. Soon she was made out to be a ship very much like the *Constellation*. At first the stranger hoisted American colors, but when Truxtun showed the private signal of the American fleet there was no answer. Soon he was delighted to see the French tricolor go up in place of the Stars and Stripes. At last he had what he'd been looking for, a French frigate for a square, stand-up fight.

Truxtun piled on all the canvas the *Constellation* could stagger under for fear the Frenchman might yet get away from him, and the good ship came rushing on, looking like a great white cloud and tossing sheets of foam from her bows. Shortly after three the two vessels were close enough for Truxtun to hail; but, getting no answer, he took a position across the stern of the French frigate and gave her a staggering broadside. But she had lost her maintopmast during a squall that afternoon, and when she tried to manœuvre to lay alongside the *Constellation* the latter ran ahead and crossed her bows. Truxtun managed to hold an advantageous position off the starboard bow of the enemy during the rest of the fight.

During this time a shot struck the foretopmast of the *Constellation*. The blow so shattered the mast that under the press of sail it was carrying it threatened to go crashing down. Young Midshipman David Porter, famous as captain of the *Essex* in the War of 1812, was stationed with some men in the foretop. Seeing the danger, he hailed

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the deck, but the thunder of the broadsides drowned his voice. Something must be done, and done at once, and the youngster was equal to it. He promptly climbed aloft, though greatly exposed to the musket fire of the enemy, and coolly cut away the halyards that supported the huge foretopsail-yard, which then, with its flapping sail, settled down to its resting-place. By relieving the strain on the topmast Porter removed the danger and saved the mast.

In an hour the battle was over. The French frigate proved to be the 36-gun *Insurgente*, Captain Barreaut. Barreaut had put up a brave fight, for the American broadside was heavier than his by about one-third, and the unlucky loss of his maintopmast had given the *Constellation* a great advantage in manœuvring.

As soon as the surrender had been received Lieut. John Rodgers and Midshipman David Porter were sent on board the prize with a squad of eleven men. The rest of the prize crew were to follow later, but the wind had now increased to a gale, and it was found impossible to put out any more boats. The two young officers found themselves in a perilous situation. Night came on with a roaring sea. The masts and rigging of the *Insurgente* were so badly shattered by the *Constellation's* fire that it was very dangerous to try to make any sail in such a heavy wind. The decks were still littered with fallen spars, dismounted guns, and the bodies of the dead, and one hundred and seventy-three prisoners had to be kept under control. To make matters worse, the hatch-coverings had been flung overboard before the surrender, so there was no way of battening the hatches down on the prisoners, and there were no irons to be found. But Rodgers was a big fellow, and by putting on a fierce swagger behind a loaded pistol he managed to rush all the prisoners into the lower hold. Then the Americans loaded a cannon with grape and lashed it with the muzzle pointing down the hatch. They also hung a bag of cannon-balls just over the hatch so that

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a single stroke of a cutlass would send it crashing down on any one who tried to come up.

At dawn, after a sleepless night, Rodgers and Porter looked anxiously for help from the *Constellation*, but not a stick of her could they see. The ships had been separated by the gale. There was nothing for it but that two young and inexperienced officers with eleven men should try to bring a disabled ship to port in spite of the gale and the presence of one hundred and seventy-three prisoners watching for a single careless instant to make a rush and retake the ship. Both Rodgers and Porter rose high in the American navy later on and became famous, but never did they have to go through such an ordeal again.

For two nights and days more that little squad stood uninterrupted watch, some navigating the ship, others watching the hatch, with loaded muskets and pistols piled about ready for the first attempt at mutiny. There was no sleep for anybody, but on the afternoon of the third day the *Insurgente* limped into the harbor of St. Kitts. Their troubles were over then, for in the very same harbor lay the *Constellation*, with Captain Truxtun anxiously awaiting their arrival.

The *Insurgente* was repaired and taken into the service of the United States, but the following year she was lost at sea with all hands.

The work of the navy in the West Indies was interrupted by the fact that, since the enlistments had been only for one year, all the ships had to come home for fresh crews. But the French privateers did not gain much except a short breathing-space. The American squadron was soon on their trail again.

On the morning of February 1, 1800, Captain Truxtun in the *Constellation* was again in the neighborhood of the Leeward Islands, some miles to the south of the place where he had captured the *Insurgente*. A large sail was reported, and he immediately gave chase. There was only a little air stirring this time, and, try as he might with every

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stitch of canvas set, he could not close with the stranger till eight o'clock on the evening of the following day. By this time she was made out to be a large French frigate, and without waiting to hail or be hailed she opened fire on the *Constellation* with her stern guns.

"Don't throw away a single charge of powder and shot!" cried Truxtun, as he saw his men impatient to begin firing. "Take good aim and fire into the hull of the enemy."

For a few minutes the *Constellation* endured the enemy's fire in silence; then when Truxtun got the position he wanted he shouted, "Fire!" and the American broadside roared in reply. From eight o'clock till one the battle went on with the greatest fury, the two ships sailing along together before a fresh wind, wrapped in smoke, and the darkness relieved only by the flare of the guns and the dim flicker of the battle lanterns. As Truxtun had commanded, the American gunners aimed at the hull of the enemy—that was the English style of fighting. On the other hand, the Frenchmen aimed, as was their custom, to disable the rigging.

At one o'clock the French ship ceased firing and sheered off as if trying to run away. Truxtun immediately trimmed sail so as to come alongside and get her surrender, when suddenly his mainmast went crashing over the side. With the mast were lost Midshipman Jarvis and several men. One of the men had warned him that the mast was badly weakened by the Frenchman's shot, but Jarvis had replied that he could not leave his post without orders.

The French ship took quick advantage of the accident to the *Constellation* by running away as fast as she could. It turned out later that she was the *Vengeance*, a much larger frigate than the *Constellation*. Her first lieutenant said afterward that several times during the battle the *Vengeance* struck her colors, but in the darkness and smoke the fact was not discovered by the officers of the *Constellation*. At any rate, the *Vengeance* was a thoroughly beaten ship. She lost 50 killed and 110 wounded, compared

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with 14 killed and 25 wounded on the *Constellation*, and her hull was badly riddled. The escape of the French ship was due entirely to the fall of the *Constellation's* mainmast. Although Truxtun did not succeed in taking the *Vengeance* as a prize, the trouncing he gave her is a finer tribute to his ability than the capture of the *Insurgente*.

These two victories of the *Constellation* were the only important frigate actions of the war. The real hard work of this war—without much glory to it—fell to the smaller vessels, who followed the French corsairs right into their lairs among the many islands of the West Indies. There was plenty of hard fighting, too. One little schooner, the *Enterprise*, under Lieut. John Shaw, captured six privateers and rescued eleven American merchantmen. The *Enterprise* became still more famous in the wars that followed. She still bears the record of being in more fights than any other ship in the American navy, and she won every time she fought.

On one occasion Lieut. Isaac Hull—later famous as captain of the *Constitution*—sailed into Puerto Plata (Santo Domingo), which was a favorite resort for these privateers. There, in broad daylight, he landed, made a dash on the fort, coolly spiked all the guns before the garrison woke up to what was happening, and then captured one of the most notorious of the privateers as she lay at anchor under the fort.

Although war had never been declared against France, fighting went on for two years and a half. About this time Napoleon became the real ruler of France, and, foreseeing a long war with England, he did not want to be annoyed by another war with America at the same time. So he opened negotiations for a treaty of peace which put an end to the campaign.

Short as it was, the war was of the greatest benefit to the United States. By cleaning out the French privateers of the West Indies the American navy made the commerce of the United States in those waters far safer, and our

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export trade increased enormously. This service, combined with the brilliant successes in battle, gave the new-born navy a popularity that it needed very much in those days when a man-of-war was looked upon as "a ready tool for tyranny." And to the officers and men of the navy it gave the most practical training and experience. Many of the heroes of the war with Tripoli and the War of 1812—like Decatur, Porter, Hull, Perry—learned how to sail and fight in this war with France. At this time, too, the American officers did an excellent thing by adopting, with some modifications, the regulations which governed the greatest navy in the world, that of Great Britain, for these regulations gave the American navy the right start in the fine English ideals of duty and discipline aboard a man-of-war.

IV

WAR WITH TRIPOLI

Reduction of the navy—Causes of war with Tripoli—Early operations—Loss of the *Philadelphia*—The burning of the *Philadelphia*—Gunboat attacks—*Intrepid* disaster—Eaton's expedition—Conclusion of the war—Commodore Preble.

ON February 17, 1801, Thomas Jefferson was elected President of the United States. When the news came to the officers of the navy they felt very gloomy, because the President-elect belonged to the Republican party—the ancestor of the Democratic party of to-day—and he, as well as that party, was known to be hostile to any standing navy.

“It's all over with us!” growled the old sea-dogs over their Madeira; and the more they talked about it, and the more Madeira they drank, the angrier they got. Young and old throughout the service banged the mess-tables with their fists and swore that the country was going straight to the dogs.

But even while Jefferson was being notified of his election to the Presidency the Bey of Tripoli was making it very clear to him that the country could not possibly get along without a navy. After buying a peace with Algiers, as described in the preceding chapter, the United States had to bribe the other Barbary States as well. These were Morocco, Tunis, and Tripoli. The Bey of Tripoli took it into his head that he hadn't driven as good a bargain as some of the others when he ratified his treaty with the United States in 1796. He became more and more insolent

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in his demands, and at last, in February, 1801, he tore up his treaty with America and threatened war.

Soon after the President came into office he undertook reducing the navy to a peace basis, as was expected. But what nobody expected was the fact that Jefferson simply dropped all the makeshift vessels that had been hurriedly pressed into service for the war against France and kept the real fighting strength of the navy intact. Not even a thoroughgoing Federalist President could have done much better than this Republican, with all his hostility to a navy!

It was well that he did so, for just then the country needed a navy very badly to show the pirates of Tripoli that there was some spunk in America and to protect our merchantmen. In May, 1801, the Bey of Tripoli ordered the flagstaff of the American consulate chopped down, dismissed the consul, and bade his corsairs capture all the Americans they could find. Fortunately, the trouble with Tripoli had been dragging on so long that the merchantmen had been well warned of what they might expect in the Mediterranean.

Meanwhile, the United States government had been fitting out a squadron for the Mediterranean. This consisted of the frigates *President*, 44 guns; the *Philadelphia*, 36 guns; and the *Essex*, 32 guns; and the schooner *Enterprise*, 12 guns. The squadron was commanded by Commodore Richard Dale, famous as Paul Jones's lieutenant in the great fight with the *Serapis*. Dale set out from Hampton Roads and learned of Tripoli's declaration of war only when he reached Gibraltar.

Not long after the arrival of the American fleet in the Mediterranean the little *Enterprise*, under Lieutenant Sterrett, came off handsomely in a fight with a Tripolitan corsair called the *Tripoli*. The two vessels were evenly matched, but the action was very one-sided, thanks to the fine seamanship of the young American commander and the good gunnery of his crew. At the end of three hours of fighting the *Tripoli* had lost her mizzenmast, and out of a

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crew of eighty twenty were killed and thirty wounded. On the *Enterprise* not a man was wounded.

Unfortunately, that was the only bright spot in the story of a whole year of operations against Tripoli. There was a blockade that grew more and more lax, with nothing accomplished, and at the end of the year all the ships had to go back to the United States on account of the fact that the enlistments were made for only one year. Then another squadron was sent out with two-year enlistments. This was offered to Commodore Truxtun, but the Navy Department quarreled with him over a foolish point, and Truxtun resigned just when a man of his sort was most needed. Commodore Morris, who was sent in his place, accomplished so little that at the end of the second year of the war he was ordered home to a court-martial and dismissed.

In short, by the end of two years and a half of nominal warfare the Bey of Tripoli had become more insolent than ever, and practically nothing had been done to assert the dignity of the United States. What was worse, the other Barbary powers were threatening trouble, too. Such was the situation when a new commodore was sent to the scene of operations. This was Edward Preble, who, like his predecessors, was a veteran of the Revolution, but not well known to his brother officers. Most of the naval officers of that day hailed from the Southern or the Middle states, and Preble was a New Hampshire Yankee. Moreover, he had a fierce temper, which bad health did not make sweeter, and he was a stern disciplinarian. He growled that he was given "a lot of school-boys" for officers, because all of his ship commanders were under thirty. But after a few months of campaigning together the doughty old commodore and his "school-boys" had not only respect for one another, but a real affection.

The squadron that Preble commanded had one important advantage over the squadrons sent before; it contained besides the frigates *Constitution* and *Philadelphia* five



THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE "ENTERPRISE" AND THE BARBARY
CORSAIR "TRIPOLI"

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small brigs and schooners. There were four new ones—the *Nautilus*, the *Vixen*, the *Siren*, and the *Argus*—besides the already famous little *Enterprise*. Previous operations had shown that the frigates were too heavy to move among the dangerous shoals around Tripoli and were unfit to pursue the light-draught corsairs which ran the blockade.

Preble stopped at Tangiers to read the riot act to the governor of Morocco for permitting one of his vessels to seize an American brig. Meanwhile, he sent the *Philadelphia* and the *Vixen* to begin at once the blockade of Tripoli. About two weeks afterward, October 31, 1803, the *Philadelphia* was working her way back to her station after having been driven off by one of the heavy gales for which that coast is famous. The *Vixen* had gone off in chase of two Tripolitan corsairs that had got away. About nine o'clock in the morning the *Philadelphia* sighted a vessel making for the harbor of Tripoli and promptly gave chase. For some time the American frigate held on in pursuit, the two vessels running near the shore and heading westward for the entrance to the harbor.

Those were the days before there were charts of the African coast; and Captain Bainbridge, knowing the danger of shoals, kept a leadsman in the eyes of the ship, sounding constantly. It was soon evident that the corsair would reach port in safety, and the cry of the leadsman showed that the water was shoaling rapidly. Accordingly, Bainbridge braced his yards, put his helm over, and swung his bow directly out to sea. The next moment the frigate crashed upon a reef and reeled over to one side. In looking for deep water Bainbridge had driven his ship squarely upon a hidden reef which runs for several miles parallel to the coast.

The corsair carried the news of the disaster to the city, and soon a swarm of Tripolitan gunboats came out, opening fire on the stranded ship, but not daring to come to close quarters. The list of the vessel made it impossible to use any of her guns effectively on the enemy, and officers

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and men bent all their energies to getting the ship free. They backed the sails, threw overboard the cannon, except for a few in the stern to be used against the enemy, hove the bow anchors over, then pumped out the water in the hold, and as a last resort cut away the foremast. When all this failed the carpenter was sent below to bore holes in the frigate's sides, and the gunner was ordered to drench the magazine. Then everything else was destroyed that could possibly be of any use to the Tripolitans.

Meanwhile, the latter's gunboats were sneaking closer and firing heavily. Fortunately, they directed their shot at the masts of the *Philadelphia*; otherwise there would have been much bloodshed on the helpless ship. At last, after four hours of resistance, when Bainbridge discovered that he could not bring a single gun to bear on the gunboats, he surrendered.

The Tripolitans clambered on board in high glee, pillaged the ship of everything—not even respecting the pockets of the officers—and carried off the prisoners to the city. The Bey was delighted, as he had every reason to be. Here were three hundred prisoners to be held for ransom; not only common seamen, but officers, who, he well knew, would have powerful friends to argue for peace and ransom on any terms the Bey might dictate. The next day he sent his men to see what they could do toward saving the *Philadelphia*, and a few days later, helped by an unusually high tide, they succeeded in getting her off the rocks unhurt. Having plugged the holes in her bottom, they dredged up the cannon, and in a short time anchored the *Philadelphia* in the harbor of Tripoli as good as new, the largest vessel ever owned by any Barbary potentate.

The Bey thanked Allah and stroked his beard with many a chuckle. These Americans had come in their ships to humble him, and, lo, they were delivered into his hands! For Commodore Preble the news was correspondingly discouraging. Before he had even arrived at Tripoli he had lost one of his frigates with all her officers and men.

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Yet it is interesting to note that the hot-tempered commodore, knowing well how distressed Captain Bainbridge must be, wrote him a comforting letter in which there was no hint of blame for the disaster. (It was through the kindness of the Danish consul, Mr. Nissen, that Bainbridge was able to exchange communications with Commodore Preble.) And it may be added that Bainbridge's officers were hardly in their prison quarters when they drew up a memorial assuring their unfortunate captain that, in their opinion, he was blameless in every particular for the loss of his ship.

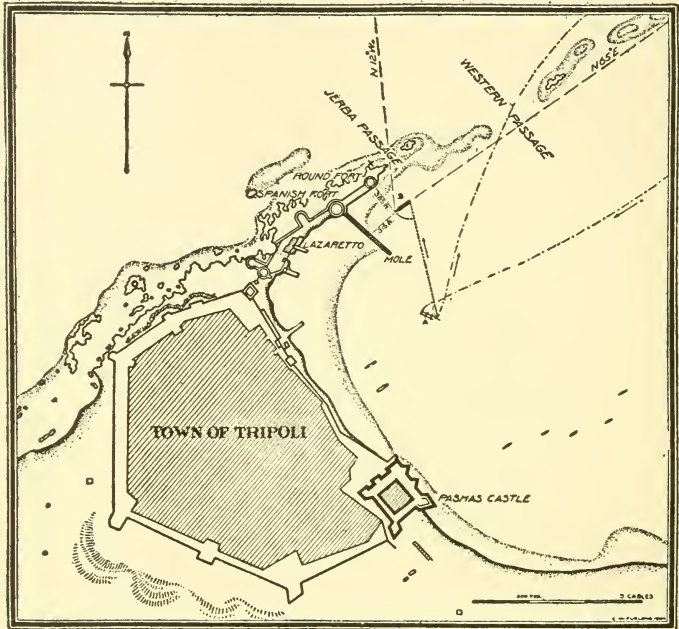
Scarcely had the news of the *Philadelphia* reached the squadron when Preble began plans for destroying her at her moorings. Young Stephen Decatur, commander of the *Enterprise*, happened to be on hand to offer himself first for the proposed expedition, and thereby won the distinction. Luckily for the purpose, the Americans had captured a Tripolitan merchant vessel, the *Mastico*. The success of such an attempt as the destruction of the *Philadelphia* depended on its being a complete surprise, and of course the *Mastico's* Tripolitan rig would not excite the suspicion that the *Enterprise* would create. So it was decided to man the *Mastico*—renamed the *Intrepid*—and take her into the harbor of Tripoli in disguise.

When Decatur called for volunteers from his ship everybody on board stepped forward. From these he selected sixty-two men and five officers. Five more officers—all midshipmen—were added from the *Constitution*, and a Sicilian pilot named Catalano. The brig *Siren* was ordered to accompany the *Intrepid* in order to stand by and rescue the crew if she were destroyed before accomplishing her purpose. The *Siren* was given this share in the expedition because her commander, Lieutenant Stewart, had offered to cut out the *Philadelphia* himself just after the commodore had promised the honor to Decatur.

The *Intrepid* left Syracuse—the American base of operations—for Tripoli February 3, 1804, attended by the *Siren*.

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They arrived before the city a week later, but a heavy gale was rising which made the attempt impossible that night and forced the two little vessels out to sea. They tossed about for four or five days, laboring to keep off the rocks on the treacherous coast, and in miserable discomfort. It



THE HARBOR OF TRIPOLI

A—Position of the *Philadelphia* when attacked by Decatur. Dot-and-dash lines represent course of the *Intrepid* on entering and leaving the harbor, February 16, 1804. Heavy dotted lines indicate the *Philadelphia*'s course as she drifted after being fired. B—Present position of the wreck of the *Philadelphia*. X—Position of the wreck of the *Intrepid* after she blew up, September 4, 1804, in attempt to enter the harbor, under Captain Somers, as a bomb-vessel.

turned out that the two weeks' provisions were bad, so that there was little on board fit to eat. The accommodations were very cramped, and the previous occupants of the

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Intrepid had left behind them swarms of vermin which had no respect for birth or rank. At last the morning of the 16th brought back a clear sky and an easy sea, and the two vessels headed once more for Tripoli. The rig of the *Siren* was changed as much as possible to conceal the fact that she was a man-of-war, and she remained well out to sea when the harbor was reached. Under the light wind the *Intrepid* headed toward the city boldly, but Decatur hung drags astern to keep her from reaching the *Philadelphia* till after dark.

As the wind was dropping rapidly Decatur decided that it was not wise to wait for the boats from the *Siren* to join his force, as was the original plan. One boat's crew of the *Siren* had already come aboard and remained on the *Intrepid*, with their boat trailing astern.

"The fewer the number, the greater the honor!" Decatur laughed boyishly, and headed directly for the familiar sides of the *Philadelphia*. The wind had dropped so much now that it was dark while the *Intrepid* was still two miles distant. Accordingly, the drags were taken in and the vessel slipped gently along before the light breeze. Only six or eight men were to be seen on the deck besides her commander, and these were dressed like Maltese sailors. All the rest lay concealed in the shadows, gripping their cutlasses and impatient to hear the order, "Board!"

Decatur had given the order for absolute silence, and there was not a whisper. A pale crescent moon hung over the city, and lights began to gleam from the white walls and twinkle from the masts of the shipping. One battery was safely passed without challenge. Slowly and more slowly crept the little vessel before the failing breeze. Would it never reach the frigate? thought the anxious figures lying crouched in the shadows.

At last the tense silence was broken by a hail from the *Philadelphia*. There was an eager movement among the hidden figures. The pilot, Catalano, answered coolly that his ship had lost her anchors in the gale—which was per-

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fectly true—and he wanted permission to tie up for the night to the *Philadelphia's* cable. Just then the wind shifted and forced the *Intrepid* away from the frigate, till she lay directly under her broadside. It was a ticklish situation, but there was no flurry on the decks. The sailors in Maltese costume manned the boat that swung astern, took the end of a hawser and rowed to meet a boat from the *Philadelphia*. The two boats' crews joined the rope from the *Intrepid* to another from the frigate and rejoined their respective ships without arousing any suspicion on the part of the Tripolitans. Then the Americans hauled on the rope, bringing the bow of the *Intrepid* up to the anchor-chain of the frigate.

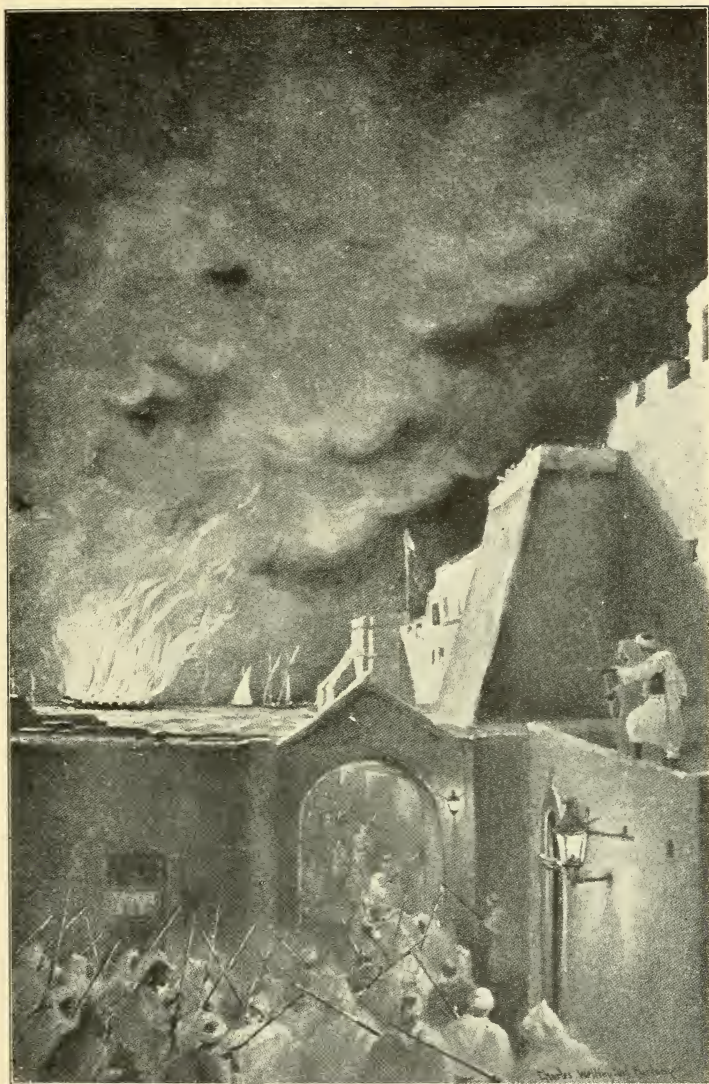
Meanwhile some one leaning over the rail of the *Philadelphia* caught sight of the armed men lying in the shadows on the *Intrepid's* deck.

“*Americano! Americano!*” he shouted.

No more hiding after that! The entire crew sprang to the hawser and hauled the *Intrepid* alongside with a will. Then, with a rush, Decatur and his men swarmed up the sides of the frigate, expecting a bloody hand-to-hand conflict on her decks. But panic had followed the surprise, and the Tripolitans ran in all directions. Several were killed, but the rest dived over the side and swam for their lives.

As soon as the ship was clear the various details hurried with their combustibles to the different parts of the ship. Decatur longed to try to bring her out of the harbor, but he was under strict orders from Preble not to attempt it. The firing-squads did their work rapidly, and in a few minutes the frigate was ablaze from stem to stern. In fact, the flames spread so fast that several men had difficulty in getting back to the *Intrepid*. In less than twenty minutes the Americans had boarded the *Philadelphia*, driven off her crew, and returned to their ship.

Now came the greatest danger of all, for the blazing frigate lighted up the whole harbor, and the Tripolitan



THE BURNING OF THE FRIGATE "PHILADELPHIA"

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gunners were running to their batteries. As the wind was still light, the Americans had to bend to the sweeps, and made but slow progress. Luckily, the Tripolitans were either too much excited or very bad gunners, for, although the shot from one hundred guns splashed all about the little vessel for half an hour, not once was the *Intrepid* hit except for a random shot that went through one of her upper sails. Soon afterward she reached the entrance of the harbor, where she was met by the boats of the *Siren*. There the men rested on their oars and looked back until a thunderous explosion marked the end of the *Philadelphia*.

The expedition had been completely successful, and what seemed at first a desperate undertaking had been carried through without a single American's being hurt. This brilliant exploit fired the enthusiasm of the entire fleet. Officers and men were ready to dare anything in order to measure up to the splendid example set by Decatur.

All that winter and spring, in spite of tremendous gales, Preble kept a tight blockade on the harbor of Tripoli, leaving two vessels to scour the Mediterranean for any Tripolitan corsair that might still be at large. Finding that he needed gunboats of a still shallower draught, he bargained with the King of Sicily for six flat-bottomed gunboats and two mortar-boats. As soon as this force was ready and the weather permitted he sent them in for an attack on the Tripolitan gunboats at close quarters (August 13, 1804). Under cover of a heavy fire from the mortars and the long guns of the *Constitution* the flotilla of six gunboats went into the harbor, and the enemy sallied out to meet them. Meanwhile the one hundred and fifteen guns in the defenses of the city opened fire, too, in answer to the *Constitution*, but fortunately did little harm.

The Tripolitans were supposed to be invincible at close quarters, but the American gunboats attacked at once alongside, and officers and men sprang upon the enemy's decks with the most determined gallantry. In this hot scrimmage all the "school-boy" officers distinguished

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themselves. Unfortunately, James Decatur, the brother of Stephen, was treacherously shot and killed by the captain of a Tripolitan gunboat which had just surrendered to him. His brother Stephen, having just captured a gunboat after a hot fight, left it as soon as he heard the news and dashed after another which he believed was the one that had caused his brother's death. He led his men upon her deck, and after a desperate hand-to-hand struggle he succeeded in killing her commander, though he very nearly lost his own life.

The man who saved him in this scrimmage was a young sailor named Reuben James, who stuck close to his commander's side, warding off the attacks made on Decatur from behind. When his right arm was disabled with simitar cuts, he shifted his cutlass to the left and fought on. Soon that arm was useless, too, and the weapon dropped from his hand. At that moment he saw a Tripolitan lift his simitar to deliver a blow at Decatur's head as he lay on the deck locked in a death-struggle with the pirate captain. As both of Reuben's arms were useless, he deliberately put his own head in the way and caught the stroke aimed for Decatur. It was a terrible blow, but, strange to say, the hard-headed young sailor was back at his post in three weeks and lived to a green old age. A story of the navy must deal chiefly with the officers, because they are the ones in command, but the case of Reuben James is a fine example of the fact that the "jackies" were just as devoted and fearless.

At another point in the line, during this gunboat attack, Lieutenant Trippe boarded one of the largest of the enemy's boats, followed by his men, but his own vessel swung off, leaving him on the enemy's deck with only a midddy and nine men. Against these eleven Americans were thirty-six Tripolitans, but what the boarding party lacked in numbers they made up in dash. In a few minutes they had the deck cleared and the Tripolitan colors down, but at the end of that time Trippe bore eleven simitar wounds, some

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of them very severe. No wonder Preble was proud of his school-boys!

At the end of the fight three of the enemy's boats were sunk, three were captured, and the rest had retreated behind the rocks. Never again did they venture out to meet the American gunboats.

Another young lieutenant who bore himself gallantly in this affair was Richard Somers, the chum of Decatur. With his single boat he had attacked five of the Tripolitan vessels and driven them to shelter. But he was burning to distinguish himself by an exploit like Decatur's, and when Commodore Preble selected him to take charge of another perilous enterprise against the enemy Somers was overjoyed. Briefly, the plan was this, to fit up the *Intrepid* as a floating mine, sail her in with only a handful of men, and, after bringing her into the midst of the enemy's shipping, to set off the fuses. The Americans were to escape in two swift rowboats.

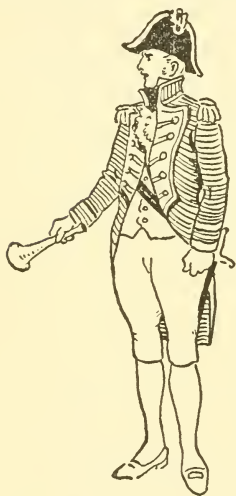
It was a desperate scheme, far more so than the destruction of the *Philadelphia*, but every man in the fleet envied Somers the distinction of attempting it. At last all was ready, and at eight o'clock in the evening, September 4, 1804, the *Intrepid* once more sailed alone toward the harbor entrance. Besides Somers there were Midshipmen Wadsworth—an uncle of the poet Longfellow—and Israels, with a crew of ten seamen. The story is that Israels hid himself on board at the last minute in order to be in the affair.

Meanwhile the *Argus*, *Vixen*, and *Nautilus* stood by outside the harbor to attend to picking up the survivors after the explosion. As before, the success of the little vessel depended on surprising the enemy. Would the Tripolitans be deceived again by the same ship? The anxious watchers on the decks of the three sloops saw the *Intrepid* disappear in the evening mist. Suddenly, to their dismay, they heard the booming of cannon. Evidently the guns of the forts had opened fire on her as soon as she entered the harbor. There followed several minutes of intense anxiety

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and suspense. Suddenly the darkness was torn by a great shaft of light, followed by a tremendous explosion.

The three ships closed in, and all night long their boats' crews rowed back and forth in the harbor entrance, searching, shouting, but in vain. Somers had declared that sooner than allow all the powder on the *Intrepid* to fall into the hands of the Tripolitans he would blow her up himself, and it was the belief in the fleet that, being surrounded by gunboats, he had deliberately blown up the magazine rather than surrender. Others have thought that, since the explosion came too soon to do the Tripolitans any harm, it was caused by a hot shot from the batteries.



UNIFORM OF A CAPTAIN,
TRIPOLITAN WAR

At any rate, the navy lost some valuable lives and gained nothing except the dare-anything ideal of courage which these men represent.

Meanwhile, Preble had repeated several times his bombardments and gunboat attacks, and kept, month in, month out, a relentless blockade on Tripoli. All this made the Bey very uneasy. For a long while he had not a single ship at sea, and the rain of cannon-balls and bombshells in the streets drove him from his palace to a safer place outside the city. So he came down off his high horse and began talking about peace in a far more modest fashion than ever before.

Unfortunately, Commodore Samuel Barron was sent out to supersede the energetic Preble, arriving on the scene shortly after the *Intrepid* disaster. The Secretary of the Navy tried to explain to Preble that this could not be helped, because Barron was superior to Preble in rank. But to be superseded just when he was putting the screws on the

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Bey of Tripoli was a bit of news that hurt Preble and made his officers indignant. Samuel Barron had given a good account of himself as a midshipman in the Revolutionary War, but his previous record in the Tripolitan war had not been brilliant, and he was now failing in health of body and mind. Although the force Barron had now under his command was far larger than the one Preble had worked with, the navy accomplished nothing more under either Barron or Rodgers, who soon succeeded him in command. When Preble went home the naval glory of the Tripolitan war went with him.

Unfortunately, the end of the war came in a way not wholly creditable to the navy. There was a peppery old consul at Tunis named Eaton, who had been very sharp in his criticism of the dilatory tactics of several officers of the navy during the early years of the war and won their hearty dislike. As he had fought well in the Revolutionary army, he managed to interest the government in a scheme he had for collecting a band of adventurers and attacking Tripoli by land. The plan sounds crazy enough, but, strange to say, he put it through. He started from Cairo with a horde of Arabs who joined him in the hope of plunder, and fairly drove them across the desert. He went through all sorts of hardships and dangers, but by sheer force of his iron will he compelled his mutinous army to follow him to the city of Derne on the frontiers of Tripoli. This he attacked and captured, leading the final charge in person.

The way now lay open to the city of Tripoli itself, and the Bey's knees were quaking. Suddenly peace was concluded by our consul-general to the Barbary States, Tobias Lear, acting with the commodore of the fleet, John Rodgers. Lear, as well as many of the naval officers, disliked Eaton, and probably hated to see him carry off the glory of ending the war by a brilliant capture of Tripoli itself. The naval men, too, felt great sympathy for Bainbridge and the other captives from the *Philadelphia*, and, fearing that the Bey might take the notion to massacre

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them, were glad to agree to almost anything. So Lear and Rodgers consented to pay sixty thousand dollars for ransoming the prisoners of the *Philadelphia*, and hastily signed the treaty. The chief comfort in that affair was that the terms of the treaty relieved the United States from paying any further tribute in the future. The conclusion of peace took place June 10, 1805.

The war had lasted four years and, except when Preble was in charge, had dragged dismally. But it accomplished its object, for it marked the first determined effort to shake off the yoke of the Barbary pirates. The greatest credit belongs to Commodore Preble. He did nothing spectacular himself, but he did far more. He introduced strict discipline into a navy that needed it badly, and yet he was as careful of the reputations and success of his officers and men as of his own. Although he had the smallest force to work with, he accomplished more than all the other squadrons put together. There had been no lack of individual bravery before, but Preble gave his officers to understand that bravery was only the first of an officer's virtues. He gave them newer and sterner ideals in obedience and efficiency.

V

THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR OF 1812

Causes of the war—The *Leopard* affair—Comparison of navies—The chase of the *Constitution*—The *Constitution* and the *Guerrière*.

IN 1793 England began to fight France, and with only an occasional truce the war went on until Napoleon's army was routed at Waterloo in 1815. In other words, while we were fighting the French in the West Indies and the Tripolitans in the Mediterranean, England was in a long death-grapple with Napoleon. In this struggle England's chief defense was her fleet. It was necessary to the nation's existence to keep command of the sea, but this fleet, in order to control the sea and blockade the enemy's coast, had to be enormous.

At one time during this war England spent four-fifths of her whole income on her navy. All those hundreds of ships needed many thousands of men to man them; and, as the life was one of cruel treatment and great hardships, men were not easy to get. Some were tempted to enlist by free drinks and a large bounty, but more were sent to the ships to save the country the expense of keeping them in jail, and many others were kidnapped in the streets and taverns of a seaport town by press-gangs from the ships. But in spite of everything the fleet never had enough men. Yet men must be found. So the captains of the British men-of-war very soon got the habit of holding up English merchant ships and taking off all their crew but a mere handful necessary to work the vessel into the nearest port. Next they overhauled American merchantmen and took

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off every one who had been born in the British Isles. From that it was an easy step to take any able-bodied seaman, no matter where he was born.

This was the practice known as "impressment," or "pressing." Many an American sailor was taken against his will into the British navy, to a life of slavery from which he could escape only by desertion. Our government protested, but it might as well have begged the sun not to rise. We have already seen how a British commodore impressed five Americans from the *Baltimore*, but the following incident shows an arrogance that was far worse.

In 1805 Great Britain began a policy of telling us that any American ship carrying goods bound to a French port was liable to seizure. Again President Jefferson "protested." Then, in order to enforce the English decrees, ships of war were actually sent to blockade several American ports. There was some more "protesting" done. In fact, during those days President Jefferson and his Secretary of State had splendid practice in protesting.

One night in February, 1807, five of the crew of these English blockading-ships in Chesapeake Bay deserted and enlisted in the American 36-gun frigate *Chesapeake*. Later five more deserted from another British ship and went to the *Chesapeake*. The British minister demanded that they should be given up, but after an investigation he was informed that they were all Americans and would not be surrendered. At this the British admiral on the station ordered all his ships to stop the *Chesapeake* at sea and search her for deserters.

As the *Chesapeake* left Hampton Roads June 22, 1807, the British ship *Leopard*, 50 guns, followed her to sea. As soon as the two ships were on the high sea the Britisher signaled the American to receive a boat. Capt. James Barron of the *Chesapeake* hove to, thinking that probably the captain of the *Leopard* wanted to send despatches to Europe. To his astonishment, the lieutenant of the

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Leopard coolly read him the English admiral's order and announced that Barron must give up the deserters. Naturally, Barron refused. Shortly after the English lieutenant had returned to the *Leopard* the latter opened fire, first with a shot and then with a full broadside.

Now it happened that the decks of the *Chesapeake* were piled high with all sorts of gear, from cables to chicken-coops, all of which her commander expected to stow during the first day or two at sea. It might be added that many a man-of-war has gone to sea in that condition before and since because of orders from Washington to sail on a certain date.

Barron was not wholly to blame, but it seems that he rather lost his head in the crisis and stood irresolute and inactive after sending the lieutenant off the ship. He did nothing to get ready, and when the British shot began to crash into the sides of the *Chesapeake* it was found that the powder-horns were empty, nobody knew where the slow matches were, or the rammers, either, and most of the guns hadn't even been mounted.

But a brave young lieutenant, William H. Allen, who had begged his captain in vain to prepare for battle with all possible speed, swore that the flag should not be struck without one gun being fired in its defense. Running to the galley, he picked out a live coal and, tossing it in his blistering hands, he ran back to one gun that stood loaded and ready. The coal was laid to the touch-hole and one gun boomed in reply to the English broadsides. By this time twenty-one shots had hulled the *Chesapeake*. Her foremast and mainmast had both been shot away, three men had been killed and eighteen wounded. Then Barron hauled down his flag.

The *Leopard* sent another boat party aboard and it was found that only one of the deserters was in the *Chesapeake's* crew, for the rest had run away before the ship sailed. But just to rub the insult in more deeply, the English officer seized three others of the *Chesapeake's* crew—all

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Americans—and carried them off to the *Leopard*. Then the British ship sailed off, leaving her almost helpless victim to limp back into Chesapeake Bay.

Was there ever such an insult to a nation? The country rang with indignation—and Jefferson protested again! Poor Barron was court-martialed and suspended for five years without pay. Four years after the *Leopard* affair the British government made a lame sort of apology and returned two of the impressed sailors. Of the others one had died and the other poor wretch had been hanged at the yard-arm for deserting.

Strange to say, all this took place while Napoleon was doing even more damage to us than the English. As soon as the British government forbade American ships to go to any French port Napoleon answered back by saying that no American ship could go to an English port. In those days we were very largely a commercial nation, and between Napoleon and England our commerce was being rapidly squeezed to death. Then, to make matters worse, Jefferson and his Congress laid “embargoes” on our own trade to spite England and France. That is, they would not allow any American ships to leave port at all. This was like a man burning his barn down in the hope that the sparks might worry his neighbor. The embargoes did not hurt either England or France, but they did hurt our own country very seriously, and they made the New-Englanders, who were largely dependent on commerce, so bitter toward the Administration that they were disloyal in the war that followed.

These restrictions on our own trade gave Napoleon an excuse, and he coolly seized ten million dollars' worth of American ships and cargoes that lay in French harbors. This was a more wholesale piece of robbery than the British had done, and we might well have gone to war with France, except that the British by the attack on the *Chesapeake* and their blockades on our own coast had done more to hurt our national pride. And there was that

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insolent practice of impressment going on all the time, which rankled sorely.

The President who followed Jefferson—James Madison—was of the same party and equally slow to act. He took up “protesting” after Jefferson finished, as if nobody had ever tried it before. By that time the British officials would laugh when the American minister called with another long envelope. But in 1811 there were some fiery Westerners in Congress who demanded war with Great Britain, not only on account of her arrogant decrees and her practice of impressing American sailors, but because they believed that some terrible Indian massacres on the frontier had been secretly instigated by the British government. Now we know that this idea was wrong, but at that time it was passionately believed in Ohio and Kentucky; and there still remained the hard facts that England had captured under her decrees nine hundred American vessels and impressed four thousand men.

So finally the Administration stopped wabbling and “protesting” and declared war on June 19, 1812. Great Britain did not want war, and at the last minute repealed her most objectionable decrees, but it was too late. It would have been far better for the United States to declare war immediately after the *Leopard* incident in 1807, for at that time Napoleon seemed invincible and England would probably have yielded on almost every point to avoid having an extra war on her hands. In the summer of 1812 it was clear that Napoleon’s sun was setting, and his abdication in 1814 left Great Britain free, if she chose, to fling her enormous navy and her veteran army against the United States.

For a long while it had been clear that we should soon have to fight either France or England, and, naturally, we should suppose that the government had been making rapid preparations for the coming struggle. But the fact is that nothing was done at all. There were no repairs on our tiny coast defenses, our army was small and untrained, our

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militia was laughable, and when, shortly before the war, a congressional committee urged that twelve ships of the line and twenty frigates be built to protect our coasts, Congress voted it down because "a large navy is dangerous to the liberties of a free people."

When war was declared we had only sixteen fighting-ships. Besides these were 257 gunboats, contemptuously called "Jeffs" by the naval men because they were the idea of Jefferson. Instead of spending a naval appropriation on building one or two new frigates he put the money into these ridiculous little gunboats, because his idea was that one shot beneath the water-line might be enough to sink a whole frigate, while it would take 257 shots to sink all of these gunboats. But when it came to using these "Jeffs" in battle it was found that the flimsy little tubs would hardly stand the kick of their own guns, and after one disastrous trial they were found only fit to break up into kindling-wood.

In our little fleet we had not a single ship of the line, but our three 44-gun frigates were the best of their class in the world. And our officers had been raised to a high point of efficiency by the campaigns against the French and the Tripolitans. Opposed to our pygmy force Great Britain had seven times as large a fleet already on the Atlantic coast, and when Napoleon fell in 1814 she had available her whole navy of 219 ships of the line and 296 frigates, not to mention the many sloops of war.

The disproportion was so great that it was almost decided to keep the American ships of war tied up close in our ports and not let them risk fighting at sea. At the same time every American officer and enlisted man was anxious to prove his mettle in a square fight. The officers had borne too much ridicule from English officers in regard to American ships, which they called "a bunch of pine boards with a striped piece of bunting." Many of the jackies had been impressed by the British and bore on their backs long red scars left by the cat-o'-nine-tails; they had something more than ridicule to pay back.

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On the afternoon of July 16, 1812, Capt. Isaac Hull, on the *Constitution*, was off Barnegat on the way to New York to join Commodore Rodgers' squadron. He discovered four ships at a great distance to the northwest, and a single ship to the northeast. He made for her, but the wind was so light that he did not get within hailing-distance till nearly midnight. The stranger was evidently a frigate, and at first Hull believed her to be a part of Rodgers' squadron. But when his signals were unanswered he suspected her to be an enemy. As his crew was green and undisciplined, he lay to till morning, for there would be less danger of confusion in fighting by daylight. Furthermore, he was suspicious of the other four ships, whose character he could not make out. All hands lay at quarters, and next morning Hull discovered not only the frigate of the night before, but a ship of the line, three more frigates, a brig and a schooner, all flying the British ensign and all bearing down on the *Constitution*. Luckily, the nearest frigate, instead of opening fire, wasted ten minutes in tacking and coming around again in a stupid fashion that gave the American frigate a little start.

Then began a famous chase. At sunrise a dead calm fell, and, except for intervals of breeze, the calm held all day. Hull drenched his sails with water the better to catch the wind, put out all his boats to tow, and then, as they were near enough shore for sounding, he bent all his hawsers together, making a line nearly a mile long, and sent out anchors ahead of the ship. The crew hauled first on one and then on another, thus warping the ship along. The English imitated every manœuver. Sometimes British shot splashed around and even beyond the *Constitution*, but every now and then a lucky puff of wind would swell the flapping sails and just carry her out of reach. The chase continued in this way for two days and nights of almost incessant labor for officers and men. Toward the close of the second day a squall came up. Hull immediately furled all sail, as if anticipating a tremendous blow, and the

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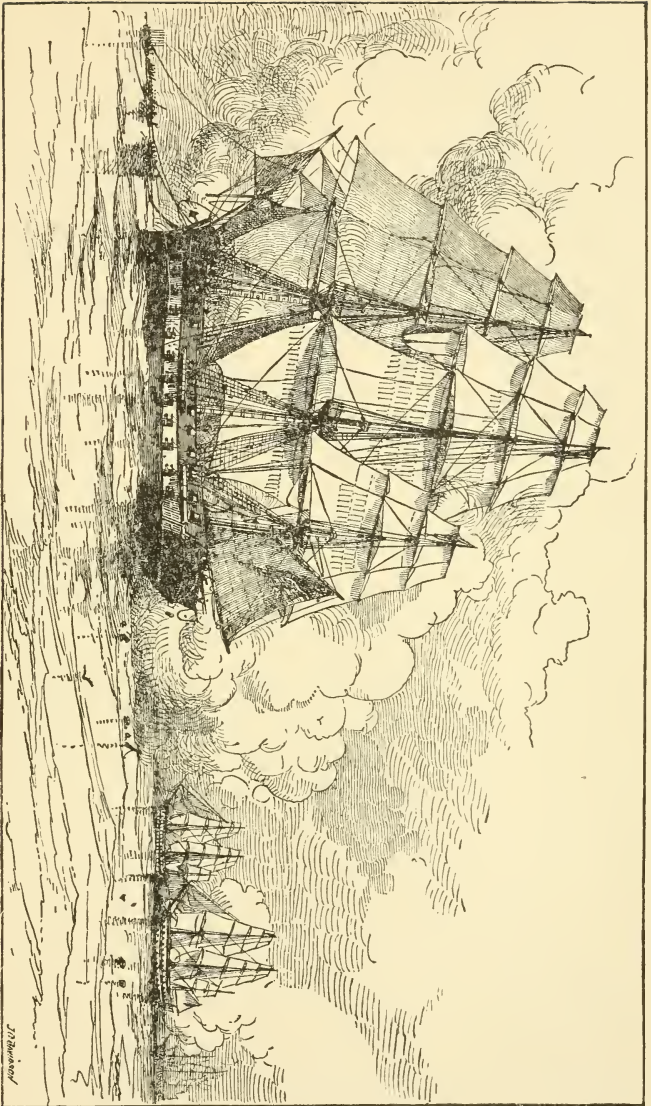
English captains hastily followed his example; but scarcely had the curtain of rain shut down when Hull loosed his sail again, and when the squall cleared away he had gained so much on his pursuers that dawn of the following day showed them hopelessly astern of him, and they soon gave up the chase.

Commodore Broke of the English squadron had been so sure of taking the *Constitution* that he had told off a prize crew for her. Hull's unexpected escape is one of the most skilful feats in the records of our navy. He missed no possible advantage and, though alternately towing, kedging, and sailing, he never lost a boat or a minute in swinging a boat on board. The English in their eagerness had cut many of their boats adrift and spent two or three days afterward cruising about to pick them up again.

The nearness of Broke's squadron to New York made it impossible for Hull to obey his original orders, and accordingly he made for Boston. Having replenished his supplies there and learned that there were no orders for him from Rodgers, Hull coolly slipped out to sea with all possible speed on August 2d. He explained that he went to sea without orders because he was afraid of being blockaded in Boston by the enemy's squadron. What he probably feared still more was that the timid authorities in Washington would order him not to stir for fear of being captured. As it turned out, just such orders arrived for him the day after he got away. In doing this Hull risked his commission and even his life, but he staked them both for the sake of proving the efficiency of the service to which he belonged.

After an uneventful cruise in the neighborhood of Halifax he turned south, and about noon on August 19, 1812, he sighted a large frigate which, as he had good reason to expect, flew English colors. This was just the chance he had been aching for. Evidently the English captain was glad to fight, too, for, as Hull had the wind behind him, the

ESCAPE OF THE "CONSTITUTION"



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Britisher deliberately waited for him to come up till he was within three miles' distance.

The British frigate was the *Guerrière*, Captain Dacres, oddly enough an old acquaintance of Hull's, with whom, the story goes, he had bet a hat the year before on the outcome of a possible duel between the *Guerrière* and an American ship like the *Constitution*. We shall soon find out who won the hat.

Dacres saw that if the *Constitution* continued on her course she would run under the stern of the *Guerrière* and rake her, so he manœvered to avoid this and to get the American under his broadside. He opened fire when within range, but Hull fired only occasionally, swinging the ship to match every movement of the enemy and all the while edging up astern of him. This went on for three-quarters of an hour; then Dacres, seeing he could not catch the *Constitution* at any disadvantage, allowed her to come to close quarters. Hull then overhauled the *Guerrière* from astern, receiving the fire of her stern-chasers in silence, but ordering his guns double-shotted for close quarters.

It was about six in the evening when he swung alongside at "half-pistol-shot" distance, and as soon as each gun came within range it poured its round shot and grape with smashing effect. As fast as possible the guns were reloaded and fired again. In ten minutes the *Guerrière's* mizzenmast toppled over, smashing a great hole in her stern, and with all its tangle of sail and spars acting as a drag against which the rudder was helpless.

"Huzza, my boys!" shouted Hull. "We've made a brig of her!"

They had done more than that, they had made a wreck of her, for the *Guerrière* now lay with her nose up in the wind. Hull promptly crossed her bows and delivered raking broadsides which did terrible execution at that close range. Then the *Guerrière* lunged her bowsprit across the deck of the *Constitution*, and each side thought

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of boarding, but the heavy sea made it impossible. At this point several were killed and wounded on both sides by musketry, including Captain Dacres, who was wounded in the back.

In breaking loose again the *Guerrière* struck her bowsprit on the rail of the *Constitution*; the blow slackened the forestay of the foremast, and, as most of the shrouds had already been shot away, down crashed the foremast. The jerk started the weakened mainmast, too, and that, with a great splintering crack, toppled overboard as well.

As the *Constitution* drew up across her bows to rake again the *Guerrière* fired a gun to leeward in token of surrender. By this time she had not a mast left, most of her batteries were blanketed under fallen spars and sails, and she wallowed helplessly in the heavy seas. A sail on the horizon suggested another enemy; and Hull, seeing that the *Guerrière* had no more fight left in her, drew off to repair damages to his rigging. The strange sail soon disappeared, and a half-hour was enough to make all necessary repairs. The *Constitution* then returned to the *Guerrière* and took her surrender.

As Captain Dacres climbed up the side of the American frigate Hull went to meet him and gave his hand to his old acquaintance.

"Dacres," he said, "give me your hand. I know you're hurt."

And the story goes that when Dacres took off his sword to give it up Hull laughed as an old friend might:

"Not your sword, Dacres, but I'll trouble you for your hat!"

The look of astonishment on Dacres's face changed to a wry smile as he remembered that bet of the year before. Hull immediately sent over a surgeon's mate to help the English surgeon and his staff in caring for the wounded Englishmen. Later, before destroying the *Guerrière*, he asked Dacres if there was still anything on board that he would like to save.

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“Yes,” he replied; “my mother’s Bible, which I have carried with me for years.”

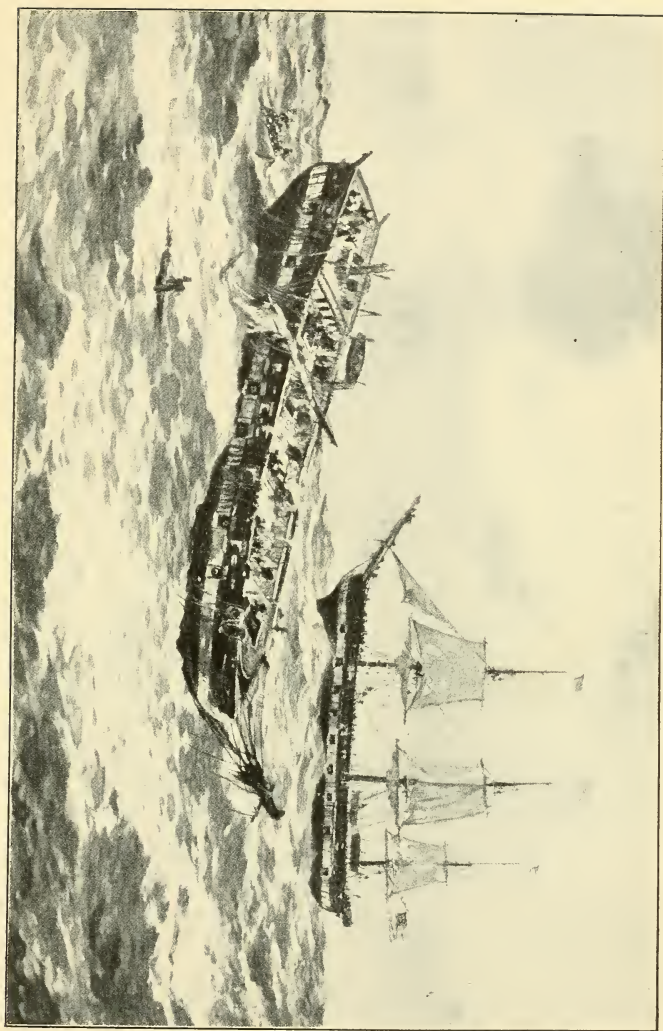
At that Hull promptly sent an officer to get it. This little courtesy seemed to bind the two men in a lasting personal friendship, for Dacres was a brave and generous enemy. He took special pains in his report to the Admiralty of the loss of the *Guerrière* to mention in warm terms Hull’s consideration for the prisoners, especially the wounded. Twenty-five years later, when Dacres was an admiral and Hull was commodore of an American squadron, the two met again in Rome. There these old-time enemies were seen walking arm in arm, and Dacres showed Hull every courtesy in his power.

The day after the battle Hull had tried to tow the *Guerrière*, but she was leaking so badly that there was no chance of saving her, so he set fire to her and blew her up. Ten days later, August 30th, the *Constitution* sailed proudly into Boston harbor, with guns booming and flags fluttering from every mast. When the news was told Boston went wild, and as the echoes of the victory spread bells rang and the people cheered everywhere throughout the land.

So far everything else had gone wrong. Instead of a glorious invasion of Canada the American army had been beaten back at every point and British regulars were on American soil. Then, to crown the miserable story, General Hull—an uncle of Isaac Hull—had, in the very week of the *Constitution’s* victory, surrendered our most important outpost of Detroit to a far inferior force. Every despatch had told a story of failure and disaster.

All this time nobody had expected that the little navy could do anything against the Mistress of the Seas, and when Hull brought the news of beating a British frigate in a stand-up fight the news was almost too good to be believed. It was the first cheery news since the beginning of the war, and people went wild with enthusiasm. Perhaps we did some silly boasting, too, but that was only natural. A very popular ballad was composed about the

THE SURRENDER OF THE "GUERRIÈRE"



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capture of the *Guerrière* which has this for its opening and most modest stanza:

It ofttimes has been told that British seamen bold
Could flog the tars of France so neat and handy, oh!
But they never met their match till the Yankees did they catch.
Oh, the Yankee boy for fighting is a dandy, oh!

There was an important side to this hullabaloo over the victory. The *Constitution* was a Boston ship, and her victory set ablaze a feeling of patriotism in Boston. That was very much needed, because Boston was the heart of New England, and the section was bitterly opposed to a war against Great Britain, or, rather, to anything done by a Republican Administration.

To the English the loss of a frigate was a trifle, but the fact that it had been captured by one of these despised Yankee frigates was a bitter pill indeed, and the London papers took it very hard. When we compare the armament of the two ships we see at once that, with equally brave men and skilful captains on both sides, the *Constitution* ought to have won, for her strength was as three to the *Guerrière's* two. But there was a far greater difference between the vessels when the short duel was over. The *Guerrière* had 78 killed and wounded to the *Constitution's* 14, and, while the former was so battered that she could not be even towed to port, the *Constitution* after a half-hour's repairs on her rigging was as fit as ever. For years the English had been accustomed to fighting and beating much bigger vessels than their own, and they believed that any British ship was fit to beat an adversary of almost twice its size.

It is interesting to note, too, that Captain Dacres, a few days before meeting the *Constitution*, had sent the following message to Commodore Rodgers in New York:

Captain Dacres, Commander of his British Majesty's frigate *Guerrière*, of 44 guns, presents his compliments to Commodore

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Rodgers of the frigate *President*, and will be very happy to meet him, or any other American frigate of equal force to the *President*, off Sandy Hook, for the purpose of having a few minutes' tête-à-tête.

So when the *Constitution*—a sister ship of the *President*—came along, Captain Dacres got exactly what he had asked for, but not exactly what he had expected.

VI

THE CAPTURES OF THE "FROLIC," THE "MACEDONIAN," AND THE "JAVA"

The *Wasp* and the *Frolic*—The *United States* and the *Macedonian*—
The *Constitution* and the *Java*.

THE first duel of the war was between frigates, the second was between sloops. In the frigate actions we must make allowance for the superiority of the 44-gun frigate designed by Humphreys to any frigates in the British navy in both size and guns. But there was little or no difference in the design of the sloops, which were built on English models; and in the sloop actions of 1812 we usually find vessels as evenly matched as is possible in the chances of war.

On October 18, 1812, Master-Commandant Jacob Jones, commanding the sloop of war *Wasp*, sighted a British sloop of war which proved to be the *Frolic*, commanded by Captain Whinyates. The two vessels were about five hundred miles due east from the Chesapeake Capes. A few days before there had been a violent gale which did some damage to the rigging of both vessels, and there was still a heavy sea running when they fought each other. The *Frolic* was escorting two merchantmen, and when Whinyates saw the American ship heading for him he signaled the convoy to run away while he waited the attack.

On account of the rough seas neither side tried firing till the vessels were within fifty yards of each other, and they ran alongside with little attempt at manœuvering. Meanwhile they blazed away at each other with cannon and

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musketry. The *Wasp's* spars and sails were soon badly cut up. Crack! Suddenly her maintopmast fell over into the fore rigging and made nearly all the head-sails useless. Jones looked anxiously at the *Frolic*, which seemed to be as fresh as ever. And yet his lads knew how to aim a gun—he had seen to that.

As the two drew closer the *Frolic's* foreyards became disabled by the American fire, and she swung awkwardly into position with her bow toward the *Wasp*. Jones made the most of this by catching the *Frolic's* bowsprit between his own main and mizzen masts, and then pouring in a broadside of grape-shot that swept the *Frolic's* deck fore and aft. The two ships were so close that the American ramrods were pushed against the bows of the *Frolic*. Jones was just giving an order for another raking broadside, but the ardor of his men could not be restrained. Seaman Jack Lang, who had once been impressed into the British navy, leaping on top of his gun, caught the lurching bowsprit of the enemy, clambered up, and was soon making his way, with cutlass in hand and blood in his eye, to the deck of the *Frolic*. Nobody could let Jack board the enemy all by himself, and at the next favorable swing of the ship Lieutenant Biddle with a party of boarders climbed up and was soon on the forecastle of the *Frolic*.

There the Americans were shocked by a horrible spectacle. The deck was strewn with the dead and dying. As Biddle picked his way along the bloody deck he found only four men on their feet—the quartermaster, still clutching the wheel, and Captain Whinyates and two other officers, all wounded. The officers dropped their swords in surrender, and Biddle with his own hands lowered the British ensign.

Scarcely had the Americans taken possession when the masts of the *Frolic* went down close to the deck. On investigating her condition the Americans found, in the words of Captain Whinyates himself, that out of one hundred and ten men "not twenty were left unhurt." Every officer was either killed or wounded.

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On the American side there had been serious damage to the rigging, but there were only five killed and five wounded, a total of ten to the enemy's ninety. The explanation of the difference is that the Americans had fired on the downward roll of the ship and hulled the *Frolic* or cut her masts near the level of the deck, the English had fired on the upward roll and wounded only the upper rigging of the *Wasp*.

Probably no other ship in a duel like this ever suffered such an enormous loss of life in proportion to her original crew; and, as her masts went overboard soon after her surrender, the ship itself was nothing but a hulk. The *Wasp* and the *Frolic* were very evenly matched, the *Frolic* having a slight advantage in guns and the *Wasp* a slightly larger crew. The result was clearly due to the better gunnery of the Americans.

The British Admiralty were so mortified by the facts as they came out in the testimony that poor Whinyates after his court-martial never got another command, and yet he had fought bravely and stubbornly, and the injuries he had done to the *Wasp's* rigging resulted finally in her capture. While Jones was busily trying to repair his injuries aloft a British ship of the line hove in sight, picked up both antagonists, and took them to Jamaica.

Meanwhile the *United States*, 44 guns, under Capt. Stephen Decatur, had gone to sea with Commodore Rodgers' squadron early in October, 1812. He left the squadron three days later, and on the 25th of the month, while cruising near the Canary Islands, he sighted a large sail twelve miles away. It was the 38-gun frigate *Macedonian*, Captain Carden, who was looking for the 32-gun frigate *Essex* which he had heard was somewhere in that neighborhood. So he made all speed to come up with the *United States*, and the impetuous Decatur was no less anxious to fight.

When Dacres fought the *Constitution* he had generously sent the impressed Americans on the *Guerrière* down into

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the hold, although he was short of men. There were seven impressed seamen on the *Macedonian*, and when they recognized the Stars and Strips on the *United States* one of them, Jack Carden, asked the captain that they might be regarded as prisoners of war. Carden, with an oath, ordered him back to his gun.

"You make that request again," he threatened, "and I'll shoot you on the spot!"

Poor Jack was soon killed by a 24-pound shot from his own countrymen.

Meanwhile the swift *Macedonian* was rushing toward her enemy. If she held her course she would pass under the stern of the American frigate and come immediately into close quarters. In so doing Carden would give up the "weather gage"—that is, the position to windward of the enemy. In those days British captains thought it a great advantage to hold the windward position, so Carden turned on a course nearly parallel with the *United States*, but keeping at a considerable distance. He still believed the American ship to be the *Essex*, and, knowing that the *Essex* was weak in long guns, he thought it would be easy to stay out of range of her carronades and shoot her up. But he had an unpleasant surprise. As soon as the two ships were within long range a 24-pound shot cut away the *Macedonian's* mizzentopmast, which fell into the rigging of the mainmast. Soon afterward the shots came crashing into the bulwarks and hull of the *Macedonian*, sending deadly splinters flying across the decks. While the two ships fought at long range Decatur kept sailing a little way ahead and then swinging his ship around to pour her full broadside on the *Macedonian*.

Carden soon realized that the *United States* had the better of him at long range and headed toward the American in order to come to close quarters. In doing this he exposed his bows to a diagonal fire from the *United States*, which Decatur was quick to take advantage of. In their position of sailing bows-on toward their enemy the English

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had only a few guns that could bear, while the Americans with their full broadside poured into the *Macedonian* a storm of iron that swept her decks and dismounted all her carronades on the starboard side.

After half to three-quarters of an hour of this destructive work Decatur allowed his enemy to come to close quarters. But, as Carden's carronades were all dismounted on the side exposed to the American fire, and as the carronades of the *United States* were now thundering away with their big, smashing shot, the *Macedonian* was worse off at close quarters than before. Soon her topmasts were gone, and her mizzenmast followed, so that she rolled the muzzles of her guns under water with every wave.

There was only a forlorn chance left for the Englishmen—namely, to take the *United States* by boarding, and the helm was put hard aport in order to foul the American frigate. Just then a shot sent the big foreyard of the *Macedonian* swinging round, and the ship pointed into the wind.

Seeing that his enemy was done for, Decatur, like Hull, sailed off a short distance to repair his rigging. At this manœuver the British sailors, who had certainly been fighting as bravely as men could, broke into a loud cheer, for they supposed that the Americans had sighted another man-of-war and were running away. But in a few minutes the *United States* returned as fresh as ever and took up a raking position under the *Macedonian's* stern. There was a hasty council of war among the English officers. Lieutenant Hope, the fiery first lieutenant, though twice wounded during the battle, pleaded that the *Macedonian* sink first but never surrender. More practical heads prevailed, and the ensign of England came flapping down to the deck.

"Sir," said Decatur, when Carden offered his sword, "I cannot receive the sword of a man who has so bravely defended his ship!"

It is true Carden had defended it bravely; but, as Preble

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had taught, bravery is only the first of a commander's qualities. Brains and skill are quite as necessary, and Carden had not shown either. Hull, in his fight with the *Guerrière*, and Carden, in his with the *United States*, were in the same relative positions. Each was to windward, and each came down to attack a waiting enemy. Hull never allowed the *Guerrière* to get in a raking broadside, though she tried often. He manœvered so that he came to close quarters from astern, where only a few of the enemy's guns could reach him before he closed. So when the *Constitution* surged alongside at close quarters she had scarcely an injury.

Carden had tried to come up to close quarters, too, but instead of manœvering to avoid being raked he came almost bows-on, exposed to a terrible fire from the entire American broadside and unable to reply to any effect. Before the *Macedonian* could come to close quarters she was so badly shattered that she was already a beaten ship. All the while Decatur showed excellent judgment in handling his ship, so that he made the most of Carden's blunders.

Like Hull and Dacres, Decatur and Carden had known each other before the war, and, oddly enough, just as Dacres had bet a hat with Hull on the superiority of the British frigates, Carden and Decatur had had a warm argument on the comparative value of British 18-pounders and the American 24-pounders. The battle settled this difference of opinion, too.

The comparative strength of the two ships was about the same as in the case of the *Constitution* and the *Guerrière*—that is, three to two. But the difference in damage inflicted was about nine to one. The British loss in killed and wounded was 104 to the American 12. In this case, where a good deal of the shooting was at long range, the Americans again showed great superiority in gunnery. After the surrender Decatur patched up the *Macedonian*, and the two ships got back safely to New York. The

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captured frigate served under the Stars and Stripes for many years afterward.

After Hull returned victorious in the *Constitution* he gave up the command of her, of his own accord, in order that Captain Bainbridge might have a chance. This was a generous act, for after taking the *Guerrière* Hull could have stayed as long as he liked on the *Constitution*. The fine unselfishness of it adds to our respect for the man who is considered the ablest single-ship captain of the War of 1812. Bainbridge must have appreciated the act, too, for it gave him a chance to clear his name of all the disasters that had clouded it during his naval career. In the French war his little vessel had been the only one captured by the French. In 1800 he had been forced to the humiliation of taking his ship on an errand for the Bey of Algiers, and in 1803 he had been captain of the *Philadelphia* when she went aground off Tripoli. Sailors are famous for their superstitions, and the crew of "Old Ironsides" felt that he was an "unlucky" captain. They were very much discontented at the idea of giving up their beloved Hull for Bainbridge, and after the *Constitution* put to sea under the new captain he was forced to discipline the crew severely.

Captain Bainbridge had with him the sloop *Hornet*, and expected the *Essex* to join him later, but, as we shall see, the *Essex* never caught up with him. The *Constitution* and the *Hornet* went south to Bahia, Brazil. There in the harbor they found a British sloop of war, the *Bonne Citoyenne*, with a large amount of money on board. For a while the two American ships kept her blockaded. Then Lawrence, the commander of the *Hornet*, sent a challenge to the English captain to come out and fight, with a pledge from Bainbridge that he would not interfere. The Englishman responded that he did not trust Bainbridge to keep his hands off. At this Bainbridge sailed off, hoping in that way to tempt the British sloop of war to come out.

Three days later, on the morning of the 29th of December, 1812, Bainbridge sighted two sails. These turned out to

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be the British frigate *Java*, Captain Lambert, in company with an American prize. As soon as Lambert sighted the *Constitution* he ordered his prize to run to Bahia, while he headed for the strange frigate. Bainbridge, seeing that the Englishman was ready to fight, headed southeast in order to get to a safe distance from neutral water. The *Java* came rushing on with all speed, and at about one-thirty the *Constitution* turned about and headed for her enemy. Then began a contest in seamanship between the rival captains. The *Java* manœvered to get a raking position, and the *Constitution* swung from one side to the other to avoid the danger. In this contest the *Java* had the better of it because she was the speedier of the two. The *Java*, like the *Guerrière*, was originally a French ship. The fastest ships in the British navy were those that the English had taken from the French. (Frenchmen in those days built ships far better than they fought them.) Besides, Captain Lambert was an expert seaman and took great pride in the art of handling a ship. So Bainbridge had his hands full in keeping the *Java* from gaining a raking position.

As soon as the ships were within reach of each other their broadsides began booming, with an occasional sputter of musketry. Early in the battle a musket-ball struck Bainbridge in the hip. At two-thirty a round shot smashed the *Constitution's* wheel and drove a copper bolt deep into his thigh, but in spite of these painful wounds he refused to leave the deck. The loss of his wheel made the situation serious, because after that the rudder had to be swung by relieving tackles, two decks below, and every time the course was altered Bainbridge had to send some one scampering below to pass the order.

With his wheel gone Bainbridge saw that there was only one thing left to do, and that was to close with his enemy, no matter what it cost. As the *Constitution* swung up the *Java* shot past under her stern, and everybody expected the dreaded raking broadside, but for some reason—perhaps the guns were not loaded just then—the *Java*,

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fired only one little 9-pounder. Round the ships swung again; once more the nimble *Java* crossed the wake of the *Constitution*, but at too great a distance to harm her. Again Bainbridge headed for her, and at this moment the *Java* lost her jib-boom with the sails on it, and the sudden loss of head-sail made her come up into the wind. Bainbridge made the most of his chance by swinging his ship about and raking the *Java* with terrible effect at close quarters.

This was a staggering blow, and Lambert tried to settle things by boarding the American frigate. But just as he was laying the *Java* alongside, down came her foremast. At that the unlucky *Java* ran the stump of her bowsprit into the mizzen rigging of the *Constitution* in a position that gave the Americans a chance to pour in another dreadful raking fire at close quarters.

From this time the *Java* was done for, although her brave defenders kept up a heroic fight. The *Constitution* circled about her and poured in a fire that riddled her and cut away every stick but her mainmast, and that went overboard a few minutes before the surrender. At the same time the American marines were busy with their muskets. It was a bullet from the maintop of the *Constitution* that gave Captain Lambert his mortal wound soon after the two ships fouled.

Shortly after four the shattered *Java* lay a complete wreck, rolling heavily in the trough of the seas, with her batteries silent. As there was no flag flying, Bainbridge decided that she had surrendered, so he sailed off for an hour to splice his badly cut rigging. On his return he found that the British frigate had hoisted her colors again, but as the *Constitution* forged across her bows, ready for another raking broadside, the flag was pulled down in a hurry.

The *Constitution* had the same advantage in strength over the *Java* that she had had over the *Guerrière*, but again there was no comparison in the damage done. The *Java*

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was so shattered that Bainbridge had to blow her up, while the *Constitution* was perfectly fit for a long cruise back to the United States. As for killed and wounded, British accounts of the *Java* vary all the way from 124 to 230. The *Constitution's* total loss was 34.

The *Constitution* put into Bahia again, and Bainbridge, though in great pain from his wounds, had himself carried before the dying Lambert in order to return the Englishman's sword and to say how earnestly he hoped that Lambert might recover. It is pleasant to read that our victorious commanders distinguished themselves by their chivalry as well as their courage and skill. Among the prisoners taken from the *Java* was General Hyslop, who was on board with a detachment of troops. The general was so much impressed by Bainbridge's courtesy that he not only wrote him his thanks after leaving the ship, but later sent him a gold-mounted sword.

For Captain Bainbridge, with all his hard-luck record, this victory meant everything. It cleared his name and proved his worth. In fact, the enemy's ship in this case was handled much more cleverly than the *Guerrière*, the *Frolic*, or the *Macedonian*, for Lambert was a splendid seaman. Where he failed was in gunnery. He belonged to that large class of English captains of those days who had no use for target practice. As the battle went on the *Java's* shooting grew wilder, while that of the *Constitution* grew more and more deadly. During the six weeks Lambert had commanded the *Java* only once had he held gun drill, and that was with blank cartridges.

In all the wild hurrahs over the continued victories of the little American navy Americans began to talk as if there were some magic stuff in our sailors which made them braver and better than any men in the world—notably the English. (At that time our army was getting so badly whipped along the Canadian line that it was very comforting to be able to boast about our navy.) The truth of the matter was that the British navy had been

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so long accustomed to beating the French—even at great odds—that the officers had grown over-confident and careless. Even Lord Nelson had pooh-poohed the idea of gun practice. “Get so close that you can’t miss!” was his advice. Accordingly we find the crews of British ships untrained in gun-fire, while the men on our American frigates and sloops were drilled and trained to shoot straight. As between straight shooting and wild shooting, no matter how brave the men may be, there can be only one result. We have seen that result in the captures of the *Guerrière*, the *Frolic*, the *Macedonian*, and the *Java*.

VII

JAMES LAWRENCE

The *Hornet* and the *Peacock*—The *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon*—
Reasons for the defeat.

IN the last chapter we left the 18-gun sloop of war *Hornet*, Master-Commandant James Lawrence, vainly challenging the *Bonne Citoyenne* to come out of the harbor of Bahia and fight. Not long afterward a British ship of the line came in, and the little *Hornet* had to take to her heels. Lawrence then sailed along the coast to British Guiana, which was a popular hunting-ground for American privateers, and on his way he captured an armed brig with a cargo of coffee and tea and the sum of \$23,000 in coin on board.

On February 24, 1813, when off the mouth of the Demerara River, Lawrence sighted a British sloop of war and in making for her was pleased to see that her commander was just as ready to fight as he was. The English sloop was the *Peacock*, Captain Peake. She was a sister ship of the *Frolic*; but, as she had recently changed her 34-pound carronades for 24's, her broadside was lighter than that of the *Frolic*. The fight between these two may be said to have lasted scarcely one round. Hardly had they begun fighting when Lawrence caught his enemy at a disadvantage by a quick manœuver and held a deadly position close under his stern, pouring in a heavy fire. In eleven minutes from the first shot down came the British colors and up went a signal of distress.

When Lieutenant Shubrick of the *Hornet* went aboard

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he found the captain of the *Peacock* killed and the ship settling fast. Then Lieutenant Connor, with a force of American sailors, was sent aboard to try to keep the little vessel afloat till the prisoners could be transferred. They threw the cannon overboard, plugged holes, pumped, and baled, but the *Peacock* settled lower and lower till suddenly she dived under, carrying with her nine English and three American sailors. The sad story about these American tars is that they were rummaging below for some of the *Peacock's* rum, which they could not bear to see wasted.

In this duel the *Hornet* had an advantage in men and weight of shot, but there was the same old story of wretched shooting against accurate shooting. The *Peacock* had lost five killed and thirty-three wounded, while the *Hornet* had one killed and four wounded. Two of the latter were hurt, not by the enemy's fire, but by an explosion of a cartridge on their own ship. The *Peacock* was so badly shattered in eleven minutes that she could not be kept afloat long enough to get all the prisoners off, while the *Hornet* had only a few injuries in her rigging, which were soon patched up.

There were three impressed Americans on the *Peacock* who had been refused permission to go below as prisoners. Like Carden, Captain Peake threatened to shoot them. One of these men was killed. Another by a strange chance turned out to be a relative of Lawrence's wife.

All the while the fight was going on the British sloop *Espiègle*, of the *Hornet* class, was lying at anchor in neutral water at the mouth of the river, in plain view. When the business with the *Peacock* was done Lawrence hastily spliced his rigging, to be ready for another set-to. To his astonishment, the *Espiègle* did not stir, and after waiting around invitingly with no result Lawrence trimmed his sails and went homeward.

By this time the *Hornet* was crowded with prisoners whose cramped quarters were naturally very uncomfortable, but Lawrence's care for the English wounded and the consideration he showed his prisoners were so fine that as

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soon as the Englishmen arrived in the United States they published a letter expressing their gratitude to their chivalrous enemy. The seamen themselves caught their captain's spirit and made up from their own supplies an outfit for the British sailors, who had lost all they had by the sudden end of the *Peacock*.

On the 24th of March, 1813, Lawrence arrived safely at New York and discharged his prisoners. During his cruise of 145 days he had captured four rich merchantmen and destroyed a man-of-war of his own rate in brilliant style. There was not another officer, even in those days of rapid successes, who could quite match this record of Lawrence's in the *Hornet*. When he arrived in New York there were grand dinners and jollifications in his honor, and he became the popular toast. And, what was better still, he was so beloved in the navy that there was not one of his less fortunate brother officers who was not delighted at the success of "Jim" Lawrence.

He asked to be allowed to keep the command of the *Hornet*, but, as he had recently been promoted to the rank of captain, the Department slated him for a frigate. Lawrence then hoped for the *Constitution*, but they gave him the *Chesapeake*, then refitting in Boston.

Late in May Lawrence took command of her, with orders to get to sea as soon as he could and, heading north, to destroy the British fisheries on the Grand Banks. On going aboard he reported to Washington that he found his ship ready for sea except for some men and a few supplies. Ten days later, May 30th, he left the wharf and moored out in the roads—to get "shaken down," as he called it, for a few days before trying to run the blockade.

Meanwhile there had been since April two English frigates blockading the port. At first, in order to encourage the well-known disloyalty of the New England States toward Madison and the war, the English had left the New England coast free. But early in 1813 the British government decided to blockade the New England

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coast as well. Two other American frigates had run the blockade of Boston harbor in a fog, just before Lawrence arrived. This left the *Constitution*, undergoing repairs in the navy-yard, and the *Chesapeake*, which was almost ready for sea.

The morning of June 1st showed that instead of two frigates blockading the harbor there was only one, the *Shannon*, Captain Broke. This was the Captain Broke who had seen the *Constitution* escape from his squadron in that long chase off the Jersey coast. As soon as Lawrence heard that there was only one ship on blockade he hurried on board to go out and fight. Had he known that that very morning Broke was writing a challenge to him to come out to a single-ship duel, "wherever it is most convenient to you," he might perhaps have taken a little more time for his preparations. Broke sent the challenge ashore by a discharged prisoner, but the message never reached Lawrence.

Here was the one chance he had been hoping for. The memory of the *Bonne Citoyenne* and the *Espiègle*, and the scornful things he had said about their commanders, made it impossible for him to sit tamely in Boston Roads with a solitary English ship the size of the *Chesapeake* coolly sailing back and forth at the very mouth of the harbor.

But the *Chesapeake* was not in the best shape for battle. Next to the captain the first lieutenant is the most important man on a ship. The *Chesapeake's* "first luff" was in the hospital ashore, dying of pneumonia. Two other officers were on leave, and to fill these vacancies Lieutenant Ludlow, only twenty-one years old, was made first lieutenant, and two midshipmen were moved up as acting lieutenants. Of course the crew was unorganized, officers and men did not know one another at all and were unfamiliar with their duties.

On the other hand, the *Shannon* was manned by as finely disciplined a crew as could be found in the British navy. Her captain had been with that ship's company on

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the *Shannon* for seven years, and made it "a crack ship." Strange to say, his hobby was gunnery, and most of his brother officers used to laugh at him as a crank. But he let them laugh. The *Shannon* was his ship, and he determined to carry out his ideas. So at his own expense he fitted out his guns with the best sights known in that day. Behind each gun he cut an arc of a circle in the deck, with the degrees marked plainly, so that something like an accurate angle could be made in aiming. Twice a day, except on Saturdays and Sundays, he had gun drill, usually including practice in firing at a floating cask four or five hundred yards away.

When Broke had preached gunnery to his brother officers they had pooh-poohed at him and repeated what Nelson had said about sights; but when one ship after another surrendered to the Americans during that first year of the war Broke knew well enough what the trouble was, and longed for a chance to show the difference between the firing of the *Shannon* and that of the *Guerrière*, the *Macedonian*, and the *Java*.

Probably all that Lawrence knew about his opponent was that it was a British frigate, in size like his own, offering battle, and to this young and impetuous commander that was enough. Just before tripping his anchor he mustered his crew and made them a brief speech. At the end two sailors stepped forward and asked for prize money that had been due them for a long while and which naturally they wanted to their credit before going into action. This incident was the foundation for the story afterward of the "mutinous temper" of the crew. Lawrence went below, ordered the purser to make out the checks for the money, and then wrote to his wife and the Secretary of the Navy. In the letter to the Secretary he expressly says that his men were in "fine spirits." Having sent these letters ashore, he unmoored and made sail directly for the waiting *Shannon*.

Captain Broke, seeing that Lawrence needed no chal-

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lence to make him fight, turned about and headed to sea to lead his antagonist out to where there was plenty of sailing-room. Then he shortened sail and waited for the *Chesapeake*. In doing this he gave Lawrence the choice of any style of attack, and, as the *Chesapeake* came on, the American commander had a tempting chance to take a raking position under the stern of the *Shannon*. Broke expected this manœuver and ordered his men to lie down to avoid the storm of iron shot and splinters that would sweep the length of the deck. But, to his astonishment, Lawrence threw away the advantage, as if disdaining to use it, and instead rounded up to run close alongside. It was nearly six o'clock in the evening when the *Chesapeake's* bows forged past the stern of the *Shannon* and the British gunners opened fire. They struck first. Just as soon as a gun could be trained on the American frigate it was fired, then loaded with all speed and fired again. The effect of this accurately aimed fire was terrible at a distance of fifty yards, yet the American seamen stood to their guns bravely, and for five or six minutes the two frigates sailed almost parallel courses, pounding each other furiously with their broadsides.

In his eagerness to close with his enemy Lawrence had allowed his ship to run up with considerable headway, while the *Shannon* had been hove to awaiting him. Besides this, the *Chesapeake* lay to windward and in passing the *Shannon* took the wind from the latter's sails. The result was that the *Chesapeake* forged past the *Shannon*, and Lawrence tried to "luff her" in order to check her headway. Just at this crucial moment several disasters happened all at once. The two men on whom the manœuvering depended most were shot down, Captain Lawrence was wounded, and his sailing-master was killed. Then a shot brought down the foreyard with its sail, the wheel was broken, and sheets fore and aft were carried away, leaving their sails flapping idly. In consequence the unlucky ship came up helplessly into the wind with her stern exposed

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to the full broadside of her enemy, only seventy yards away.

Broke took quick advantage of this position by pouring into the *Chesapeake* a terrible diagonal fire, while she drifted slowly, stern foremost, right upon the British guns.

Lawrence, seeing that the two ships were going to foul, gave the order to call "boarders away." But there was confusion in getting the order because the negro bugler was so paralyzed with terror that he had hidden himself, and the order had to be shouted from man to man. Just before the two ships fouled Lawrence was wounded again, this time mortally. The American boarders gathered, cutlass and pike in hand, but they looked round in vain for leaders. At that moment Lawrence was being carried below, and every other officer on the spar-deck had received his death-wound except a few midshipmen—mere boys—most of whom were in the tops.



UNIFORM OF A
SAILOR, WAR OF 1812

The second lieutenant was off at the opposite end of the ship on the deck below, with not the faintest idea of what was going on above. The acting third lieutenant, Midshipman Cox, had responded to the call for boarders by leading his gun-crews on deck. But just as he reached the deck he saw his beloved commander fall mortally wounded. Lawrence was not merely the captain to young Cox; he was a friend and idol. The young man impulsively stopped in his tracks to help pick up his captain and carry him to the deck below. But as he ran up again he found the hatch already battened down by the boarders of the enemy.

Meanwhile the American boarding party, thus left without leaders, were being cut down by a terrible raking fire at close quarters. It is small wonder that they soon

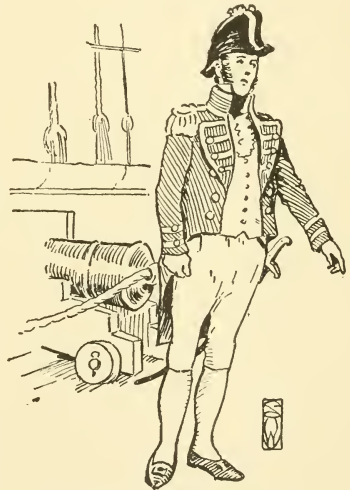
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became demoralized and ran below. The marines had lost their captain, but they were rallied by their sergeant, and made a defense which the marine corps may still boast of to-day. Out of a company of forty-four they lost twelve killed and twenty wounded before the survivors were finally swept away by the rush of the *Shannon*.

In the British navy a captain is not supposed to lead a boarding party from his ship unless things are pretty desperate. Whatever Broke may have thought of the condition of his own ship, the fact remains that he was among the first to leap to the quarter-deck of the *Chesapeake*. Not long after the British had seized the quarter-deck there came a golden opportunity for the Americans to rally and save the day, if

they had had a single officer to direct them. During the confusion the *Chesapeake* had fallen off enough to catch the wind and surge ahead. This broke the lashings that bound the two ships together, and Broke and his men found themselves separated from their ship. About this time Second-Lieutenant Budd had rallied some defenders on the fore-castle and was fighting desperately, but he was twice severely wounded and finally was thrown to the gun-deck unconscious. In this fighting Captain Broke himself received a terrible cutlass-stroke on the head that very nearly cost him his life and made him an invalid for the rest of his days.

After Budd was wounded there was no more resistance.



UNIFORM OF A CAPTAIN,
WAR OF 1812

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The first lieutenant of the *Shannon*, in his eagerness to show that the *Chesapeake* was captured, hauled down her flag and put on English colors. But in his nervous haste he attached the British ensign under instead of over the Stars and Stripes. At this a gun-crew on the *Shannon*, thinking that the Americans must have retaken the ship, fired their gun, killing the blundering lieutenant and four or five of his men. That was the last shot of the battle.



UNIFORM OF A
MARINE, WAR OF 1812

In all this story so much happened that it is hard to realize that from the first shot to the last it was only fifteen minutes. The British swarmed over the captured ship and, unfortunately, their conduct showed nothing of Captain Lawrence's generous spirit toward a beaten foe. After all resistance had ceased an English lieutenant directed his men to fire at the Americans in the rigging as if they were shooting at squirrels in a tree; and after the prisoners were on board the *Shannon* there was small consideration shown them or

their personal property. We may be sure nothing of the sort would have happened if the "brave Broke" had been in command, but he lay unconscious in his cabin, and his ship was in the hands of young subordinates.

Poor Lawrence lingered in great agony for four days afterward, crying out in his delirium, "Don't give up the ship!" which, with "I haven't yet begun to fight!" are the favorite watchwords of our American navy. Lawrence's treatment of the prisoners from the *Peacock* had won him the kindest feelings among the English, and the news of his death brought a genuine regret to his enemy. He was buried in Halifax with all the honors that could have been given to an Englishman of his rank, and British officers

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walked bareheaded beside the coffin to pay their dead enemy the respect they felt for him.

When news reached the House of Commons that the *Shannon* had taken the *Chesapeake* the whole House burst into cheers, and tremendous enthusiasm followed in the English newspapers. A year before, the capture of an enemy's frigate by an English frigate of the same rating would scarcely have been noticed, for it was always happening with French ships, and the hullabaloo over the capture of the *Chesapeake* was a fine tribute to the new respect Englishmen had for our ships. Broke became the nation's toast, and a popular ballad was sung about "brave Broke" for years. Boys who have read *Tom Brown at Rugby* will remember that the Rugby boys shouted it a whole generation after the battle.

On the other side of the Atlantic the news came as a sudden and terrible shock. After all the brilliant victories of the preceding year Americans had come to think themselves able to "whip anybody" on the seas. National pride had been feeding on naval victories so long that the news of the *Shannon's* capture of the *Chesapeake* in fifteen minutes was a very bitter pill.

When anything happens that people do not like or that hurts their pride they always get relief by finding somebody to blame. It was lucky for poor Lawrence's name that he did not live to face a court-martial. As it was, the blame was all shoved upon Acting-Lieutenant Cox. In his court-martial he had to face an array of thirteen charges to begin with, but everything fell to pieces except these facts—he had stopped to pick up Lawrence and help him down the ladder to the gun-deck. The poor boy did not know it, but at that moment he was the only officer left on the spar-deck. When he found that he could not get back up the same ladder, he ran forward only to find the panic-stricken crew tumbling down from above in a rush which he could not stop. Back he went to his gun and fired it, the last shot in the defense of the *Chesapeake*. It was a mistake in

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judgment to stop to help Lawrence at that moment, but not a very blameworthy one under the circumstances. For that the lad was expelled from the navy with all the blame of the loss of the ship on his shoulders. To show the fine stuff Cox was made of, when expelled from the navy he shouldered a musket and fought as a volunteer soldier through the rest of the war.

We were not satisfied with a scapegoat, either; we had to find some other comforting reasons for the defeat. Sailormen explained it by saying that the *Chesapeake* was an "unlucky" ship—there was that miserable *Leopard* affair six years before—and nothing could have saved her in battle, anyway. Other people began to hunt for more probable excuses to explain the defeat, and where they could not find them they made them up. So, right down to our time Americans have been brought up on a patriotic fairy tale explaining the loss of the *Chesapeake*. According to this, her crew were both drunk and mutinous and composed of landlubbers, or "cowardly Portuguese," who refused to fight. All this nonsense has been thoroughly exploded.

The truth is that the *Shannon* was a better ship than the *Chesapeake* for the same reason that veterans are better than recruits, but the American crew—and they were Americans—burst into cheers when they went into action and fought like tigers during those terrible minutes when the *Chesapeake* was a cloud of flying splinters from the enemy's fire and men were dropping everywhere. And we must remember in those five or six minutes when the two ships were running parallel the *Shannon* lost more in killed and wounded than the *Guerrière* or the *Macedonian* had at the time they surrendered. Luck played an important part in those ship duels at close quarters, and the *Chesapeake* had the worst possible luck in losing practically all her officers, her wheel, and her head-sails almost at the same instant. Yet much of that luck may be laid to the accuracy of Broke's trained gun-crews, after all.

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Some think that Lawrence was very headstrong to rush to sea when he did, but we must remember that it was his business to get to sea, and another day might have brought back that other British frigate, which would have made escape impossible. Where he did make a mistake was in throwing away the chance to rake the *Shannon* when he had it in his grasp. That kind of generosity in battle may be "magnificent," as the French officer said of the charge of the Light Brigade, "but it is not war."

However, we must not leave the brave Lawrence with a word of criticism. With his warm heart and his high ideals of chivalry he is perhaps the knightliest, the most lovable of the naval heroes of 1812.

VIII

LAKE ERIE AND THE CRUISE OF THE "ESSEX"

Campaign on the Great Lakes—Building a fleet on Lake Erie—
Battle of Lake Erie—Career of the *Essex*—Midshipman Farragut
—Effect of commerce-destroying on the war.

A GLANCE at the map will show how important the Great Lakes should have been to us in attacking England on her weak side—namely, Canada. But here, as everywhere else, no preparations had been made even toward the end of the negotiations, when everybody knew that war with England could not be avoided. Consequently, after the bad blunders of the army in the summer of 1812 we soon found ourselves in the position where Canada ought to have been. The surrender of Detroit and Mackinac (at the upper end of Lake Huron) left all our Northwest in the control of the British, Canadians, and their Indian friends, and there was hardly anything to hinder an army from invading New England, New York, or Pennsylvania.

At this disgraceful and dangerous state of things the government finally woke up to the importance of the Lakes. So they sent Captain Isaac Chauncey to take command of Lakes Ontario and Erie. That is, he was to build a fleet there to regain control of those lakes. As soon as Chauncey arrived he sent Lieutenant Elliot to Black Rock (near Buffalo) to begin a naval base on Lake Erie, while he himself took charge of Lake Ontario.

Captain Chauncey's work on Lake Ontario we can sum up very easily by saying that for the rest of the war he and his British rival, Captain Yeo, played a kind of seesaw,



STATES AND TERRITORIES IN THE SOUTH AND WEST—1812

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No decisive action was fought, because as soon as one commander had more ships than the other the latter would draw to cover until he had built some more. Then he would sally out on the lake, and the other fellow would hide.

The story of Lake Erie is very different. In the first place, young Elliot made a splendid beginning by a bold night attack in open boats against two British armed brigs that had anchored in fancied security near the British Fort Erie, on the Canadian shore. Elliot captured one and compelled the destruction of the other to prevent its capture. But the British still had a much larger vessel, the *Detroit*, which controlled the lake, besides others in the process of construction.

That winter Master-Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry was ordered to take command at Lake Erie and construct a navy which should regain the lake for the United States. It was a new and hard task for a young officer used to the swaying deck of a frigate, the salt-spray, and the jolly friendships of the wardroom mess. The neighborhood of Lake Erie in those days was a wilderness, and he was to plunge into that wilderness and build out of the tall pines a fleet that should drive away an enemy already in control of the lake! Perhaps an officer who had not known Preble's stiff training in the Tripolitan war would have laughed at such orders, but Perry had been one of those "school-boys."

Even his fine courage must have been dampened when in March, 1813, he arrived with his little band at Sackett's Harbor, on Lake Ontario, drenched to the skin with an icy March rain and a long tramp through slushy snow as he hurried to defend the little outpost against a threatened attack. From there he went to Buffalo, and thence over the ice to Presque Isle, now Erie, at that time a handful of cabins with a little tavern. Here he determined to establish his naval base, for a sailing-master and shipwright, with a gang of workmen, had been at work on several vessels, some of which were nearly ready for launching. The largest

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were two brigs, 110 feet in length, the *Niagara* and the *Lawrence*. The latter name was given by special order of the Navy Department on receipt of the news of Captain Lawrence's death.

The British at their base, Malden, were also building to increase their naval force, so there was no time for seasoning the timber. Many a tree that stood in the forest at sunrise found itself bolted to the sides of a vessel before sunset. Besides superintending the building of his flotilla Perry had to be on the watch against any sudden attack that might destroy everything. And as the work went on he found the difficulties piling up. He had to have rigging, sails, cannon, powder, and men for his vessels after he had built them, and all these were desperately hard to get where he lay, with a trackless forest behind and an enemy on the lake in front. Most of his mechanics and sailors had to be brought several hundred miles from New York, and for crews he had to depend largely on raw militia, negroes, half-breeds, Indians—anything he could find on two legs. And time and time again the men fell sick of the "lake fever" by the scores. When the battle of Lake Erie was fought over a hundred of the Americans lay sick with the malady ashore.

In April the English were forced to abandon Fort Erie on the Niagara River, and Perry instantly jumped at the chance of getting the little flotilla that Elliot had collected away from Black Rock to Presque Isle. These vessels, the *Caledonia*—the captured brig—three schooners, purchased by Elliot, and a little sloop, were painfully warped up against the stiff current of the Niagara River by oxen on shore. After that they had to beat against head-winds on the lake till finally they just managed to reach Presque Isle before the British could intercept them.

This was early in July, and by that time the British commander on Lake Erie, Captain Barclay, had his fleet all ready. Although he had just missed capturing the flotilla on its way from Black Rock, he settled down to blockade Perry at Presque Isle. The American commander now faced

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a new difficulty. After at last getting enough men for his ships he found that he could not get his ships out on the lake because the water had dropped so much during the early summer that the two largest vessels could not be taken over the bar. So Perry had to sit helpless for several weeks and see the British flag mocking him from the squadron lying out of gun-shot on the other side of the bar.

But blockading is dull business, and when Barclay saw no sign of the Americans making any effort to get over the bar he sailed away, on August 2d, to accept, it is said, an invitation to dinner on the opposite shore of the lake. This was his fatal blunder, for the minute he was out of sight Perry and all his men worked with feverish energy for two days and nights to get the two brigs out on the lake. First they removed and beached all their guns. Still the brigs were much too deep in the water. Next they sank two large scows to the water's edge alongside each brig, fastened in such a way that when the water was pumped out of them they lifted the ship. As the first trial did not raise them enough, the work had to be done all over again. At last, after the greatest difficulty, the brigs were eased over the bar into deep water. On the morning of the fifth, as the *Lawrence* slipped into the outer lake, up came Barclay's squadron, again just too late. Seeing then that Perry had his force on the lake, Barclay went back to his base at Malden, because he had left there his largest ship, the *Detroit*, at that time undergoing repairs.

Perry followed him up and kept a blockade on him so that he could not get supplies, all of which had to come by water. Barclay needed a good deal of equipment for his flotilla, but the blockade soon made it necessary for the English to fight or starve. So at sunrise, September 10, 1813, the Americans saw the white gleam of the British sails coming out on the lake, and Perry hastened to meet them. As he well knew, on the outcome of that day's fighting hung not only the control of Lake Erie, but the fate of our Northwestern territory.

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Both commanders arranged their battle-line with the largest ships in the center, and Perry intended that each of his larger vessels should fight a British ship of the same size. With two little schooners just ahead of him he bore down in the *Lawrence* to engage the *Detroit*, the British flag-ship. Behind the *Lawrence* came the *Caledonia*, the *Niagara*, and the rest of the schooners and sloops, all in a long line. Unluckily, the wind dropped as Perry bore down. The slow little *Caledonia* kept all the rest so far back that when the fighting began there was already a wide gap between her and the *Lawrence*. Then, when the *Lawrence* came to closer quarters, she was left still farther from the rest of the American line. All the while at her masthead flew a blue flag, bearing the words of the dying Lawrence, "Don't give up the ship"; but it soon looked as if the *Lawrence* would follow the fate of the *Chesapeake*. With all the rest of the line out of effective shooting-distance, the *Lawrence* and the two schooners had to stand the combined broadsides of practically the whole British squadron.

Hoping every moment to see the rest of his ships closing up to help him, Perry continued the unequal fight with wonderful courage for two hours and forty-five minutes. At the end of that time the *Lawrence* was a wreck and the slaughter on her decks had been frightful. Perry and his thirteen-year-old brother James were among the handful left who were not wounded or killed, but their escape was a miracle, because their clothing was torn by bullets and splinters.

The longed-for breeze at last came rippling over the water. As the *Lawrence* was drifting out of the fight Perry with his own hands fired one last gun at the enemy. Then, leaving a lieutenant in charge, and taking his commodore's pennant over his arm, he got into a boat with his brother and four seamen and rowed for the *Niagara*. The latter was now forging past the *Caledonia* in order to get into action. This famous passage in an open boat was made possible only by the heavy curtain of powder-smoke that lay

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over the water, for the little gig was not discovered by the enemy till it was almost alongside the *Niagara*. Perry at once raised his pennant over the *Niagara* and sent her commander, Lieutenant Elliot, to hurry up the vessels in the rear.

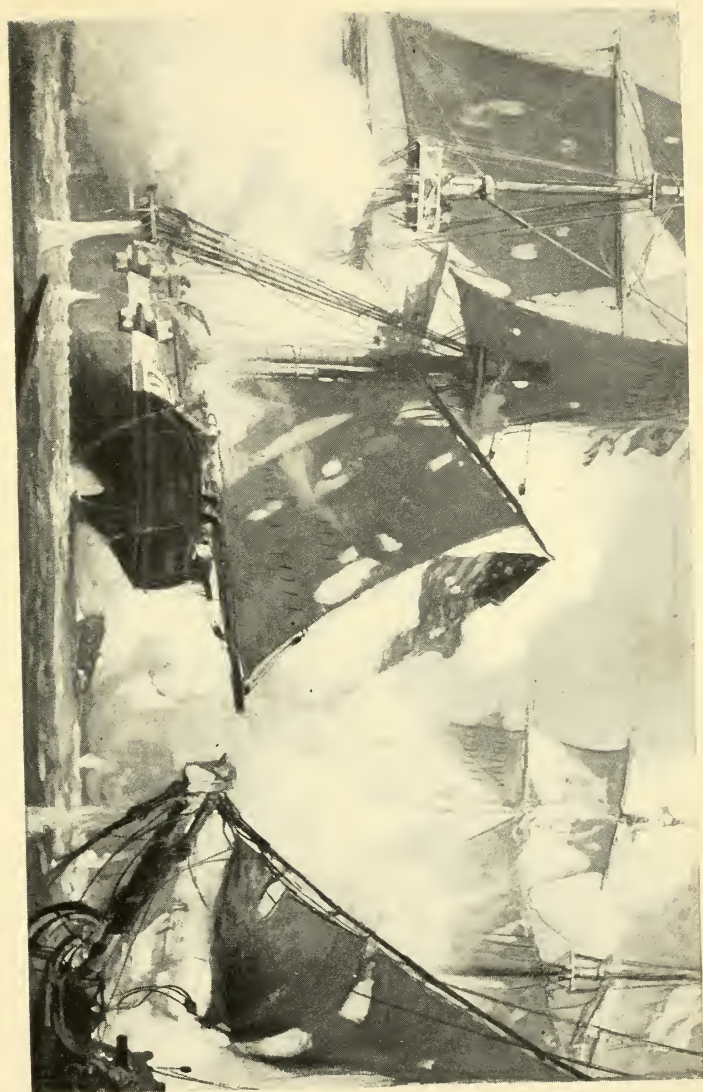
Up to this time the day had gone disastrously for Perry, but now he sailed the *Niagara* directly toward the group of British ships, and the *Caledonia*, with the smaller vessels, followed the example of the *Niagara*. These were all fresh ships, and the effect of their sudden attack was tremendous. To make things worse for the English, their two largest ships in trying to manœuvre fouled and lay in such a position that Perry was able to rake them both at close quarters. He then rounded up alongside and shot across their decks. Meanwhile, his opposite broadside riddled the smaller English vessels clustered on the other side of him.

The heroic defense of the *Lawrence* and the two schooners had not been for nothing, because it had injured the enemy so much that they were unable to stand up against this sudden attack of fresh ships at close quarters. In a few moments all the British colors were down and the battle was over.

In justice to the brave men who had fought and died against great odds during those bloody hours at the beginning of the battle, Perry rowed back to the shattered *Lawrence* and there received the English captains as they came to surrender their swords. Then, writing in pencil on the back of an old letter, the victorious young commander sent the famous despatch to General Harrison, "We have met the enemy and they are ours—two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop."

The results of this battle were of great importance, for all that area—Detroit and Michigan territory—which had been lost in the summer of 1812 by the army was thus won back by the navy in a single day. For this Perry deserves high honor; but we must remember that the victory was not due to any superior bravery or marksmanship of the

THE "NIAGARA" RAKING THE "DETROIT" AND THE "QUEEN CHARLOTTE"



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Americans, or to any genius in tactics, for Perry's method of attack was, in fact, very poor. Perry's fleet was much stronger than Barclay's and ought to have won, anyhow. Perry's greatness lay in his magnificent energy in building out of green timber a fleet that *was* superior to that of the British. He really won the battle of Lake Erie during those discouraging days at Presque Isle when he was working in the face of an enemy, in spite of sickness, hardships, and a hundred discouragements, to build, equip, and man a stronger fleet than that of the enemy. That kind of thing does not play to the galleries like crossing the line of fire in an open boat, but it counts far more.

We must now go back to the time when Captain Bainbridge sailed off with the *Constitution* and the *Hornet* on that southern cruise which ended with the captures of the *Java* and the *Peacock*. The little 32-gun frigate *Essex* was under orders to join Bainbridge, but, as she was delayed in getting ready, she was ordered to follow, while the other two vessels went on ahead.

On board the *Essex* at that time was a little midshipman named David Farragut; and, as we shall have a good deal to say about him later on as a man, it will be interesting to know something about him as a boy. So we shall follow the career of the *Essex* with an eye on Midshipman Farragut, and begin by going back to the very outset of his naval career.

Captain David Porter had noticed the little fellow while visiting his parents in Louisiana, and liked him so well that he offered to make him his adopted son and start him in the navy in his own ship, the *Essex*. The offer was accepted, and the year 1811 found young David, at the advanced age of nine years, standing very stiff and solemn in a cocked hat and tailed coat with a dirk by his side, holding up his right hand and promising, in a little piping voice, to "defend the United States against all their enemies, foreign and domestic." After that David was

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"David" no more. He was "Mr." Farragut; and Captain Porter, who had been so jolly and kind, was no longer "uncle," but "Captain." Then the little fellow began to learn what man-of-war discipline meant, and if there were homesick moments down in that stuffy cockpit of the *Essex*, where the middies swung their hammocks and where the big boys bullied the little ones, David said nothing about it.

Not long after the war began the *Essex* captured the English sloop *Alert* (August 13, 1812). As she had taken several merchantmen besides, there were many prisoners on board—so many that it would have been almost inhuman to keep them cooped up under a hatch. So Captain Porter allowed them a good deal of liberty on deck.

One night David awoke and saw a man bending over him, holding a pistol. He recognized the fellow as one of the British sailors from the *Alert* and realized with a sudden thumping of his heart that there was mutiny afoot. He kept perfectly still, shut his eyes, and, to his relief, the prisoner moved away. The boy did not know how far the ship was already swarming with armed mutineers, but he did know that Captain Porter must be told. Just as soon as the man left, David slipped noiselessly to the deck, scampered up the ladder, and burst full tilt into the captain's cabin without so much as a knock.

Captain Porter wasted precious little time after hearing David's story. "Fire! Fire!" he shouted, and the ship's bell began clanging the alarm. As fire-drill was nothing unusual at any time of night on board the *Essex*, the men came tumbling up, each with his blanket and cutlass. At this sudden appearance of the crew armed with cutlasses the mutineers were taken by surprise. They were quickly discovered and put in irons. Captain Porter then found out that some of the Englishmen had managed to break into an arms-chest and in that way supplied themselves with arms and ammunition. As the prisoners far outnumbered the crew, it was a narrow escape for Captain Porter and his ship. In fact, if it had not been for David Farragut's

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quick work there would be no more story of the *Essex* to tell.

Two days after Bainbridge set out on his cruise Porter made sail after him (October 28, 1812), but his vessel was slow, the others had a start of him, and he missed them at one meeting-place after another. At last he had no idea at all where Bainbridge was. His provisions were getting short, and the expected arrival of a British squadron would at best have kept him blockaded in a Brazilian port. So he had to choose between going home without having done anything and making a cruise against the enemy's commerce, relying on the captured ships for supplies. The latter and more adventurous plan was adopted, much to the delight of everybody, most of all "Mr." Farragut. So the *Essex* cruised down the coast of South America, battled for three weeks against the storms of Cape Horn, and finally slipped into port at Valparaiso, Chile, in March, 1813.

Chile was then in rebellion against Spain, and was the only colony Porter could rely on to let him have fresh water and provisions. Spain was at that time allied with England in the Napoleonic war, and the other Spanish colonies of South America would have given the *Essex* a very frowning reception. For example, Peru went so far as to send out privateers to catch American whalers on their homeward voyage.

From Valparaiso the *Essex* began her operations. First she recaptured some American ships from the Peruvians, and then in a business-like fashion went after every English ship in the south Pacific. Before she finished she had them all, except a few that had managed to get shelter in a friendly harbor.

With such a flock of prizes as he had on hand, Captain Porter had to draw on even his midshipmen as prize-masters, and one day David Farragut was ordered to command the *Barclay*, one of the recaptured American ships. Porter also put aboard a prize-crew from the *Essex*, and the *Barclay's* original captain to help David navigate her.

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It was to be a long trip from Tumbez in Ecuador, where Porter had landed his prisoners, all the way south to Valparaiso. The appointment of little David as captain of a ship must have raised many a laugh, for he was not quite twelve years old, and rather small for that!

David was still asleep when early the next morning the signal flew from the *Essex* to make sail. His quartermaster came to his cabin and woke him.

"You'd better go on deck, sir. I'm afraid there'll be trouble."

When the young captain got on deck he found the other ships well on their way to sea, but not an anchor-chain of the *Barclay* had been started. The old skipper stood on the quarter-deck looking very surly indeed; moreover, he stood six feet four.

"Captain Randall," said David, bravely, looking up into the face of the big man, "order all sail and follow the fleet!"

"You monkey," sneered the other. "You'd give me orders, would you?"

"Captain Porter's orders," retorted David.

"Well, this is my ship, and I'll take her to New Zealand," was the response. Meanwhile the crew had edged forward to hear this curious quarrel between the big skipper and the little middy.

David's voice shook, but he had no idea of yielding. "Then I'll give the orders myself. Men"—he turned to the crew—"up anchor, and be lively about it."

"Ay, ay, sir," the loyal quartermaster responded; and the crew, tickled at the little middy's spunk, went to the capstan with a will. When David went on piping orders to make sail, the astonished skipper roared that he'd shoot the first man who touched a rope, and went stamping down to the cabin for pistols.

David called to his faithful quartermaster, and after a few words with him shouted down the ladder, "Mr. Randall, you're under arrest! If you come up on deck you'll go overboard!"

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The skipper saw a group of muscular tars gathered at the head of the ladder and wisely decided to stay below. After that there was no doubt that Midshipman Farragut was the real captain of that ship, and he sailed her down to Valparaiso like an old salt.

When Porter had captured everything within reach he decided to go westward to the Marquesas Islands, where he could overhaul the *Essex* without being disturbed. He had heard of three British ships being sent after him and wanted to wind up his cruise by capturing one of them. There at the islands there were novel adventures for young Farragut, swimming in the surf, catching great sea-turtles on the beach, and exploring the woods with the native boys. Then, after the work on the *Essex* was finished, it was "anchors aweigh," with bows pointing again toward Valparaiso. There the *Essex* arrived with her tender, a captured ship renamed the *Essex Junior*, on February 3, 1814. By this time Porter had rescued the American whaling industry, which was in danger of being destroyed, and turned the tables on the enemy by annihilating all British commerce in the south Pacific, a damage estimated at two and a half million dollars. What Porter wanted now was an English frigate like the *Essex* for a stand-up fight.

Five days after the *Essex* entered the harbor of Valparaiso two British ships came in, the frigate *Phæbe* and the sloop *Cherub*. The *Phæbe* at once attempted a surprise attack on the *Essex*, although both ships were in a neutral harbor. But as the Englishman surged close alongside the *Essex* he suddenly discovered that Porter had his men ready at the guns, so he promptly eased off with an excuse. Then followed a stubborn blockade. Porter challenged the captain of the *Phæbe* to a single-ship duel, but the Englishman refused. Finally, during a gale, March 28, 1814, Porter tried to get to sea past the two ships. He had almost succeeded when a squall carried away the maintopmast, and he turned back to a little harbor on the coast in order to regain neutral water while he repaired damages.

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The rest is a sad story. The English, seeing that the *Essex* was badly disabled, and caring not a fig for neutrality, bore down and attacked the *Essex* as she lay at anchor. After suffering a good deal from a too-close encounter the two British ships took positions at a distance, out of reach of the *Essex's* carronades, and shot into her as at a target. During this part of the battle the *Essex* could not bring a single gun to reply.

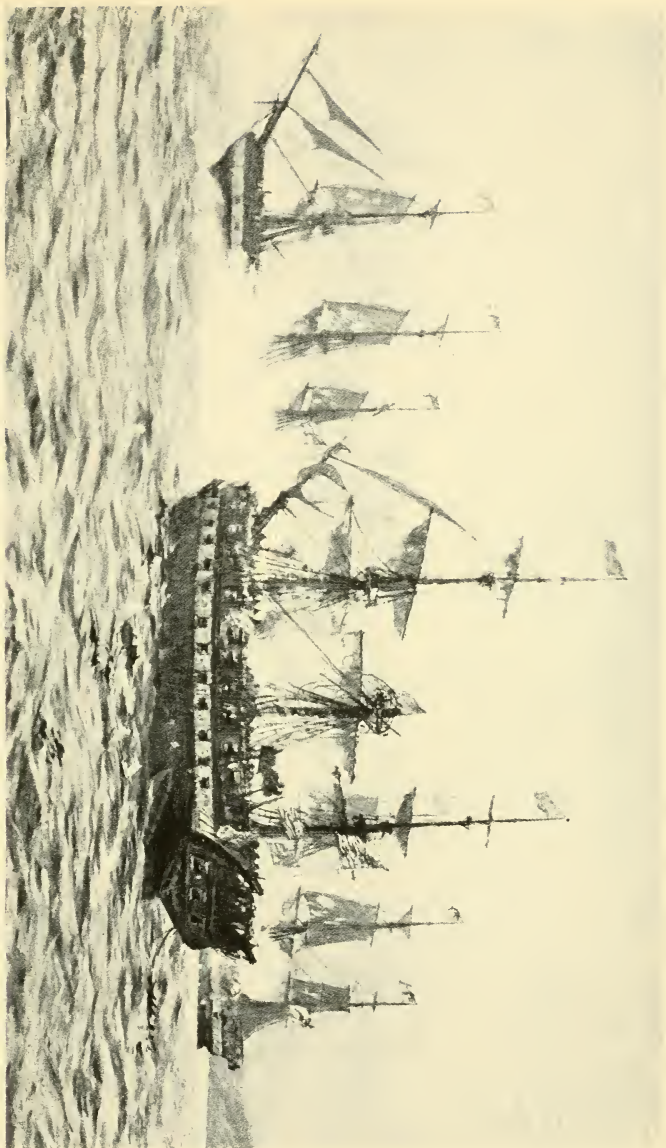
The slaughter among the Americans was horrible. Yet, while the least chance remained for getting his ship once more into close action, Porter would not surrender. But it was useless. After losing in dead, wounded, and missing more than any other American ship during the war—a frightful total of 155—Porter surrendered.

The *Essex* might have been taken, anyway, for the combined force of the two British ships was very much superior, but the reason that the enemy could pound the *Essex* at leisure was because the latter had a main-deck armament of nothing but carronades, the short-range guns. Why this great blunder was made no one knows. When Captain Porter protested against the carronade armament long before, and asked for long guns, the authorities at Washington had stubbornly denied his request without deigning to give a reason. This fact was the chief cause of the frightful slaughter and the loss of the ship. During all the terrible battle-scenes on the *Essex* David Farragut was coolly running errands for the captain, carrying orders here, getting primers there, helping a wounded man elsewhere. Once he was hurled to the foot of the ladder and knocked senseless by the body of a man mangled by a shot. David recovered his senses, picked himself up, and went on with his errand as if he had been a veteran of a score of battles.

Then, when after the surrender the boy stood downcast among the British midshipmen on the *Phæbe*, the story is that he saw one enter with his own pet pig.

“That’s mine!” he exclaimed.

“Fight for it, then!” said the others. They formed a



THE "ESSEX" BEING CUT TO PIECES

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ring, and David and the new-comer pitched in with their fists. It is not necessary to add, perhaps, that David kept the pig.

Even with these few glimpses that we have taken into his life in the *Essex* days it is easy to see in Farragut the midday of the war of 1812, a promise of the superb qualities of Farragut the admiral of the war of '61. And no better training-school for these qualities could have been found than in the little old *Essex* under Captain Porter.

Commerce-destroying is not a very glorious kind of war—it preys on defenceless ships—but it was just the kind of warfare that did the most for our cause in 1812. The loss of a frigate like the *Guerrière* only stung England's pride into more fighting. In fact, she would hardly have missed a score of frigates from her great navy. But when the *Essex*, the little sloops of war, and the privateers ravaged English commerce, that touched John Bull on the pocket-book and made him roar for peace. So, although Porter was unable to capture a frigate as he had hoped, still he had accomplished much more toward bringing about a peace favorable to America than if he had taken half a dozen.

IX

LAKE CHAMPLAIN AND THE END OF THE WAR

Battle of Lake Champlain—Credit due Macdonough—Effect of the battle on conclusion of peace—Work of sloops and privateers in War of 1812—Defense of the *General Armstrong*—Reasons for naval successes in the war.

WE come now to the most important battle of the War of 1812. In spite of its importance most Americans know less about it than about half a dozen other battles of the war, and they know still less about the fine young fellow who won the victory.

In the previous chapter we noted the importance of Lakes Ontario and Erie. We saw how splendidly Perry settled matters on Lake Erie, and how Chauncey, to the end of the war, only played a drawn game with his British opponent on Lake Ontario. There was another and at the time still more important waterway, Lake Champlain. If you look at the map of this region you will see that the lake, with the Richelieu River on the north and Lake George and the Hudson on the south, makes an almost continuous waterway between New York and Montreal.

The British had realized its importance during the Revolutionary War, and in 1812 it should have been the first line of attack for the Americans in their invasion of Canada. But our blundering government wasted its small army in several disastrous expeditions farther west and let slip the best opportunity of all.

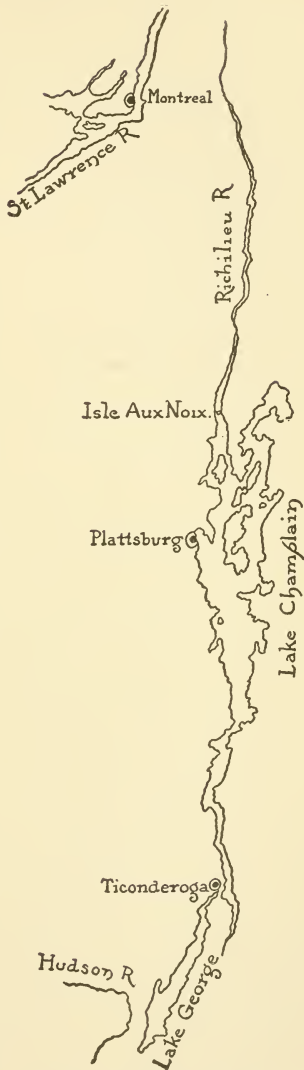
At the opening of the war we had two little sloops on the lake, carrying ten carronades each. In June, 1813, while

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chasing an English gunboat, they got caught by a swift current in the narrows near Isle aux Noix and, being drawn under the guns of a British fort, were captured. This gave the British immediate control of Lake Champlain.

Master-Commandant Thomas Macdonough, who during the Tripolitan war had helped Decatur burn the *Philadelphia*, was then in charge of naval affairs on the lake. After the loss of the two sloops he began work on some vessels in Otter Creek in order to recover control of the lake. A sample of the speed with which these vessels were built is the schooner *Eagle*, which took the water just nineteen days after her keel was laid. The rest of the flotilla consisted of the ship *Saratoga*, the schooner *Ticonderoga*, and the sloop *Preble*, and several galleys. While the work was in progress the British came down the lake in their gunboats and attacked, but Macdonough, getting wind of their intentions, landed his guns and made such a strong battery of them that he beat the English off.

After this Macdonough was able to finish his vessels un-



MAP OF LAKE CHAMPLAIN
REGION

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disturbed, but meanwhile the English had been greatly increasing their naval force. The ease with which naval supplies could reach them from Montreal was a great help to them, and certain unpatriotic farmers in Vermont cheerfully supplied all the timber and food-stuffs that the English wanted.

The British authorities, realizing their great opportunity on Lake Champlain, made up their minds to strike at this point the decisive blow of the war. At Plattsburg were about three thousand Americans, consisting of two thousand militia and nearly one thousand invalided soldiers. To sweep away this small force Sir George Prevost, the Governor-General of Canada, was to bring an army of about twelve thousand of Wellington's veterans down the western shore of Lake Champlain. At the same time the English naval force under Captain Downie, a splendid officer of fighting experience, was to clear the lake of Macdonough's flotilla. When that was done there would be nothing to prevent the English from taking a pleasure trip down the Hudson to New York. It looked easy. The English found many of the New-Englanders very friendly, and they heard with satisfaction that the Governor of Vermont had flatly refused to obey the President's command to call out the militia for the nation's defense.

By the end of August, 1814, Prevost had crossed the border with an army of over eleven thousand men to move on Plattsburg. To oppose him, Macomb, the American general, had a force amounting by this time to 2,500, including 1,500 regulars and the rest composed of volunteers and militia. In the mean time Macdonough had moved his squadron to Plattsburg Bay for a final stand. For some reason Prevost did not want to attack Plattsburg until he was sure that Captain Downie was fighting Macdonough's force at the same time. He kept nagging Downie with orders to get under way till the latter sailed down the lake to give battle before his preparations were quite completed. Then, instead of a triumphant assault

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on Plattsburg, Prevost was checked by a spirited resistance from the Americans intrenched on the slopes above the Saranac River. He should have made the attack four days earlier, instead of idling in the woods waiting for Downie. As it turned out, the small force of Americans succeeded in keeping Prevost in check, thus protecting Macdonough's rear till the battle on the lake was over. There have been several occasions when the stupidity of a British commander has been most valuable to the American cause, and this is one of them.

Meanwhile Macdonough had made his preparations. He knew that his force was inferior to Downie's, particularly in long guns. Out on the lake the British flag-ship *Confiance*, with her long guns, could have beaten Macdonough's entire force single-handed. So the American commander drew up his line in the harbor before the town of Plattsburg, placing his ships between Cumberland Head and Crab Island in such a way that the shoals at each end of the line would prevent the British from turning his flanks. At the same time this formation compelled Captain Downie to begin his attack in a head-on position and to form his line of battle under fire. Then Macdonough saw to it that there was enough room astern of each ship so that if the guns on the exposed side were dismantled each vessel could trip her bow-anchors and swing around to present a fresh broadside. And to be prepared in case the rigging was too badly shattered, or the wind dropped too much to turn a vessel by sail, Macdonough put "springs" on his anchor-cables. These springs were hawsers made fast to the bow-cables under water, and leading back to the stern. By slipping the bow-cable and hauling on the spring a crew could "wind" a ship right around by bringing the stern to the place where the bow had been. In short, Macdonough provided for everything in advance just as far as a man could and made the best possible arrangement of his inferior force.

The American line from northeast to southwest was as

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follows: the schooner *Eagle*, the flag-ship *Saratoga*, the schooner *Ticonderoga*, and the little sloop *Preble*. Forty yards to the rear lay the ten American galleys, which were large rowboats with a little howitzer in the bow. When all was ready Macdonough, who was as devout as he was brave, mustered the crew of the *Saratoga* for prayers.

As the British squadron came down before the wind Downie saw across Cumberland Head exactly how Macdonough had arranged his ships and quickly formed his plan. The *Confiance*, flag-ship, was to fire a broadside at the *Eagle*—at the northerly end—and then anchor across the bow of the *Saratoga* in a raking position. The brig *Linnet* and the sloop *Chub* were to engage the *Eagle*, while the sloop *Finch* and a dozen galleys were to attack the *Ticonderoga* and the *Preble* at the southerly end. It was a splendid plan, but it had to reckon with the American broadsides first, as Macdonough had intended.

The *Confiance* rounded Cumberland Head with flags flying and crews cheering. But as she turned her bows to the American line she got a hot reception. Just before the firing of the first shot a rooster on the *Eagle* suddenly flew to a gun, flapped his wings, and gave a lusty crow. At this the Americans cheered mightily, for it was a sign of victory.

Macdonough aimed the first gun fired on the *Saratoga*, and the shot struck the British flag-ship near the hawse-pipe, flew the whole length of her deck, killing and wounding several men in its path, and shattered the wheel. Soon her two port-bow anchors were shot away, and this loss, combined with the baffling head wind, forced Downie to give up his idea of anchoring in a raking position. Instead he had to be content with mooring about five hundred yards to the east of the *Saratoga*.

All this while Downie had not fired a shot. But as soon as he had anchored—about nine o'clock—he poured in a deadly broadside that killed or wounded one-fifth of the *Saratoga's* men. And then the battle was on in bitter earnest. About fifteen minutes afterward a shot struck

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a gun on the *Confiance* just as Downie was in the act of sighting it and killed him almost instantly. From that time the fight was continued with great spirit by Lieutenant Robertson, the second in command. At the northern end of the line the *Eagle* was being attacked by the *Chub* and the *Linnet*. A well-directed broadside from the *Eagle*



PLATTSBURGH BAY, LAKE CHAMPLAIN
Position of the ships at the close of the battle.

killed or wounded nearly half the crew of the *Chub* and smashed the rigging so badly that she drifted helplessly toward the *Saratoga*. She promptly surrendered, and a young midshipman named Charles Platt carried her to the rear. This youngster deserves to be remembered. Everybody knows that Perry went in a boat through the line of

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fire to the *Niagara* once in the battle of Lake Erie, but few know that Midshipman Platt carried orders from Macdonough in an open boat through a much hotter line of fire *three times* in the battle of Lake Champlain.

Although the little *Chub* had been quickly disposed of, the schooner *Linnet* got a very favorable position off the starboard bow of the *Eagle*, where the latter could bring few guns to bear, and poured in a deadly fire. Finding that he was in a bad place and his springs all shot away, Lieutenant Henley, of the *Eagle*, made sail and dropped down to a position astern of the *Saratoga* where he could pour a diagonal fire into the *Confiance*. But this gave the *Linnet* a chance to get a raking position on the *Saratoga*, and the American flag-ship was soon in a desperate condition, being caught between two fires. Most of the guns on the side toward the enemy had been dismantled, and there had been many killed and wounded. Macdonough himself fought with the superb gallantry of a Paul Jones. Twice he was hurled across the deck by huge splinters, once a piece of the spanker-boom fell on him and knocked him senseless. Once again he was thrown unconscious and bleeding to the deck. Fortunately, he recovered himself every time, and was back at his guns with a laugh and a shout of encouragement.

Soon a shot from the *Linnet* dismantled the last effective carronade on the *Saratoga's* starboard side and sent it bumping down the hatch. Here was the crisis of the battle.

At the southern end of the line the English sloop *Finch* had gone ashore in a battered condition on Crab Island and surrendered to some of the invalided soldiers who had mounted a little six-pounder there. The American sloop *Preble* had been so hotly pressed by the English galleys that she had been driven to the rear. That left the schooner *Ticonderoga* fighting with might and main against the galleys, which she finally succeeded in driving away.

But, as everybody knew, the day depended on whether the *Saratoga* or the *Confiance* could hold out the longer.

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Now, with the *Saratoga's* fire silenced, there was fear in the American line that the flag-ship was going to surrender and that the day was lost.

True, not a gun could be fired on the *Saratoga's* starboard side, and the wind had died down, besides, but this was just the situation Macdonough had provided for by his "springs." He called away his men to the capstan, and in spite of a merciless fire the men slowly hauled the ship clear round till her bow pointed south instead of north and a fresh broadside faced the enemy. With a cheer of fresh hope the crew sprang to their guns and fired a double-shotted broadside. This unexpected fire was more than the *Confiance* could stand. Since most of her guns on the engaged side were now useless, too, Lieutenant Robertson had tried to imitate Macdonough's manœuver. But the anchors he needed were gone, there was not enough wind for his sails, and he succeeded only in swinging his bow directly toward the *Saratoga*. There the *Confiance* hung while the *Saratoga* raked her. There was nothing for Lieutenant Robertson to do but surrender. After the flag of the *Confiance* went down, Macdonough hauled on his springs again and brought his broadside to bear on the *Linnet*, which, after a defense of fifteen minutes, surrendered, too. At that moment the *Ticonderoga* was just driving the galleys to the open lake. The American galleys had tried to help in the battle, but they proved too small and light to be of any use.

The British galleys got away because there was not a vessel in the American squadron in condition to make sail after them, but the main part of the fleet fell into Macdonough's hands. The victorious young commander then sent this modest report to the Secretary of the Navy: "The Almighty has been pleased to grant us a signal victory on Lake Champlain, with the capture of one frigate, one brig, and two sloops of war of the enemy."

Without taking away any of the glory that belongs to the other brave fellows who fought on the American side, it is

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not too much to say that the credit of this victory against a superior force belongs, first and last, to Macdonough himself. The victory was due to his skill in choosing his position and to his shrewd forethought in providing for exactly what occurred. It was those "springs" on his cable that turned defeat into victory. This combination of brains with the finest kind of courage places Thomas Macdonough at the very top in our list of the heroes of 1812.

Let us see what the results were. As soon as Prevost heard what had happened he took to his heels and retreated to Canada. In fact, he was in such a hurry that he left behind most of his stores and ammunition for the Americans!

Still more important was the result on the peace negotiations then going on in Ghent, Belgium. The English commissioners had been standing out for the surrender of a part of the American territory—large slices of northern New York and Maine, and a broad tract in the northwest to be made into an Indian country under British government. But after the news of Champlain the English agents gave up this demand and yielded to the American position that the boundary lines should be just as they had been before the war. The capture of Downie's fleet, together with the retreat of Prevost, proved to be the decisive action of the war. Of course, on account of the slow means of communication, fighting went on many weeks after the treaty was signed in Ghent, on December 24, 1814. But nothing that happened afterward made any difference with the terms of peace.

Oddly enough, the treaty made no mention of impressment, the chief reason of the war. On this point the English commissioners refused to yield, but it was a matter that took care of itself. When Napoleon was done for there was no need for such a gigantic navy, and, therefore, no reason for impressing sailors into the fleet.

Except for this point the Americans gained a great diplomatic victory in that treaty. Although we do not like to

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admit the fact, in 1814 we were a pretty badly beaten nation. All our military expeditions had been failures, Washington had been sacked and burned, and a good deal of our territory was occupied by the British. Though our little navy had made a brilliant name for itself, the Atlantic coast was so tightly blockaded in 1814 that those of our frigates which had not been captured were unable to get to sea. On the other hand, the peace in Europe left England free with a splendid army and her great navy to do about as she liked with us. Why, then, was she willing to sign a treaty of peace so favorable to the United States?

These were two main reasons. First, although the great struggle with Napoleon was over, the other nations, especially Austria, felt jealous of the great power and influence England had won in ending that war. Every one expected a new European war to break out at any moment, and the British government did not want to be hampered by a war in America. Secondly, although the blockade kept our frigates idle in the harbors of our coast, yet the smaller sloops, and especially the swift-sailing privateers, were able to run the blockade without much trouble, and these vessels, coupled with the *Essex*, harried the commerce of England till the rates of insurance on ships got so high that it did not pay to send a cargo out. So the merchants of London demanded peace.

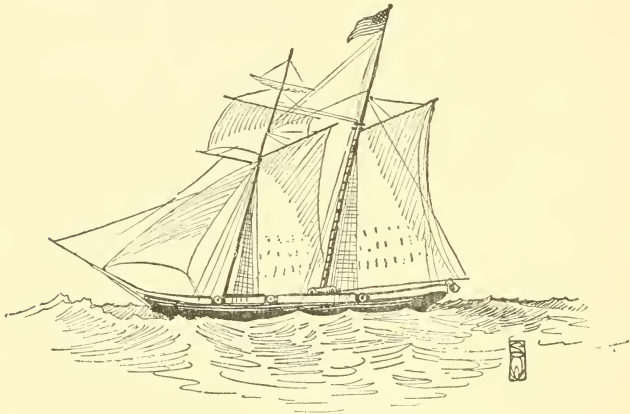
Nor were these sloops and privateers engaged only in capturing merchantmen. We have already spoken of the victories of the *Wasp* and the *Hornet* against British sloops of their own class. There were six other duels between sloops of war, and out of the total of eight seven were victories for the Americans.

Of the privateers some were so brilliantly handled that they deserve special mention. There was the little *Comet*, of Baltimore, which fought, one moonlight night off the coast of Brazil, an action as gallant as any in the war. Captain Boyle of the *Comet* attacked three armed merchantmen, convoyed by a Portuguese sloop of war, the four

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ships mounting a total of fifty-four guns to his fourteen. But he handled his ship and guns so cleverly that when the firing ceased the Portuguese sloop of war and two of the merchantmen were hurrying back to neutral water, badly hurt, while the third fell a prize to the *Comet*.

Another and more famous exploit occurred in the fall of 1814. Nowadays many of the steamers plying between New York and the Mediterranean ports pass through a certain channel in the Azores. On one side rises the graceful



TYPICAL PRIVATEER OF WAR OF 1812

"Topsail schooner," mounting carronades, and a "long Tom" amidships on a swivel

cone of Mount Pico, and on the other lies the little town of Horta on the island of Fayal. Few Americans who look over a liner's rail at this little whitewashed city with its comical old fort realize that within a few rods of that fort a wonderful battle was fought by American sailors, and that there on the bottom still lies the hull of the most famous privateer in our history.

On September 26, 1814, the privateer *General Armstrong*, Captain Reid, arrived at Horta to put fresh water aboard.

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She had scarcely dropped anchor when a large British squadron under Commodore Lloyd came in. As soon as it was known that the little vessel was an American privateer the ships anchored in such positions as to make it impossible for her to escape to sea. Of course the port was neutral and the British had no right to attack, but Captain Reid was pretty sure that they would, and made his plans accordingly. He moved his vessel as close as he could under the guns of the fort and asked the Portuguese governor for protection. But the governor was mortally afraid of offending the English and did nothing more than make a feeble protest.

At midnight the English attempted a surprise attack in a few boats, but they were beaten back with heavy losses. Angered by this unexpected repulse, Commodore Lloyd made another boat attack, using all the boats in the squadron and sending about four hundred men. There were only ninety in the privateer, but they had the advantage of position. They rigged boarding nettings along the sides of the vessel and loaded and collected arms. Then began a desperate hand-to-hand fight. The British swarmed over the sides of the privateer, but were obliged to hack through the boarding nettings before they could reach the deck, and were meanwhile exposed to the pike, pistol, and cutlass of the defenders, who fought, as an English eyewitness described it, "with the ferocity of savages."

After an hour of the fiercest struggle the English were repulsed with great slaughter. According to some accounts upward of two hundred were killed or wounded. Strange to say, the American loss was only two killed and seven wounded. Infuriated by this severe and bloody defeat, Lloyd determined to open his broadsides on the *Armstrong*, regardless of what the shots might do to the houses of the town. A brig advanced to the attack, but the *Armstrong's* well-directed fire beat her off.

Captain Reid realized, however, that he could not hope to fight the whole squadron, so he quickly removed his dead

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and wounded to shore. Then, aiming his "long Tom" down the hatch, he shot a hole through the ship's bottom. In order to make sure that the British should not have her, he set the *Armstrong* on fire as well. Finally, with his flag on his arm, he rowed ashore, leaving only a blazing, sinking ship for the enemy to board. No naval officer could have given a better account of himself than this privateersman, and his gallantry was fittingly rewarded after the war by a captain's commission in the navy.

Captain Reid did not know it at the time, but Lloyd's squadron was a part of the expedition against New Orleans. The *Armstrong's* crew had killed and wounded so many officers and men that the squadron was delayed an entire week at Horta. One of the ships had to be sent back to England, loaded with the wounded. The rest of the ships and transports at Jamaica had to wait a week for Lloyd's squadron, too, so that the attack on New Orleans was delayed just about seven days. As Andrew Jackson came on the scene only three days before the English arrived, it is not too much to say that the stubborn defense of the little privateer made possible the victory of New Orleans.

In looking over the course of the War of 1812 we notice the contrast between our naval successes and our military failures. The reason of this is simply that the army had been allowed to fall into decay, with old and inefficient officers and only a small body of regular soldiers. There had been no trial by fire to burn out the poor material among the officers and temper the efficiency of the men. What was worse, most of the armies of 1812 consisted of raw militia, fresh from the farm, who had to face veteran soldiers of the Napoleonic war.

The navy, on the other hand, had been through two campaigns, one against France, the other against Tripoli, and Preble had brought it up to a high ideal of duty and efficiency. While it was insignificant in size, it was nevertheless a veteran navy and keyed up to the highest pitch. Every one of our heroes of the War of 1812 had been through

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fire at Tripoli, and many had smelt powder in the French war as well.

The War of 1812 had a good effect on the nation at large in that it inspired a new feeling of patriotism. Disgust at the selfish and disloyal conduct of many of the New-Englanders during the war resulted in a larger patriotism, even in New England itself. The feeling that the United States was a nation, not a bundle of jealous states, was strengthened by the common danger of the war, its victories, and even its defeats.

X

1812 TO THE CIVIL WAR

Campaign against Algiers—Suppressing the pirates in the Gulf and the Caribbean—Qualla Battoo—Opening Japan—Political corruption in the navy—Founding of the Naval Academy.

IT is hard for us to understand now why the American people were willing to pay tribute to Algiers after they had settled the question with Tripoli, but the fact remains that between 1797 and 1815 we were sending every year tribute of naval supplies to the Bey of Algiers.

In 1812 that potentate received a special envoy from England, bearing presents and messages of friendship from the Prince Regent. This encouraged the old pirate to make trouble for the Americans again, especially as the United States was soon deep in a war with Great Britain. So he hustled our consul out of the country and sent his corsairs abroad to catch American ships. Fortunately, on account of the impending war with England, there were few American merchantmen in the Mediterranean, but the Algerians managed to catch one, the little brig *Edwin*, and sold her crew into slavery.

During the war we had no time to attend to these pirates, but as soon as peace was made with England Congress declared war on Algiers, and ordered two squadrons to proceed thither and get satisfaction. Bainbridge commanded one and Decatur the other. The latter got to sea first, May 20, 1815, and he went about his business with his usual dash and thoroughness.

He was scarcely in the Mediterranean before he caught

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a 44-gun frigate, the largest ship in the Algerian navy, with the admiral on board. The Algerian admiral was killed during the brief action before the frigate surrendered. Then, on arriving at Algiers, Decatur sent the terms of his treaty to the Bey and said that if they were not accepted at once he would sink every Algerian ship that tried to enter the harbor. Just as one of the Algerian cruisers appeared the Bey sent off a boat in hot haste, agreeing to the terms of peace. The chief points in Decatur's treaty provided for the immediate release of all Americans in slavery, the payment of \$10,000 for the *Edwin*, and an end to all tribute-paying for the future.

After settling with Algiers in this straight-from-the-shoulder fashion Decatur paid a visit to Tunis and Tripoli, both of which had allowed British men-of-war to recapture American prizes in their harbors. From Tunis he squeezed \$46,000—which he estimated to be what the prizes were worth—and from Algiers \$25,000, with the liberation of ten Christian slaves besides. Two of these were Danes, whom he selected out of gratitude to the Danish consul, Nissen, who had been so kind to the American prisoners during the Tripolitan war.

Captain Bainbridge, with his usual bad luck, arrived on the scene only in time to find that Decatur had finished the whole business.

The Bey of Algiers was so mortified over his humiliation, and so angry because the English had not helped him, that he became very insolent toward them. As it did not pay the British government any longer to make presents to these pirates, the following year it sent to Algiers a large fleet which chastised the Bey very severely. After that there were no more Christian slaves and piracy in the Mediterranean.

In the chapter on the French war we saw that most of the French privateers in the Caribbean were really pirates. After 1815 French, Spanish, and some American privateers went right on with their business, which they liked too

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well to give up just because peace had been declared. If you study a large map of the West Indies you will see that the Caribbean is naturally a paradise for buccaneers. The famous sea-rovers of the seventeenth century always made their headquarters there because, in the first place, it was the cross-roads of the Atlantic, and, in the second place, there are so many little islands where a pirate ship could retreat for hiding. After 1815 things became so bad in the Gulf and the Caribbean that hardly a merchant ship passed through without at least a brush with one of these buccaneers. When the United States tried to deal with the problem it turned out that many of the pirates carried a letter of marque issued by Venezuela, which was then in open revolt against Spain. Of course, this letter of marque was a farce, and in 1819 Oliver H. Perry was sent on a mission to Venezuela to straighten out the difficulty. Unfortunately, the "hero of Erie" fell ill of yellow fever and died, and the expedition had no result.

In 1821-22 Captain Biddle, the lieutenant of the *Wasp* in her famous duel with the *Frolic*, took a small squadron into the West Indies and made a good beginning against the pirates. In 1823 Captain Porter was sent with another squadron, and, as in the *Essex* days, David Farragut went along too.

It was a hard and dangerous service. The pirates had to be hunted right to their island caves because most of them ran to hide as soon as they heard of Porter's coming. A greater danger than pirate bullets was yellow fever, which cost the squadron many good officers and men. Once the entire squadron had to go north to break up the epidemic, and for a time Porter himself lay at the point of death.

But nothing short of death could stop him, and he went at his difficult task till it was done. By the close of 1824 there was not a black flag to be found in that whole region. Captain Porter is best known for his *Essex* cruise, but the service he performed in rooting out and destroying

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the piracy of the Gulf and Caribbean was many times more difficult and dangerous.

Another expedition against pirates took place in 1831. This time it was concerned with the Malays of Qualla Battoo, a town on the northwestern coast of Sumatra.

The *Friendship*, a little Yankee merchantman, was treacherously seized by the natives, who killed the mate and several of her crew. To teach these Malay cut-throats a lesson for the benefit of our many merchantmen in these waters, the government sent the 44-gun frigate *Potomac* to the scene. The Malays retired to their forts in the jungle village, and officers and men from the *Potomac* landed under cover of darkness and attacked and captured one stronghold after another with splendid gallantry. The Malays fought with the most desperate courage, for they preferred death to surrender. The following day Captain Downes of the *Potomac* took his frigate up the river and opened his broadsides on an army of Malays that had collected at the rear of the town. The roar of those long 32-pounders terrified the natives into the most abject submission. Yet it required another bombardment the following year by another American frigate to put a stop to the murderous tactics of these natives. Thereafter the Americans had little further concern with pirates.

American naval officers found themselves again in the Gulf at the time of the Mexican War. But this war was almost wholly a military one, and the duties of the navy were chiefly to blockade Mexican ports, with an occasional brush with the enemy on shore. During the latter part of the campaign Captain Matthew C. Perry had charge of the naval operations before Vera Cruz. Matthew was a younger brother of the famous Oliver, and had made a name for himself in Biddle's expedition against the pirates by capturing five pirate craft with his little sloop, the *Shark*, and helping in the capture of a sixth. But Matthew Perry's fame rests on a peaceful rather than

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a warlike exploit—namely, the opening of Japan to the civilized world.

In the middle of the sixteenth century Christian missionaries had found a cordial welcome in Japan. But as more Christians arrived, belonging to unfriendly sects and nations, they began to squabble with one another in a very un-Christian spirit. At first this only amused the Japanese, but when they discovered that the Portuguese and the native Christians were joined in a plot to overthrow the government they rose in their wrath and banished the foreigners, bag and baggage. Thereafter for two hundred and fifty years no foreigner was permitted in Japan, except that the Dutch were allowed a few trading privileges at Nagasaki.

When the Mexican War brought us California the question of trading with the East became important. There were already many American whalers in the Japanese Sea, and it was a great hardship for them to be shut out of all Japanese ports when in stress of storm or in need of fresh water. Further, wherever an American ship was wrecked on a Japanese coast the survivors were promptly led to prison, where they stayed indefinitely.

Another very important reason for opening Japan was that we had in those days a large "clipper" ship trade with China, and Japan lay most conveniently on the trade route. Steamers were beginning to cross the Pacific, too, and Japan had tempting deposits of coal. For a long while England, Russia, France, and Portugal had tried to get trading privileges with Japan, but they had all failed.

In 1849 the sloop of war *Preble*, under Commander Glynn, went to Nagasaki and rescued some shipwrecked American sailors who were in prison for the crime of being foreigners. On his return he reported that the Japanese had heard of America's easy victory over Mexico and were much impressed. So he thought that the time was ripe for the United States to succeed in Japan where the other nations had failed. Acting on this suggestion, the gov-

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ernment organized an expedition and gave the command of it to Commodore Matthew C. Perry. While the squadron was being fitted out Perry made a careful study of all the books on Japan that could be found, and, as the Dutch had the only existing charts of Japanese waters, the government had to buy a set from them. The thrifty Dutchmen, by the way, insisted on the tidy sum of thirty thousand dollars as the price.

The expedition left Norfolk in the fall of 1852 and arrived in Yedo Bay in July, 1853. The appearance of the two steam-frigates *Susquehanna* and *Mississippi* towing the sailing-sloops of war *Saratoga* and *Plymouth* up the bay created a sensation among the natives, who had never before seen a steamship. Their boats clustered around the strange ships, but Perry not only refused to permit any one to come on board, but drove the boats away. He had decided that the best way to impress the Orientals was to outdo them in dignity and exclusiveness, and he refused to show himself or obey the orders of the Japanese that he move south to Nagasaki. Perry declared that he would deliver the President's letter there at Uraga, where he was, or more directly up the bay to the nation's capital, Yedo (Tokio). He hinted at using force, too; and, as the Japanese saw no way of stopping these armed steamships, they finally agreed to receive the President's letter at Uraga.

Accordingly, on July 14th three hundred officers and men were landed, amid the booming of guns, and marched in a stately procession to the reception-house built for the occasion, where the Japanese princes were waiting. The letter and the credentials from the President, written on vellum and incased in rosewood boxes ornamented with gold, were given to the princes amid perfect silence. Then, after telling them, through the interpreter, that he would return in the spring for an answer, Perry took his leave.

The American squadron wintered at Hongkong, but Perry heard rumors of the strange activity of French and Russian ships in the vicinity; and, fearing that they might

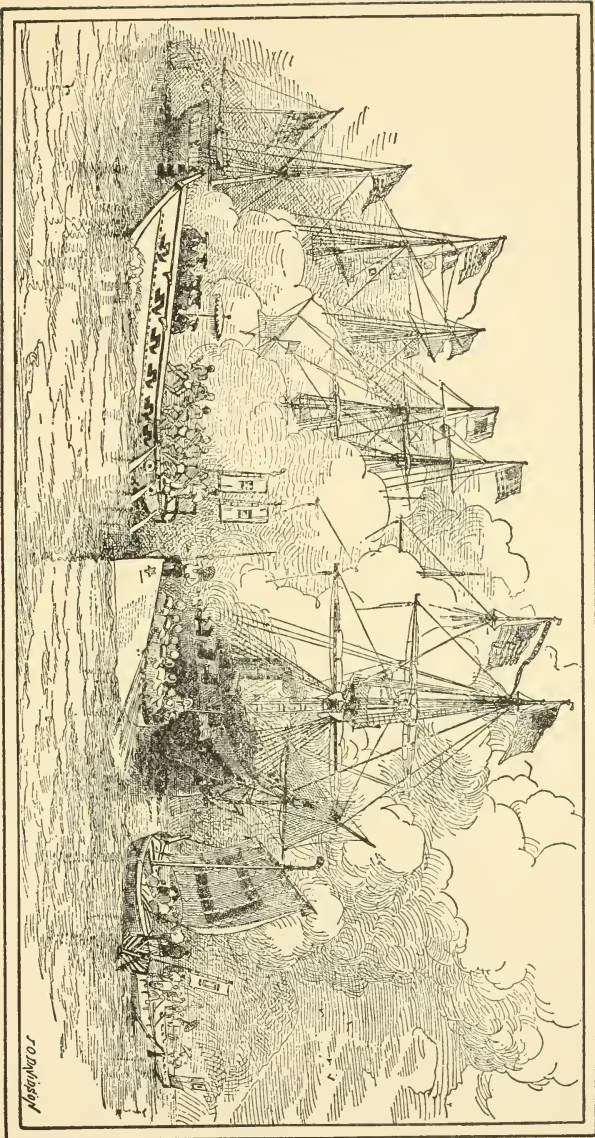
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get ahead of him, he returned to Japan in February, 1854. This time he anchored within twenty miles of Yedo. The Japanese told him to return to Uraga to transact business, but Perry's answer was to move on till he came within sight of Yedo itself, the sacred city. After this the Japanese agreed that the negotiations should be opened at Yokahama, about opposite where the squadron lay, and the palaver began.

Three weeks of talk followed; but, while the Japanese officials said they wanted friendship with America, for a long while they would grant nothing. After some delay Perry decided to try what gifts would do. The Americans had brought along a curious lot of odds and ends as presents to impress the Japanese people. There were farming-tools, clocks, telegraph instruments, three life-boats, and a miniature railway. The last made a great hit. The cab of the engine was about big enough for a six-year-old child to crawl into, and the cars were in the same proportion. The train was made to whirl around a circular track at the rate of twenty miles an hour, and the dignified Japanese officials got astride of the roofs of the cars and made a merry-go-round of the train. It must have been hard for the Americans to keep their faces straight as they saw these stately officials whirling along, with their feet sticking out in front, their robes flying in the wind, hanging on for dear life, but grinning like Cheshire cats with the fun of the ride. When Sunday came around Perry mystified the Japanese by his solemn observance of "Lord's Day" and the sound of the "Doxology" as roared out across the water by lusty American tars. Shortly afterward seventy Japanese were entertained on board one of the ships, and, as usual, the Christian foreigner brought the white man's rum as well as his religion. The Japanese officials were soon made very happy and very noisy under the influence of huge quantities of champagne, punch, and Madeira.

Finally the Japanese yielded. On March 31, 1854, Commodore Perry and the four Japanese representatives

VISIT OF THE JAPANESE OFFICIALS TO COMMODORE PERRY



J. O. Mitchell

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of the Mikado signed a treaty written in three languages—English, Dutch, and Chinese. The terms of this treaty provided for help and protection for shipwrecked American sailors, permission for ships in distress to enter any Japanese harbor, and the opening of the ports Simoda and Hakodadi, where the Americans could get wood, coal, and water and trade with the Japanese. Further privileges were added by the treaties of 1857 and 1858.

The Americans did not enjoy their special advantage long, for that very year England and, later, Russia and Holland, obtained equal privileges. But the honor of opening to the world the "Hermit Nation" could not be taken away from the American commodore.

There were reasons for Perry's success more effective than his steamships, his solemn pomp, his miniature railway, or his champagne. At that time the Japanese government was threatened with revolution, and it felt unable to bring a united resistance against any outside force whatever. Of this Perry knew nothing at the time.

In the second place, there was a Japanese who, as a lad of fifteen, had been rescued from shipwreck by a New England skipper. The latter carried the boy back to Massachusetts and gave him a good education at his own expense. In 1849 the exile returned to Japan, where at first he was imprisoned as a foreigner and got his release only after translating Bowditch's *Navigator* into Japanese.

This young man wrote the reply in English to Perry's letter, and during the negotiations he was kept hidden within hearing of the American officers, to discover from their conversation what their real intentions were toward Japan. His assurances that the Americans were genuinely friendly and honorable in their purpose did more than anything else to persuade the Japanese government to grant a treaty.

The year 1858, when the final treaty with Japan was ratified, brings us very close to the Civil War. At this point let us look back and see how the navy had fared dur-

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ing the years of peace. In the early days we saw that Congressmen used to make speeches against the navy on account of its "dangerous menace to liberty." Just before war broke out with England in 1812 a Congressman actually got up and made a motion that the navy be abolished.

After that war the politicians changed their tune. The navy had become very popular through its victories, and the country would not hear of doing away with it. But, unfortunately, it was discovered that the navy could be used in the game of politics, and it is a sad day for any branch of the government when it becomes a grab-bag for politicians.

Of course, commissions in the navy had always been a matter of a politician's favor, but now "graft" set its dirty fingers on the ships as well. Whenever a Congressman of the party in power needed to make himself popular with the voters in his home port he would work till he got an appropriation for building or repairing a ship there. Then the contract would be turned over to another grafter, and the money would be nearly all wasted.

The frigates built by Humphreys in 1797 were the best of their class in the world; but the ships built after the War of 1812 were perhaps the worst. One commodore reported that in his squadron he had scarcely a single ship that could make over *five* knots an hour! Some ships dragged along for years in the building, and then, after a fortune had been wasted on them, they proved to be worthless. Such a ship was the frigate *Santee*, which was thirty-six years getting built. Every time a fresh appropriation was made for her the workmen had to take out much of the old work because the timbers had rotted from exposure. Then at the end it was found that she was top-heavy and not fit for anything but transport duty. And yet in those days we built the fastest and finest merchant ships in the world!

A worse abuse was the matter of "repairs." Ships would be ordered to a navy-yard at the request of a politician,

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and then a bill of repairs would be paid by Uncle Sam which was often considerably more than the cost of building a new ship. The sloop *St. Louis*, which cost \$75,000 to build, was "repaired" once in this fashion, and the bill was nearly \$120,000. The little *Shark*, which cost \$9,000, was repaired for the moderate sum of \$27,000. The frigate *United States*, after having \$80,000 spent on her in repairs, had scarcely gone to sea when the carpenter found the timbers so rotten that she had to turn about and retire to New York, where she was condemned. Some ships sent in a big bill for "repairs" before they were even launched!



CAPTAIN OF THE
FIFTIES IN FULL
DRESS

With the officers matters were not much better. There was no grade in the navy above captain, though a captain in command of a squadron was called a "commodore" by courtesy. The result was a large number of captains, with very slow promotion for the officers below. These captains were allowed absolute power, and very little was asked of them except to keep their ships off the

rocks. They bullied and insulted the younger officers and did exactly as they liked. Many of them were in liquor during the greater part of a cruise, and courts-martial had no terrors for a man of captain rank.

There are many amusing instances of the power of these fierce old martinets. In the thirties it was the fashion to wear long and luxuriant whiskers, and young men spent loving hours curling, oiling, and perfuming these manly charms. A stern old commodore, who did not like the hairy style, issued the following cruel order as soon as he took command, "All officers in this squadron will shave off their whiskers at once." And they had to obey!

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Another captain was on duty off the coast of Africa, watching for slavers, when the rumor came that war was likely to break out with Spain over Cuba. Thinking that there would be a fine chance for prize-money in Cuban waters, he sailed back across the Atlantic, only to find that there was no war at all. Of course he had to be court-martialed for leaving his station without orders. The court found him guilty and sentenced him to "present this court with a bottle of good whisky."

At the opposite end of the line the case was even worse with the midshipmen. There was practically no education for them, so that when they became captains they were almost as ignorant as the enlisted men. There was such slow promotion that in the forties young men were still midshipmen at twenty-five, an age when Stephen Decatur was captain of a frigate. It got to be a habit, too, to treat the navy as a sort of reform-school, and boys were given commissions as midshipmen because they made too much trouble at home.

A good case of this sort was Midshipman Philip Spencer, the son of the Secretary of War. He had been dismissed from college, and had already been ousted from the navy for his "disgraceful and scandalous conduct," but his father's influence put him back again. At last he was caught plotting to kill all the officers of the brig he was serving on and turn pirate. He finally confessed his guilt, and with two other conspirators from the crew was hanged at the yard-arm. This occurred in 1842.

The execution of a midshipman, the son of a powerful politician, aroused the greatest excitement throughout the country and helped a project that had been urged for a long while—namely,



MIDSHIPMAN OF
THE FIFTIES IN
FULL DRESS

THE STORY OF OUR NAVY

the formation of a naval school. The country began to feel that it wanted some one better than a mere scapegrace to wear its uniform. The growing importance of steam meant that a new science had to be mastered



MIDSHIPMAN OF THE FIFTIES
IN SERVICE DRESS

by naval officers which could not be picked up, like seamanship, by a few cruises. Gunnery was getting to be more of a science, too, and both these things demanded careful study at a professional school. In March, 1845, George Bancroft, the historian, accepted the position of Secretary of the Navy with the understanding that he might go ahead with the founding of a naval school. The old-timers sneered at the idea of "teaching sailors ashore," but Bancroft went about his work with great tact and succeeded in making a start in a little army post at Annapolis. It

was a small beginning, but there were some splendid teachers selected for the work, and the school quickly won the favor of the entire navy. The birth of the Naval Academy attracted little notice at the time, but in its influence on the service it was really the most important event between 1815 and 1861.

XI

THE BEGINNING OF THE CIVIL WAR, THE IRONCLADS

Three lines of operation for the Union navy—Capture of Port Royal—Surrender of the Norfolk Navy Yard—Changes in ships since 1812; steam, guns, armor—Ironclads—Construction of the *Merri-mac*—Destruction of Union ships in Hampton Roads—The *Monitor*—Battle between ironclads.

FOR many years North and South had been growing apart on the subject of slavery. During this time the South had won all the battles on the question in Congress; but some of them, like the fugitive-slave law, had been costly victories because they had awakened a strong anti-slavery sentiment in the North. Toward the last there was much talk about the "constitutionality of secession" and "the rights of sovereign states," but at the bottom of it all lay the institution of slavery. On this subject both sections developed an intense spirit in the course of one generation. In the North about 1820 there was little or no abolition sentiment, but by 1855 it was uppermost. In the South about 1820 there were many who were opposed to slavery, and there were even societies in the South for freeing the slaves, but by 1855 Southerners were united not only in defending slavery as a "God-given institution," but also in demanding that it be extended and strengthened by act of Congress. Then, when the new Republican party won the election of 1860 on a platform that opposed the further extension of slavery, the "fire-eaters" of the slavery party determined to get out of the Union. The North did not want war or disunion, and for the sake of

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peace tried all sorts of ways to meet the cotton states half-way, but it failed. As the North yielded the South only became more pugnacious, and on December 20, 1860, South Carolina led the way by seceding from the Union.

In 1832 Andrew Jackson had stamped out the spark of secession in that state by sending the *Constitution* to Charleston with loaded guns. Another Democrat was President in 1860, but a man of a very different sort. His lifelong friends and many of his Cabinet were of the secession party and, though a Union man himself, he did not know what to do. So he did nothing at all. Six other states followed the example of South Carolina undisturbed, and when Lincoln became President he had to face the greatest crisis in the history of the country. A large part of the South had already formed a separate government, and four other slave states needed only Lincoln's call to arms, after the firing on Sumter, to join the Confederacy.

In the previous chapter we noted the slimy trail of the politician through the history of the navy between 1815 and 1861. When the Civil War began there were in service forty-two vessels of all sizes from a tug to a ship of the line—but only twenty-three of these were propelled by steam and fit to be considered. Of the "Home Squadron" only four were in American waters. The rest were scattered everywhere. This fact was partly due to the thoughtfulness of Mr. Toucey, President Buchanan's Secretary of the Navy, who, though a native of Connecticut, was a strong secessionist, and did not want the Southern states to be embarrassed by United States war-vessels. One-fifth of all the naval officers immediately resigned and joined the Confederacy, but those who commanded ships in foreign waters brought them back to the federal government, as a point of honor, before they resigned.

As soon as war began the Navy Department made plans for a naval campaign, and shipyards and foundries were set to working day and night. The work of the navy was

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divided into three general plans: first, to blockade the Southern coast; secondly, to open the Mississippi and capture Confederate ports; thirdly, to hunt down Confederate cruisers and privateers.

The first of these, the blockade, would have been hard for a navy many times the size of the Union fleet in 1861, for the coast line to be guarded was 3,549 miles long. But after getting control of the Potomac the government began stringing out the ships down the coast, and adding to them as fast as possible. At first the blockade was a good deal of a joke to the Confederates, but in three years it had grown so powerful that blockade-running became very dangerous, and in the end, as we shall see, the blockade crushed the Confederacy.

A good stroke at the beginning was the capture of Port Royal, South Carolina, by Captain DuPont. This was the finest harbor on the Southern coast. Besides his vessels of war DuPont took with him army transports with nearly thirteen thousand troops under General Sherman. Off Hatteras the expedition was struck by a violent gale. Two of the transports were sunk, and the men were rescued only with the greatest difficulty. Another vessel had to throw all her cannon overboard to keep from sinking.

On November 4, 1861, DuPont arrived with his storm-beaten squadron off Port Royal. He had to spend some time in getting the channel surveyed and marked, for the Confederates had removed the buoys. In fact, the Confederate government had known all about the intended attack on Port Royal before most of the officers in the Union fleet. This was true of most of the Union plans, for throughout the war there were some very bad leaks leading from Washington to Richmond.

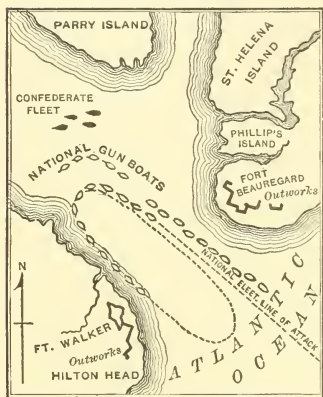
At eight o'clock on the morning of November 7th DuPont got under way in two columns to attack the Confederate fortifications. These were two strong forts on opposite sides of the bay, about two and a half miles apart, Fort Beauregard on Bay Point to the north and Fort Walker

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on Hilton Head to the south. DuPont decided not to use the troops at all because many of the boats needed for landing them had been carried away by the gale.

The previous afternoon DuPont had called his captains together on the *Wabash* and explained his plan. This was very skilfully thought out, and the fleet carried it through like a well-oiled machine. The flag-ship *Wabash* led the way at the head of a column of ten steamships, about

midway between the two forts. On his right steamed a parallel line of five gun-boats. As soon as the Union ships came within range they received and returned the fire of both forts. Steadily the main line steamed on for about two and a half miles into the harbor, then the *Wabash* turned to the south and led the line slowly back, about eight hundred yards distant from Fort Walker. The gun-boats protected this turning movement from a little Confederate flotilla of four gun-boats, which they drove up a

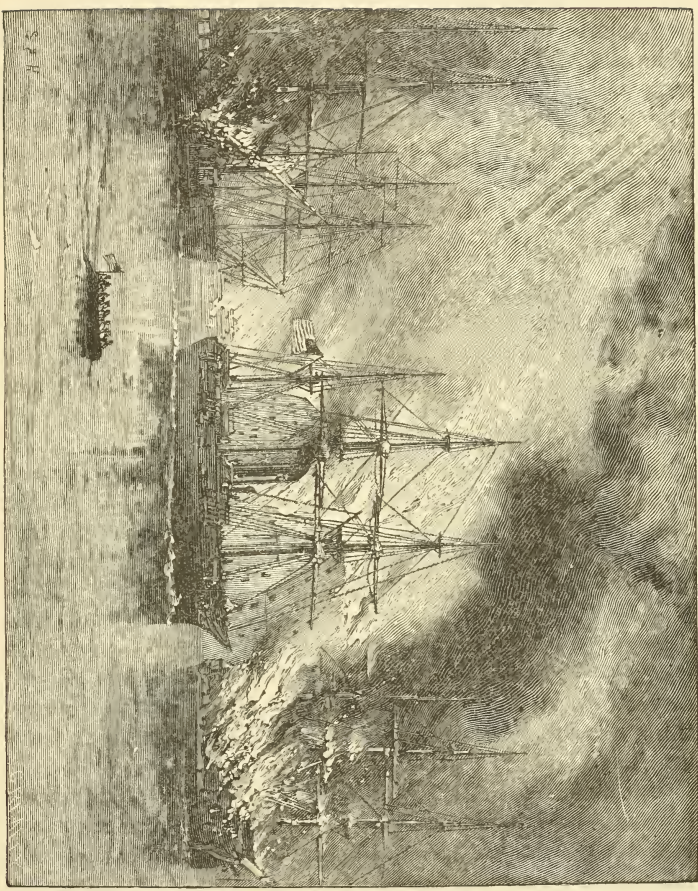


CAPTURE OF PORT ROYAL FORTS

creek. Again the *Wabash* swung round and passed between the forts, returning as before, only this second time coming to within six hundred yards of Fort Walker. By the time DuPont was ready for another "circle of fire" the Confederate forts were silent and deserted.

The victory had been surprisingly easy. The Union losses in the whole fleet were only eight killed and twenty-three wounded, and hardly a single ship was seriously hurt. On the other hand, the Confederate fortifications had been torn to pieces. The credit is due to Captain DuPont for his plan of attack. In the first place, he made

BURNING OF THE SHIPS, NORFOLK NAVY YARD



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his ships a moving rather than a standing target; secondly, he shifted his distance each time round so that the gunners of the fort had to find the range all over again; thirdly, he got at the forts from inside the harbor, where the Confederates had not expected an attack. The forts were very weak on this side, and the cross-fire that DuPont's line of battle kept up from the land side and the front at the same time was too much for the gunners of the forts to stand.

This victory was of great value because it gave the blockading fleet a good base to work from, right in the heart of the Confederacy.

Most of the heavy guns the Confederates had mounted at Port Royal had come from the Norfolk Navy Yard. The capture of that yard was the greatest disaster the navy suffered in the war, and it was due to the blunders of some well-meaning but incompetent naval officers. At the time Virginia was on the point of secession the commandant, Commodore McCauley, did not know whether to send the ships out of the yard or not. He changed his mind several times. Then toward the last he scuttled four vessels, including the new steam-frigate *Merrimac*. At that time Commodore Paulding was coming with a thousand soldiers to protect the yard, and against the trifling force the Confederates had mustered Paulding could easily have done so. But he got panicky, too, and he had scarcely arrived when he began trying to destroy everything in the yard preparatory to running off and leaving it.

But little was really destroyed. As soon as the frightened officers were gone with their forces the Confederates rushed into the yard and saved almost everything of value. By this stupid performance of McCauley and Paulding the Union lost ten ships, besides one that was half built, and nearly 3,000 cannon, 300 of them being heavy guns of the most modern type, the "Dahlgrens." The capture of these guns was of the greatest importance to the Confederacy,

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for the Southerners had no gun-factories and it would have taken some time to import cannon from Europe.

At the Pensacola Navy Yard in Florida another spineless officer had surrendered without a blow, so that the Confederacy got a good many cannon from there, too.

One of the vessels scuttled and set on fire at Norfolk was the *Merrimac*. The Confederates had tried to buy an iron-clad ship, but, failing in this, decided to raise the *Merrimac* and use her for the purpose. At this point let us stop a moment to consider how ships had developed since the War of 1812.

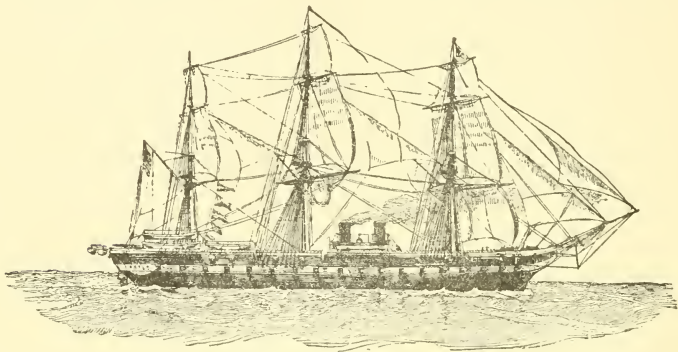
The great change, of course, was steam. But there was so much dislike among the older officers to the "kettle-boiling" type of ship that steam made slow headway. This seems strange when we remember that our navy was the first to build a steamship, the *Fulton*, launched as early as 1814. A real objection to steam was the fact that the big side-wheels of the earlier steamers could be so easily smashed by cannon-shot. But after Ericsson had invented the screw-propeller, which lay safe under water, the far-sighted officers saw that there was no further use for the sailing-ship. The United States navy had the first screw-propeller man-of-war, too, the *Princeton*, launched in 1843; and the newer ships like the *Merrimac*, the *Hartford*, and the *Wabash* were built with screw-propellers. Yet even then steam was not trusted to act alone, and these steamers were all rigged with a complete outfit of sails. And more than half of the American fleet still depended on sails entirely.

Another and newer idea was armor. Cannon had been very much improved since 1815, especially with the invention of the rifled gun; and naval men, the world over, began looking about for some means of protecting a ship against these heavy guns. During the Crimean War in 1855 the French sent three floating batteries to attack a fort. These batteries were coated with four inches of iron, and, though they got a fearful pounding from the fort,

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they were not hurt at all. This fact aroused much interest; but, while naval constructors were talking about the use of armor in 1860, as yet there was no ironclad in the American navy.

As soon as the war broke out the Confederates organized a board to draw up plans for an armored ship, and the capture of the Norfolk Yard gave them the material they needed. The *Merrimac* was raised and put in dry dock.



THE STEAM-FRIGATE "MERRIMAC" IN 1860

Her hull was sound, for she had sunk before the flames had got very far. Then the Confederates went to work transferring her into a ship the like of which had never been seen before. A casemate was built on her deck with slanting sides and covered on the top with an iron grating. These sides had a thickness of twenty-two inches of timber overlaid with four inches of iron. The ends of the deck, not covered by the casemate, were supposed to be under water, and propeller and rudder were shielded by a heavy "fan-tail." In the bow was a heavy cast-iron beak for ramming. Ten guns were mounted on her, two of them rifled pivot-guns, one at each end. The reconstructed *Merrimac* was renamed the *Virginia*; but, as she is far better known by her old name, we shall stick to that.

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About noon of March 8, 1862, she steamed down the Elizabeth River with some of the men still putting the finishing touches to her. The Norfolk people thought that she was simply going to make a short trial spin to turn over her engines. But two small gunboats joined her, and she steamed out of the river directly toward the two Union ships near the opposite shore of Hampton Roads, off Newport News. These were the sloop *Cumberland*, of twenty-four guns, and the frigate *Congress*, of fifty. The two ships hurriedly cleared for action on the appearance of the strange monster steaming toward them, flying the Stars and Bars. The Union officers had heard of the building of an ironclad in Norfolk, but they had not expected anything like this. It looked more like a floating barn than a ship.

On she came slowly, for she was very heavy and her engines had been condemned as worn out the year before. The men of the *Cumberland* and the *Congress* had plenty of time to make ready for battle, but, as there was not a breath of air stirring, neither of these old sailing-ships could move an inch.

The Union guns opened fire on the *Merrimac* when she was three-quarters of a mile distant. The heavy shot struck their target fairly, but bounced off the sloping casemate like so many peas. The *Merrimac* did not reply till she came within close range. Then a shell from her forward pivot-gun killed or wounded every man in the after pivot-gun crew of the *Cumberland*. A moment later she poured into the *Congress* her starboard broadside, which ripped through the wooden sides of the old frigate as if they had been paper.

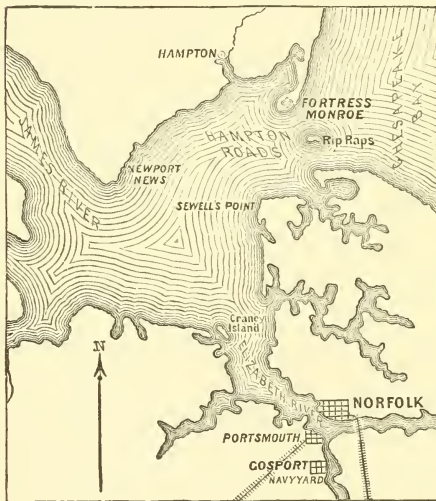
Leaving the *Congress* for the moment, the *Merrimac* rammed the *Cumberland*, smashing a great hole beneath the water-line. As the *Merrimac* backed away her ram broke off. All this time the Union guns were pounding harmless broadsides at the ironclad, and the Confederate gunners were answering with terrible effect.

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The captain of the *Cumberland* was absent on a court of inquiry, but the vessel was nobly defended by Lieutenant Morris. After the ramming the *Cumberland* began to settle rapidly, but Morris stuck to his guns. As the men were driven by the water from the lower decks, they helped to fight the guns on the spar-deck, and they did not stop firing till the water was lapping about these guns as well, and that was three-quarters of an hour after the *Merrimac* had rammed. Then the *Cumberland* reeled and sank, but as she settled on the shallow bottom her masts stood out of water; and when her captain came galloping back from Fortress Monroe at the sound of the firing he found his

ship done for, but he saw the old flag still flying from her masthead.

Not a shot from the *Cumberland* had penetrated the armor of the *Merrimac*. But the firing had not been wholly wasted, for the *Merrimac's* smoke-stack had been badly riddled and the muzzles of two of her guns were smashed by solid shot. The ramming, too, had cost the *Merrimac*



HAMPTON ROADS

her beak, twisted her bow, and made a leak that gave her trouble afterward.

Having settled the *Cumberland*, the *Merrimac* turned slowly—she was hopelessly clumsy—and headed for the Congress. The commander of the *Merrimac* was Captain

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Buchanan, who had been the first superintendent at the Naval Academy, and previous to the war had been commandant of the Washington Navy Yard. He was a Marylander, and the tragic way in which the families of the border states were divided by the war is shown by the fact that as Buchanan turned his great guns on the *Congress* he knew that on her decks stood his favorite brother.

To avoid being rammed the commander of the *Congress* made sail, and with the help of a tug ran in under the Union batteries of Newport News. But the frigate soon went aground and stuck. The *Merrimac* then chose an easy raking position and riddled her without mercy, while the *Congress* had only two stern guns that could be used against the *Merrimac*. Soon both were disabled, leaving the frigate perfectly helpless.

Meanwhile, the rest of the Union squadron—two steamships and a frigate—had left their anchorage off Fortress Monroe to come to the assistance of the *Cumberland* and the *Congress*. All these ran aground before they could reach the scene. The commander of the *Congress*, Lieut. Joseph Smith, had been killed early in the action, and when Lieutenant Prendergast, the second in command, saw that the other Union vessels were powerless to help him, he hauled down his flag.

But when one of the small gunboats came alongside to take off the prisoners she met such a hot fire from the shore batteries that she had to retreat. Captain Buchanan was very indignant, because he thought that some of the firing came from the surrendered *Congress*, and, snatching a musket from one of his men, he climbed out on the casemate to fire at what he called the "treacherous Yankees." A sharp-shooter from the battery promptly put a bullet through Buchanan's thigh-bone, and he had to yield the command of the *Merrimac* to his lieutenant, Catesby Jones.

Finding that they could not take possession of the *Congress*, the Confederates set fire to her with red-hot shot.

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The old frigate continued to burn far into the night, and finally blew up. About half past six the tide had dropped so much that the pilots of the *Merrimac* insisted that unless the ironclad returned to deep water she would stick in the mud all night. So, leaving the other helpless Union ships to be destroyed the next morning, the victorious *Merrimac* steamed back to Sewell's Point to anchor for the night.

It had been an overwhelming victory for the South, and the news spread like wildfire in all direction. The *Merrimac* had destroyed two wooden ships and in turn had scarcely a dent in her armor. In contrast to the terrible loss of life on the Union ships the Confederates had lost only two killed. Nothing but the dropping of the tide had saved the rest of the Union fleet from destruction that evening, and their doom was only postponed till the next morning. The South, on hearing the news of the day's fighting, believed that nothing could stop the *Merrimac* from going up the Potomac and shelling Washington and then breaking the Union blockade. Joyous Confederate newspapers prophesied that the *Merrimac* would end the war at once. Not only would she have Washington helpless under her guns, but she would put New York under ransom as well. Then all Europe would recognize the independence of the Confederacy. As a matter of fact, with her weak engines the *Merrimac* could not have lasted half an hour in an ordinary seaway, but nobody realized that at the time.

All these predictions were gloomily believed by the friends of the Union, too. The next morning, when a Cabinet meeting was hurriedly called in Washington, no one had a single hopeful word. The cause of the North seemed doomed by the sudden appearance of this invincible ironclad.

But that very night a still stranger-looking ship might have been seen by the glare of the blazing *Congress*. It was Ericsson's *Monitor*, which had come on the scene in the nick of time, like the hero of a melodrama. This queer

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craft, though so different from the *Merrimac*, was quite as ingenious and novel. Her inventor, John Ericsson, had designed her for the shallow rivers and bays of the Southern states. She drew only ten and one-half feet, her armored deck was only two feet above the water-line, offering no target to the enemy, and her revolving-turret gave her the power of firing in any direction without turning the ship itself. This iron turret was nine feet in height, twenty feet in diameter, and eight inches thick. Two eleven-inch guns, pointing in the same direction, formed her armament. This design had been submitted to the French by Ericsson some time before, but they had rejected it. And we must take off our hats to the Union officers who risked their reputations by approving it, because the Navy Department was flooded with all sorts of protests from naval experts against building any such "crazy contraption."

The *Monitor* was a marvelous invention, and well designed for rivers and harbors, but she was not a sea-going vessel at all. In the trip from Greenpoint, Long Island, where she had been built, the little craft very nearly foundered. The chief trouble was that in a heavy sea the waves poured right down smoke-stack and blowers, and the deck-hatches, being under water practically all the time, leaked badly.

Lieut. J. L. Worden, her commander, and every man of his crew had to work their hardest all of two days and a night to keep their ship afloat during the storm they ran into off the coast. The following day they reached Chesapeake Bay, and arrived at Fortress Monroe shortly after the *Merrimac* had left the Roads. Worden had orders to report at Washington, but after that day's disasters the captain of the *Roanoke*, who was senior officer present, ordered Worden to remain in Hampton Roads to protect the wooden ships against the *Merrimac*.

The officers and crew of the *Monitor* were worn out with their struggle against the storm, and they had had no sleep

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the night before, but for the greater part of the night of the eighth they worked like beavers preparing their vessel for battle.

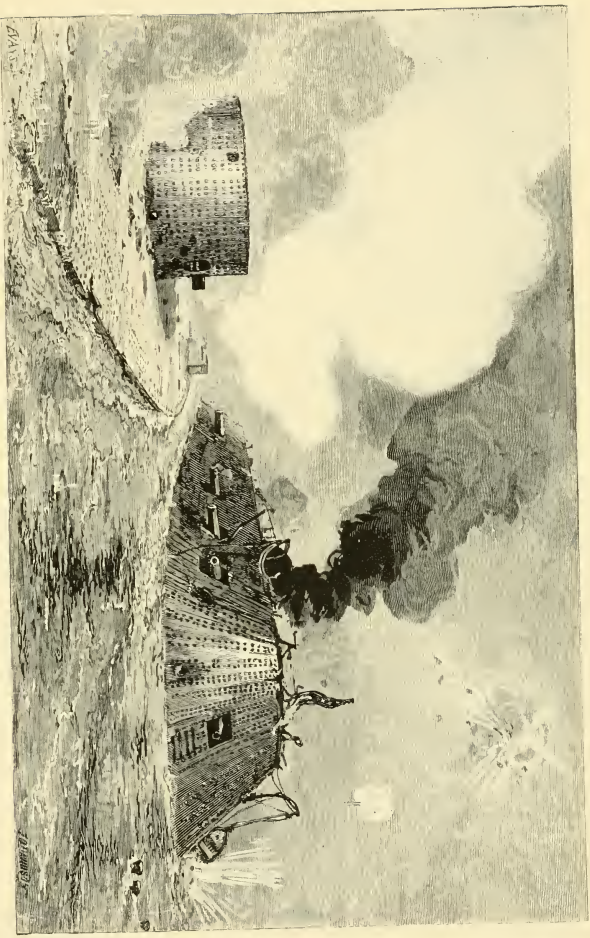
Early Sunday morning, March 9, 1862, the *Merrimac* steamed out again into the Roads to finish her work of destruction. When still a mile away she put a shell into the stranded *Minnesota*, but before the second shot could be fired, out stepped the "cheese-box on a raft" to challenge the iron giant to battle.

The combat that followed was one of the strangest in naval history. The two vessels passed and repassed each other, the *Merrimac* firing often, the *Monitor* replying only every seven or eight minutes. The Confederates used shells, and the Union gunners replied with solid shot, but neither could penetrate the armor of the other.

Once the *Monitor* tried to disable the propeller of the *Merrimac* by ramming, although she was not well adapted for ramming because of an anchor-well in her bow. The *Monitor* missed her aim by a few feet, and the *Merrimac* tried to ram, but the more nimble *Monitor* received only a glancing blow. This collision opened up the leak in the *Merrimac's* bow, which had only temporarily been patched up, and gave trouble for the remainder of the fight. Just as the two ships came together the *Monitor* slammed a solid 180-pound shot into the *Merrimac*, which bent in the iron and timber and very nearly penetrated the casemate. Then the two ships swung apart and continued their harmless bombardment of each other.

After two hours of battle the *Monitor's* ammunition gave out, and she had to retreat to shallow water for the process of getting the shot up into the turret from below. As this took fifteen minutes, the *Merrimac* began firing on the *Minnesota*. But before the *Merrimac* had fired a third shell the *Monitor* was back in the ring again, and the pounding of heavy shot against armored sides went on as before.

Both ships had their troubles. The *Merrimac* drew twenty-two feet of water and was in constant danger of



Courtesy of the Century Co.

THE "MONITOR" AND THE "MERRIMAC"

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going aground. Her smoke-stack had been so badly damaged that she could scarcely keep any steam up, and the engines were bad to begin with. The *Monitor* had trouble starting her turret and more trouble in stopping it, so after a few trials the men fired their guns "on the fly." All the view the gunners had of their enemy was through the narrow opening in the turret around the muzzle of the gun, so they simply pulled the lanyard when the dark casemate loomed through the smoke. One of the worries of Lieutenant Greene, who was in charge of the turret, was that he might fire by mistake into the *Monitor's* own pilot-house. At the suggestion of the *Monitor's* chief engineer all subsequent vessels of this type were built with the pilot-house on top of the turret.

About eleven-thirty Lieutenant Jones of the *Merrimac* turned his guns on the *Monitor's* pilot-house instead of the turret, and a shell struck it fair, partly lifting the iron roof and for the time blinding Worden, who was peering through the sight-hole at that moment. He gave the order to sheer off, for he was afraid the pilot-house had been wrecked, and the *Monitor* retired for fifteen or twenty minutes to shallow water. But after taking a survey of damages Lieutenant Greene, who was now in command, saw that the *Monitor* had received no serious wound. Accordingly he headed the *Monitor* again toward the Confederate ram and fired a few shots as a challenge to renew the battle.

But the *Merrimac* was steaming back to Norfolk and would not turn. The next day Lieutenant Jones was bitterly criticized by the Southern papers for leaving the field to the *Monitor*, but he explained that the leak in his bow was causing much trouble, and the pilots had informed him that unless he returned to Norfolk then he would have to spend the night in the Roads on account of the dropping tide.

So far as any harm they did to each other is concerned the *Monitor* and *Merrimac* affair was a drawn battle, but

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in its results it was an important victory for the Union. The *Monitor* had saved from destruction three Union ships, she had prevented the *Merrimac* from attacking Washington or breaking the blockade, and she had restored hope and confidence in the Union cause. In other ways it was one of the most important battles in naval history; for, taken in connection with the *Merrimac's* easy victory of the day before, it showed that the wooden ships of the old navies were of no further use and the navy of the future would have to be ironclad.

The *Merrimac* came out twice into Hampton Roads afterward, but did not attack the Union fleet. Her commander had formed plans for destroying the *Monitor* with solid shot, but the presence of each was so important to North and South that both vessels were held in leash by their governments, and there was no second fight between them. When Norfolk had to be abandoned the following May, the *Merrimac* was burned at her moorings because she had no way of escape. In December of the same year the *Monitor* went to sea and again ran into a storm. This time she went down, so both these famous ships had very brief lives. But the two types lasted throughout the war. The Confederacy built "rams" like the *Merrimac*, and the Union built "monitors." In this ship-building race the North had a great advantage in ship-yards, engine-works, rolling-mills, and skilled workmen. The South had practically none of these things, because of its dependence on slave labor. Thus the very cause the South was fighting for proved its greatest weakness in naval warfare.

XII

THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI

Construction of the gunboats—Services of Foote—Capture of Fort Henry—Attack on Fort Donelson—Island No. 10—Running past the batteries—Union successes in the West.

IN this chapter we turn to the second line of operations for the Union navy—the opening of the Mississippi. Both sides realized the importance of this “Father of Waters” in the great struggle. If the Confederates could keep the Mississippi in their hands they would have the commerce of the Northern central states in their power, they could carry on a campaign against these states by the same waterway, and they could get all the food-supplies needed by the Confederate armies from the states of Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana, which were practically untouched by the war.

On the other hand, if the North could get control of the river it would split the Confederacy in two, cut off those supplies from the Western states, and by means of all the rivers that flow into the Mississippi could send gunboats right into the heart of Arkansas, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

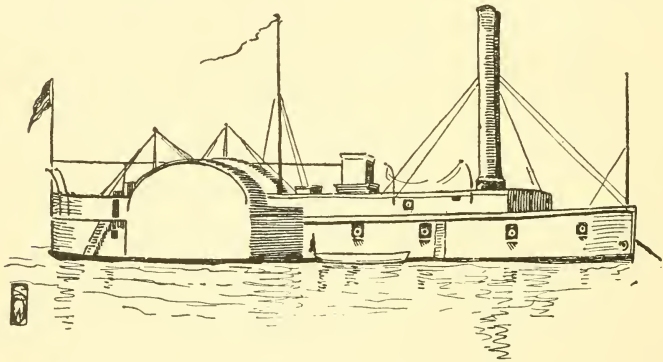
From the beginning of the war the Confederates worked hard to fortify the river and some of its tributaries. They selected the best places for defense and built strong forts from Columbus, Kentucky, down to New Orleans. The most powerful of these was at Vicksburg.

In order to capture such forts, or even get past them, the Union needed a fleet of ironclad gunboats drawing

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little water, but carrying heavy guns. James B. Eads, the famous engineer, designed a type to meet these requirements, and in August, 1861, the government gave him the contract to build seven of them. So these river ironclads were being built in the West at the same time that the hammers were ringing on the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* in the East, and were finished some months sooner. These river gunboats were ready for duty in January, 1862.

In size and armament they were all alike. They were flat-bottomed boats, 175 feet long, drawing six feet of water, and carrying thirteen guns. They had a casemate with the forward end protected by twenty-four inches of oak covered by two and a half inches of iron. The engines



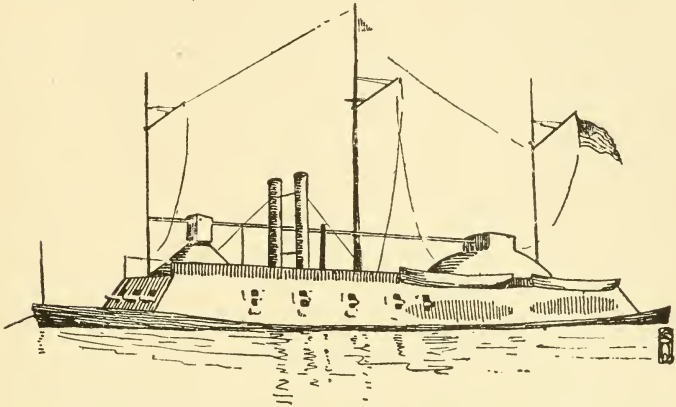
U. S. GUNBOAT "LEXINGTON," A WOODEN RIVER-BOAT MADE OVER FOR FIGHTING

were shielded by two and a half inches of iron alone. The lack of armor was the chief weakness of these boats, especially about the pilot-house, but more would have meant a deeper draught. Just forward of the stern was a paddle-wheel, which was protected by the casemate. Besides these seven gunboats was a big snag-boat, the *Benton*, which was made into an ironclad, too, and was larger and more

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powerful than the rest. These eight vessels formed the main strength of the "river-fleet."

A great deal of the credit of building these gunboats belongs to Capt. Andrew H. Foote, who was detailed to superintend the work. This was a good deal like sending



THE "BENTON," THE MOST POWERFUL OF THE UNION GUNBOATS

Oliver Perry to Lake Erie in the War of 1812, for Foote was a "blue-water" sailor, and river work was not much to his taste. Where Perry had troubles in lack of supplies Foote was annoyed by the frequent meddling of army officers. The river-fleet was put under the War Department, and wise brigadier-generals who didn't know one end of a boat from another wanted to show Foote just how these boats ought to be made. And sometimes, even in St. Louis, Captain Foote found himself short of materials that he needed. At other times he had difficulty in getting the money that the government owed for the work already done. There always was a good deal of "red tape" to be untangled at every step, but Foote went ahead in spite of everything and got his fleet ready. This work he rightly considered the most important of his career, but, like

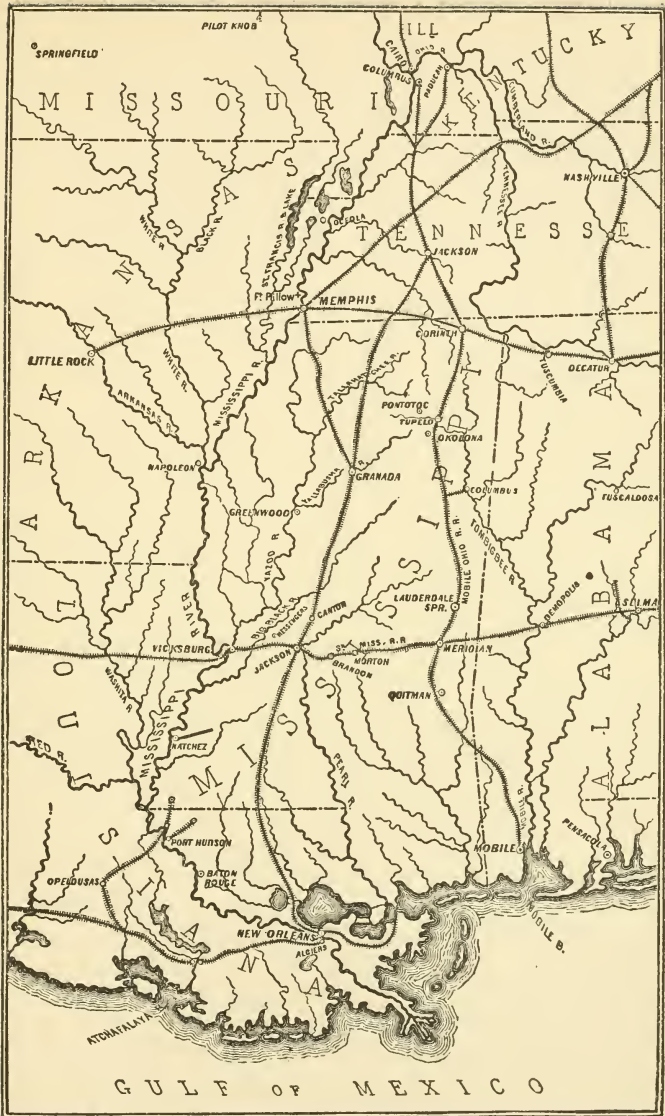
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Perry's building a flotilla on Lake Erie, it was too dull and prosaic to win the popular admiration it deserved.

As soon as his boats were ready Foote made his base at Cairo, Illinois, an important place for the Union to hold, on account of its position. It is at the junction of the Mississippi and the Ohio, at the point where Illinois, Missouri, and Kentucky meet. Previous to this time, on the very day of DuPont's victory at Port Royal, three other unarmored river-boats, which had been bought and made over for fighting purposes, did good service in saving Grant's army from capture at Belmont.

With his river-fleet Captain Foote now planned to attack Forts Henry and Donelson. The Confederate works at Columbus, Kentucky, were very strong, but Henry and Donelson were not nearly so powerful. By capturing these two the Union forces could get in the rear of Columbus, and that would mean that the Confederates would have to surrender or leave. On February 2, 1862, Foote took four of his armored fleet and the three wooden gunboats to make the attack on Fort Henry. At the same time Grant's army came up the river and landed a few miles from the fort in order to march around to the rear while the fleet attacked the front.

The boats had to go up the Tennessee slowly on account of the torpedoes that had to be fished out of the channel. About noon on February 6th, as according to the plan arranged with Grant, Foote steamed slowly toward the batteries, with his four armored gunboats in front and the three wooden ones in the rear. By advancing bows on, Foote kept the strongest part of his boats toward the enemy, and at the same time he was forcing the Confederates to shift their range with every shot. A hot battle followed, and as the Union fleet came to close quarters both sides hit each other hard and often. A single shot from the fort ripped through the casemate of the gunboat *Essex*—named after the old *Essex* and commanded by a son of Commodore Porter. The shot flew back, exploded the



MAP OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, CAIRO TO THE GULF OF MEXICO

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boiler, and left the boat a drifting wreck. Foote's own boat, the *Cincinnati*, had her casemate penetrated, too. In fact, she was very roughly handled from smoke-stack to water-line, but was not disabled.

Meanwhile the Union fire had plowed the Confederate earthworks and dismounted several of the guns. About an hour and a quarter after the first shot the Confederate flag came down. Grant's army had been so delayed by swollen streams and boggy roads that it arrived only in time to take charge of the prisoners, though the main force escaped before Grant arrived. The captured work was fittingly renamed Fort Foote.

After this success the three wooden gunboats went on up the Tennessee River and caused the destruction of many military stores and took as a prize a large steamer which was being rebuilt as a gunboat.

These boats returned in time to join the attack on Fort Donelson, which lay twelve miles to the east on the Cumberland River. Here the Confederates had collected an army of 18,000 men, including those who had escaped from Fort Henry. Fort Donelson was built on a high bluff on the west bank of the river, and was stronger than Fort Henry. There were powerful batteries near the water-level, and still heavier guns on the edge of the bluff. When Foote advanced to the attack, on February 14, 1862, with four armored and two wooden gunboats, he soon found that he had "caught a Tartar." His guns could not be elevated enough to answer the batteries on the bluff, and all the advantage gained by the sloping casemate on his boats was lost because the plunging shot from the cannon on the bluff took the slope at right angles. Instead of bouncing off the casemate the heavy projectiles went through. The Union gunboats stuck to the attack bravely, but one after another was disabled, and went drifting out of action till at last, after an hour and a half, all six were in retreat. Two days later the fort surrendered to General Grant.

The plan of making the Confederates move out of Colum-

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bus by capturing Forts Henry and Donelson succeeded. The Confederates, however, managed to slip away with all their supplies, and rallied their forces at the next line of the river strongholds—at Island No. 10. This was so named because it was the tenth island south of Cairo. It was fifty-five miles from Cairo and near the Missouri shore, just about on the line separating Kentucky and Tennessee.

In spite of its size and dignity the “Father of Waters” has always had such freakish and unreliable ways that it is no wonder that the Indians looked on it with superstition. On a map the Mississippi between Cairo and New Orleans wriggles so much that it looks as if it had a fit of the malarial “shivers” for which the valley is famous. As the crow flies, it is only four hundred and eighty miles from Cairo to the Gulf, but as the river winds it is eleven hundred miles! One of the queerest of these snaky turns was in the neighborhood of Island No. 10. As you can see by the diagram, the river took a notion to go northwest, then changed its mind and turned southward. Next it seemed to prefer to go back toward Canada, and went due north for a while. It had not gone more than a few miles in that direction when it turned about face again and decided that the Gulf was the best place, after all. In twelve miles of flow the Mississippi gained here only three miles to the south. In the middle bend lay Island No. 10, two miles long and two-thirds of a mile wide. To-day the course of the river is very different, and the island has long since been washed away.

The Confederates had fortified this island because it was well fitted for defense. It was protected on the east by the impassable swamps of Reelfoot Lake, and on the shore opposite the island, to the south, lay six protected batteries. The channel to the north of the island was choked by a line of sunken hulks, so that any vessel that passed the point by the south channel would have to run the gauntlet of the four island batteries on one side and the

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six shore batteries on the other. Besides these there was a large floating battery of ten nine-inch guns moored near the middle of the island.

The weakness of the Confederate defense at Island No. 10 was that all their supplies had to come from the south, chiefly by river, and if that line were cut off they would be helpless. To this end General Pope occupied New Madrid, on the upper bend, and planted artillery to keep Confederate gunboats from coming up. What he needed now was the protection of Union gunboats so that he could get troops across the river into Tennessee and strike the defenses of the island in the rear.

The Confederate defenses were too powerful for a gunboat fleet of three times the size of Foote's squadron to make a direct attack, as they had done at Forts Henry and Donelson. And in those bombardments on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers, if a Union vessel were disabled she would drift out of action away from the enemy. Here, if a boat lost control of her steering-gear or of her engines, she would be carried down by the current directly into the hands of the Confederates. So Foote contented himself with a long-distance bombardment (March 16 and 17, 1862) aided by mortars, but he was unable to do much harm to the Confederate works.

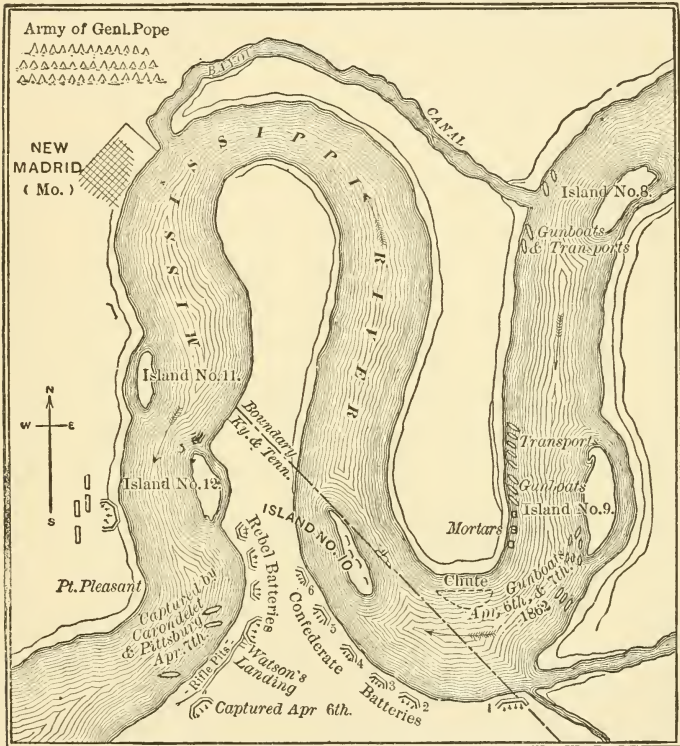
Meanwhile General Pope had been digging a canal from the Mississippi to a stream that entered the river near New Madrid. His idea was to avoid going past the island by cutting off the loop. By April 4th he had the canal ready and floated the lighter transports loaded with troops across and around to New Madrid, but the gunboats drew too much water to follow. He had now all the troops he needed, but still no gunboat.

About two weeks before, Foote had called a council of war to talk over the possibility of running past the island with some of the gunboats, but all the officers, with the exception of Commander Walke, of the *Carondelet*, voted against the idea. Yet every day the necessity of getting

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a boat down there grew plainer, and on the 30th of March Foote told Walke to "go ahead and get ready."

While Walke was busy preparing the *Carondelet* for her dangerous run, fifty men from the army made a brilliant



MAP OF ISLAND NUMBER 10

capture of the nearest Confederate battery on the shore. They spiked all the guns and got back without losing a man. Three days later a lucky shot cut the cable of the floating battery and the swift current carried it down-

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stream three miles before the Confederates could moor it again. That, too, was a big obstacle removed.

Still, many officers, naval and military, wagged their heads solemnly as they saw Walke at work on his gunboat, and prophesied that the *Carondelet* could not live three minutes under a cross-fire from those heavy guns. "Nothing but suicide," they said, "and throwing away a good gunboat at that."

On April 4th—the day Pope took the army over the canal to New Madrid—Walke reported to Foote that everything was ready for the dash. Walke had done everything he could think of to protect the vessel against the fire of heavy guns. Engine-room and boiler he had barricaded with heavy timbers and loose iron. Round the parts that had no armor at all he piled bales of hay, more timbers, and heavy chains. The upper decks he covered with wood, coal, cables, and chains—almost anything that would deaden the blow of a solid shot. Round the pilot-house, that most vulnerable part of these boats, he wound hawsers and cables to the thickness of about eighteen inches. To the stern was lashed a coal-barge to protect the wheel and the magazines.

About ten o'clock that night, when Walke got under way, the weather came to his help by rolling up a black thunder-storm. The *Carondelet* slipped out into the current with lights covered and running silently. For the first half-mile she ran without discovery. Suddenly, as ill luck would have it, just as she came under the guns of the first battery, her flues caught fire and blazed. Boom! Zi-i-ip! A gun and a rocket in the second fort gave warning that a Union gunboat was trying to run the gauntlet.

Now that Walke was discovered, there was nothing to do but crowd on the steam, and he sent the *Carondelet* rocking and careering down-stream through the darkness at a dangerous rate. Meanwhile the thunder-storm burst with torrents of rain and tremendous thunder and lightning. Going as she was at this full speed down the swift current,

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the *Carondelet* proved hard to keep on her course on account of the coal-barge astern, which slewed the gunboat time and again out of the channel. Once, luckily, a flash of lightning showed the pilot that she was heading for a shoal right under a Confederate battery.

"Hard aport!" he yelled, and the *Carondelet* swung over, bumped, and slid into deep water again. It was a wildly exciting trip. The Confederates were soon firing on the gunboat with musket and cannon, and to the tremendous thunder-claps were added the roar of heavy guns and bang of bursting shells. But in the excitement and darkness the Confederates were unable to hit her at all! As Walke had expected a very severe fire, he kept all his men under cover except the two heroic leadsmen, who had to stay in the bow, and his chief pilot and himself, who kept the deck. Fortunately, not one of the four suffered anything worse than a drenching.

For half an hour more the *Carondelet* rushed by the booming guns on the Tennessee shore, all firing at her as fast as they could be loaded. Still she was not hit. Then she had the floating battery to run past, but that proved no more dangerous than the rest, and about midnight she arrived at New Madrid, welcomed by the loud hurrahs of the Union soldiers. The *Carondelet* had run past six forts and over fifty guns. Instead of being sunk by their fire, she had not been hurt in the least. It was a very brilliant exploit in the face of all the belief, Union and Confederate, that no vessel could possibly get past. To show that it was not mere luck, two nights later the *Pittsburg* repeated the run of the *Carondelet*.

After that Island No. 10 was done for. The Union army crossed to the Tennessee shore and found that the greater part of the Confederates had already abandoned the works, leaving only one hundred men, who surrendered to Foote. But Pope, knowing what line of retreat the Confederates would have to take, went after them and bagged the whole army. Meanwhile the two wooden boats, *Tyler* and

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Lexington, were helping the army on the Tennessee River and saved the day for Grant in the famous battle of Shiloh by checking the Confederate advance on the weakened left wing.

After Island No. 10 had surrendered Foote took his gunboats down-river eighty miles to Fort Pillow without meeting any more opposition from the Confederates. On May 9th Foote was relieved of the command by Capt. C. H. Davis, and went North for a well-earned furlough. In the attack on Donelson he had received a wound which gave him much suffering and finally led to his death the following year.

After Davis took charge the gunboats went on bombarding Fort Pillow. The work had to be done at this time by the navy alone, for General Halleck had suddenly ordered away Pope's army just at the moment when Pillow could have been surrounded and forced to surrender, with all her defenders. General Halleck was one of those Union generals whose salary the Confederacy could well have afforded to pay. However, the gunboats kept pounding away, and on June 4th the Confederates deserted the fort.

During this bombardment on May 10th the Confederate rams had made a dash on the *Cincinnati*. Only four of the Union boats got into the fray, on account of some blunder about signals, and before the Confederates returned they had rammed two of the gunboats so badly that they had to be run aground to save them from sinking. The day after Fort Pillow surrendered the Union squadron went down-river, hot on getting revenge. They caught the Confederate rams near Memphis and completely routed them. Four out of the eight were sunk; the other four took to their heels, but only one was allowed to escape. The Union gunboats suffered very little.

The chief trouble with this Confederate flotilla was that it was not well organized; each boat was under a river-captain who wanted to run it to please himself and refused to

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take orders from any Confederate officer, naval or military. So they acted in a hit-or-miss fashion, which turned out to be chiefly "miss." We shall see in the following chapter the same trouble spoiling the effectiveness of the Confederate naval force at New Orleans.

After the rout of the Confederate rams the city of Memphis fell into the hands of the Union. This left the Mississippi open all the way to the greatest stronghold of all—Vicksburg. And as Farragut by this time had entered the river at New Orleans and steamed north past Vicksburg, the Northern and Southern divisions of the Mississippi campaign grasped hands at a point just above Vicksburg. Of Farragut's great part in opening the mouth of the river we shall speak in the next chapter.

In this combined naval and military campaign on the upper Mississippi we find the army and the navy working together, as Foote said, "like the two blades of a pair of shears." Steadily the Union forces hammered down one stronghold after another, with every step penetrating farther into the Confederacy.

The success of these operations looms big when compared with the indecisive work of the Army of the Potomac in the East. But we must remember that one great advantage which Foote and Grant enjoyed was in being a long way from Washington. They were not being meddled with all the time, as was poor General McClellan. The Virginia campaign was at the very doors of Washington, and every Congressman, every post-office clerk, every newspaper correspondent, knew exactly what was the matter with the Union operations, and they were anxious to explain just what McClellan ought to do. These amateur war experts bombarded the War Department and the President with their wisdom, and even Lincoln himself interfered with his long-suffering general far too much. When Grant became chief of the Army of the Potomac, Lincoln had learned his mistake and called "hands off" to the meddlers.

The success of the army and the navy in the West went

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far to keep up the sagging hopes of the North during that discouraging year of 1862 when everything in the East seemed to go wrong. One great plan of campaign had succeeded, anyway; and, though Vicksburg had not fallen, the Mississippi was patrolled from Cairo to New Orleans by Union forces.

XIII

THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI

Career of David G. Farragut—Southerners on Union side—Passing the New Orleans forts—Importance of the capture of New Orleans.

TO begin the story of the operations on the lower Mississippi we must go back to David Farragut. The year 1862 was nearly a half-century after that March day in a Chilean harbor when we saw the little midshipman Farragut running across the blood-stained decks of the *Essex* with a bundle of primers under his jacket. Between that time and the outbreak of the Civil War he had found small chance to make a name for himself. He served well in the campaign against the pirates in the twenties, but it was a thankless kind of work, with far more hardship than glory. When the Mexican War took the fleet to Vera Cruz, Farragut came forward with plans to reduce the Mexican fort there by bombardment or by an assault. He backed his suggestion by a carefully prepared set of observations and soundings that he had made twenty years before when the French fleet was attacking the place. At that time he had gone about measuring the depth of penetration of every shell in the masonry and ticketed the information away, with the idea that some day the facts would be useful to his country. But neither the Department nor Commodore Matthew Perry cared to be advised by any subordinate, and when Farragut was at last given a little vessel to command Perry sent him off to blockade Tuxpan, where the only possible way a commander could distinguish himself was to die of yellow-fever. This Farragut almost succeeded in doing.

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In the War of 1812 we saw the brilliant promise of the fearless and resourceful little midshipman Farragut, and yet the long years of peace after that war had given him no chance to show his real worth. In 1861 he was sixty years old—an age which to-day finds an officer on the verge of retirement—and still he was wholly unknown.

Farragut was born in Tennessee, and during the forty years before 1861 he had made Norfolk, Virginia, his home; so that in all his ties of birth, kin, and friendships he was a Southerner; but there seems to have been no question in his mind about where his sword belonged, and when Virginia seceded he left Norfolk and asked for active duty under the flag he had sworn to serve.

That was a trying time for many Southern officers—like General Lee, for example—who were opposed to secession, but who felt that their duty lay with their state when it joined the Confederacy. We have never done full justice to those who, in spite of everything, remained loyal to the Union. By that act such men cut themselves off from friends, family, and home. Coming from states in the Confederacy, these men had no political friends to help them and no local newspapers to shout their praise. Yet this class of Union officers furnished some of the best ability displayed on the Union side. Farragut had no equal. Another Union officer from Virginia was that splendid soldier General Thomas, “the Rock of Chickamauga,” whose achievements historians have been slow to appreciate. Others, and younger men, not in such high places of command sacrificed just as much, but came in for little or no recognition. From the rank of captain to midshipman there was many a Southern man in the Union navy whose loyalty was not shaken by the fact that his father, uncles, and brothers were all on the other side.

At first, in the confusion following the resignation of so many officers who “went South,” the Navy Department hesitated to give any command to a Southerner. But Farragut’s prompt action in leaving Norfolk at the time

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Virginia seceded, and his immediate request for active duty, had made an impression on Gustavus Fox, the able Assistant Secretary of the Navy. So in December, 1861, when the Department planned an expedition to capture New Orleans and open the lower Mississippi, Fox picked Farragut as the man to carry it out.

Meanwhile, Farragut had been kept at the dull duty of weeding out the decrepit old officers who clogged the navy list at the top. Of course, this had to be done by somebody, but Farragut was aching for active work. When he was called to Washington and informed that he was to command the expedition he was overjoyed. The Confederates were sure that no fleet whatever could get by their forts below New Orleans, and expected all Union attacks to come from up-river. Many Union advisers, too, said that it was impossible to enter the river from the Gulf with wooden ships, but Farragut answered that it could be done, and he was eager to prove it.

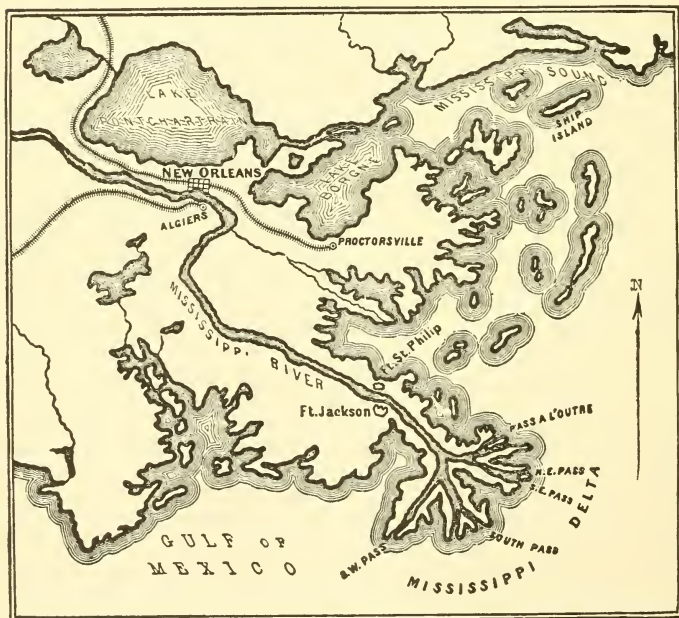
Accordingly, a fleet was collected, consisting of seven screw sloops of war, one side-wheeler, and nine gunboats, besides a mortar flotilla. These ships arrived off the Mississippi delta toward the end of February, 1862. Then followed two months of tedious preparation. The heavy steamers had to be slowly worried and dragged over the mud at the mouth of the river in order to get them into deep water above the bar. It took two weeks to perform this operation for the *Pensacola* alone. By April 7th Farragut had his ships inside the bar and was ready to move upon the enemy.

From the first the Southerners had known of the intended attack on New Orleans, and these two months of hauling and tugging, besides, had given them plenty of time to develop a powerful defense. But, in spite of repeated warnings and urgent requests to Richmond for means of defense, the authorities were slow in making any preparations. They replied that the forts below New Orleans could not be passed, and calmly repeated that

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Union forces would probably come from the North rather than from the Gulf, anyway. And yet New Orleans was the largest city in the South at that time, and in a position of great strategic importance. The careless attitude of the Richmond government, especially of the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Mallory, made those officers who understood the situation—like the gallant young Beverly Kennon—boil over with indignation.

The two forts in which the Confederates had the utmost faith were situated eighty miles below New Orleans. Fort St. Philip, with forty-two guns, was on the east bank of the river; and Fort Jackson, with fifty-eight guns, was lower down on the west bank. While the latter was



THE MISSISSIPPI BELOW NEW ORLEANS

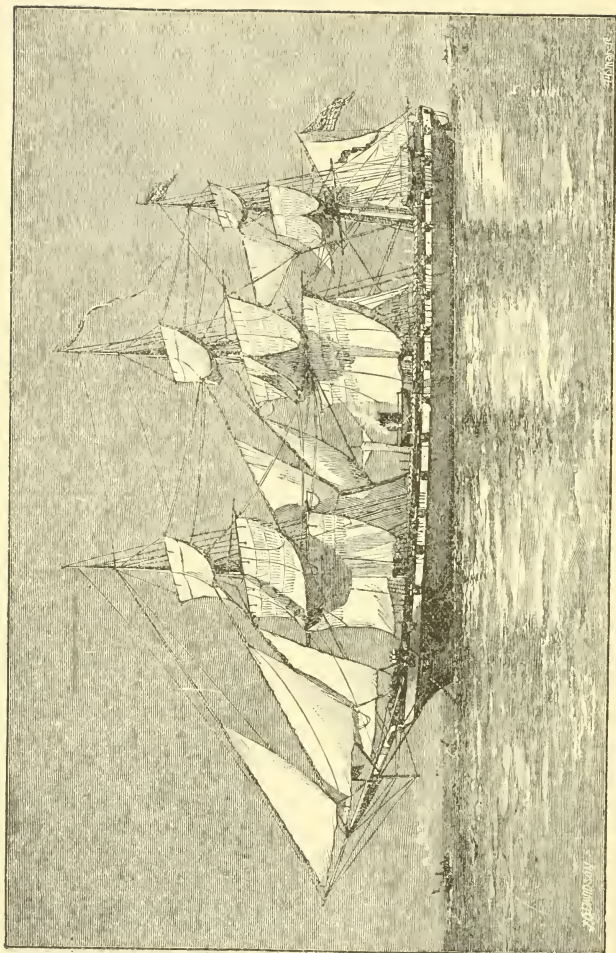
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stronger, the former had a better position, because, being on a bend of the river, its guns could rake an approaching line of ships. But in the case of ships and forts it is not so much the number of guns as the quality of them, and the quality of "the man behind the gun." Many of these cannon were old-fashioned 24-pounders which had no business to be in a defense of such importance as this, and the garrison seems to have been not very well trained or disciplined, for a mutiny broke out the day Farragut reached New Orleans.

One of the Union admiral's famous sayings was, "The best protection against an enemy's fire is a well-sustained fire from your own guns." To that end he put as many cannon on his ships as they could stand. The *Hartford*, his famous flag-ship, was called a "screw sloop of war." Under Farragut she carried twenty-two nine-inch Dahlgrens, about twice as many as several other cruisers of her rating.

In passing these forts Farragut had a problem much more difficult than that of DuPont at Port Royal. The latter had a wide channel for his "circle of fire," and he could shift his range at will. Here the Union fleet had to go through a narrow river-channel, of which the Confederates had the range long beforehand, and one fort, at least, could pour in a raking fire. When we stop to think that all these ships were wooden and that naval expert opinion was largely of the opinion that they would all be sunk in the channel, we can realize that Farragut had some iron in his backbone.

Nor was he a reckless, slap-dash kind of fighter. He realized the dangers as well as anybody. But he felt that it was his business to overcome those dangers just so far as human foresight could. After the mortar flotilla had bombarded the forts for three days without doing a particle of damage—Farragut had little use for mortars—he decided to go ahead with his steamships. The Confederates had drawn a barrier across the river consisting



U. S. SLOOP OF WAR "HARTFORD"

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of sunken schooners chained together and great booms of logs. He sent two gunboats to clear a passageway, and made the mortars of real use by keeping so many shells dropping on the forts that their fire was lessened and so did not stop the work of the men on the gunboats. For these it was a tough problem to chop away an opening under fire, and once one of the gunboats went aground. But they stuck to it like heroes, and before they retired they had opened a space wide enough for the largest vessel to pass through.

The next step was to make the ships ready for running the gauntlet of the two forts and to meet the rams above the forts. Terrifying accounts of these rams had come out to the fleet, and nobody knew just what to expect after reading the accounts about the *Merrimac* only a few weeks before.

Farragut spent two days in making sure that his ships were prepared for the run. Each was loaded down at the bow a few inches so that if she ran into the mud she would keep pointing up-stream. The ships were all wooden, but there were ways of protecting even a wooden ship against cannon fire. Farragut ordered the heavy sheet-anchor cables fastened alongside in such a way as to make a sort of "chain armor" for the engines and boilers. And to protect these parts from raking shot—forward and aft—bags of coal and sand were piled in heaps in stern and bow. To make sure that everything was just right he made an inspection of every ship in the line on the afternoon before the attack.

After a careful survey of the forts Farragut had determined on a night advance. At two o'clock on the morning of April 24, 1862, two red lights from the *Hartford* gave the signal to get under way. There was some delay in pulling up anchors, so that it was three-thirty when the Union line steamed through the darkness for the opening in the barrier. The fleet had been divided into first, second, and third divisions. After getting through the barrier the first

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division was to hold to the right and engage Fort St. Philip. The second division, led by Farragut in the *Hartford*, was to follow, swing a little to the left and attack Fort Jackson. Farragut had intended at first to run the two divisions side by side, but there was so much danger of confusion, if not collision, in getting through the barrier that he changed his plan. A third division, consisting chiefly of gunboats, was to bring up the rear.

The black line of ships steamed slowly through the barrier, but not a shot came from the forts till the leading ship of the first division, the *Cayuga*, was just about abreast of Fort St. Philip. Then the pitch darkness was torn by the flashes of artillery, and the Confederates opened fire on her with a vengeance. The *Cayuga* was too light to withstand a bombardment or reply to it; her business was to run by as fast as she could before she was sunk. So she rippled up-stream with the sparks pouring out of her smoke-stack.

The next in the line was the heavy *Pensacola* with twenty-three big guns. She slowed up and gave the fort the benefit of her broadside, and several times she stopped her engines to continue her set-to with the fort. The idea was that the heavy ships of this class would take the heat of the Confederate fire and, if possible, silence their guns for the benefit of the weaker vessels in the rear of the line.

But the stopping of the *Pensacola* left the *Cayuga* tearing up-stream all by herself. Suddenly her captain realized, as he peered astern through the darkness and the smoke, that there was not another Union ship in sight. His first thought was that they must all have been sunk by the forts. And as he looked forward he counted eleven Confederate rams and gunboats looming out of the darkness and heading straight for him. No wonder that Lieutenant Perkins, who was acting as pilot, wrote afterward, "It seemed as if we were gone, sure."

But some well-directed shots drove off or disabled the nearest Confederate ships. The famous ram *Manassas*, of which alarming reports had been spread, suddenly appeared

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alongside and tried to ram the *Cayuga's* stern. So wretched were the ironclad's engines that she missed entirely. So she slipped astern and drifted down the stream to try again on some other ship.

Just then some Union gunboats came up, and for a few minutes there was a wild time. In the pitch-darkness and smoke and the confusion of vessels no one could tell friend from foe. Suddenly the Union gunboat *Varuna* fired a broadside by mistake into the *Cayuga*, and there were shouts and frantic signals amid a grand uproar of banging guns and bursting shells. But in about twenty minutes things straightened out, and the weak Confederate flotilla were all scattered and sunk except the *Gov. Moore*. This was one of the gunboats that had attacked the *Cayuga* but had been driven off by her heavier guns. The commander of the *Gov. Moore*, Lieut. Beverly Kennon, realizing that he could do nothing against ships like the *Cayuga*, went in chase of the *Varuna*, which had gone on up the river. Kennon raised signal-lanterns like those he had noticed on the Union ships, and he was not recognized as an enemy till he was close astern. Then he pumped two huge shells into the *Varuna*, and as she swung about to meet her opponent Kennon rammed her, firing another shell through his own bow into her. Shortly afterward another gunboat, the *Stonewall Jackson*, rammed her, too, and she headed for the bank, filling rapidly, and settled in shallow water. But as she settled she still used her guns on the *Gov. Moore*; and, as the latter had been badly hurt by the fire of the *Cayuga* as well, she soon dropped out of the fight and surrendered. The *Gov. Moore* had been handled with great gallantry and skill—Kennon had been in the navy before the war—and was the only Confederate vessel in this battle that deserves such praise. After the *Gov. Moore* had surrendered there was little resistance left. But before Kennon surrendered he had done more than both forts—he had sunk one of the enemy's fleet.

These Confederate rams and gunboats had no organiza-

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tion. Some belonged to the state of Louisiana and some to the Confederacy, and some just "acted on their own hook." As an example of the way authority was mixed up, Kennon was a lieutenant in the Confederate navy, but his vessel belonged to the navy of Louisiana.

Let us turn back to see how the second division fared. About half an hour after the *Cayuga* drew the fire of Fort St. Philip the *Hartford* led the way for the second line and played her bow-guns on Fort Jackson. By this time the darkness was made worse by the stifling clouds of powder-smoke. A dull glare was made out just ahead of the *Hartford*, and the next minute a blazing fire raft came down directly upon the flag-ship.

Round spun the wheel to avoid this dangerous and unexpected enemy, but the jerk of the helm only laid the bow of the *Hartford* in the mud near Fort St. Philip. At that moment it was discovered that the raft was not drifting, but being shoved down upon the *Hartford* by a Confederate tug. In another moment there was the hot breath of flames, and the fire leaped on the sides of the ship and went crackling and roaring up the tarred rigging. Here was a crisis indeed. The flag-ship was aground under the enemy's forts and afire at the same time. But as the officers and men looked at their leader they saw him as cool and self-possessed as if he were arriving in a home port and giving orders to anchor. His quick commands snapped out with decision but without excitement, and there was no hint of panic in his well-disciplined crew. While the guns drove off the tug and answered the redoubled fire of the forts a section of the crew soon had the hose playing on the blazing sides and shrouds. Meanwhile the screw was churning a reverse under full pressure, and after some nerve-racking suspense it finally pulled the *Hartford's* nose off the mud. Then she steamed serenely up the river without further trouble.

Next in line to the *Hartford* was the *Brooklyn*. The smoke and darkness were so thick that she immediately

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lost sight of the flag-ship and was steering blindly, without even a lantern to guide her. The result was that the *Brooklyn* missed the opening and soon found herself bumping on one of the sunken hulks in the barrier. She got badly fouled in the wreckage and swung across stream, with her bow touching the mud on the east bank. While she lay in this disagreeable position she got a very hot fire from Fort St. Philip.

At last, after all kinds of difficulty, she, too, was pulled loose and headed up-stream again. At that moment the ram *Manassas* suddenly appeared alongside. The latter was going so slowly that she was able to give only a gentle bump to the Union ship, and the chains alongside prevented any serious damage. After this the career of the *Brooklyn* was concerned chiefly with destroying the Confederate gunboats and pouring in such a tremendous fire on Fort St. Philip that it was silenced for several minutes.

Although the Confederates were driven to cover by the heavy broadsides of the big steam-sloops like the *Hartford*, the *Pensacola*, and the *Brooklyn*, they opened fire again when these ships were past. So they succeeded in keeping the third division, composed chiefly of light gunboats, from getting by. But Farragut had thirteen vessels past the forts, and with these he advanced to New Orleans the following day.

Panic seized the city when news came that the "Yankee" ships had actually gone by those forts. And as the Union fleet steamed up the river Farragut had his hands full to keep clear of the ships and steamers loaded with the precious cotton, but burning like bonfires, that came drifting down from the city.

The fleet was soon anchored at New Orleans, and Farragut sent Captain Bailey ashore to get the formal surrender of the city. Captain Bailey was accompanied by Lieutenant Perkins of the *Cayuga*, and these two officers had an experience to try their nerve. As they marched up the

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streets to the City Hall they were surrounded by a cursing, yelling mob, who brandished fists, clubs, and pistols in the faces of the two "men in blue." "Kill 'em! Kill 'em!" shouted the crowd; but Captain Bailey and his aide, very stiff and erect, looking neither to the right nor the left, marched calmly and steadily to the City Hall and delivered Farragut's message to the mayor. A Confederate eyewitness described the incident afterward as "one of the bravest deeds I ever saw done."

After a good deal of delay the flag of Louisiana came down, and the Stars and Stripes took its place. On the 29th news came that the two forts had surrendered. From New Orleans Farragut moved north to Vicksburg. This was according to the orders of the Department, and Farragut obeyed like a true sailor. But he knew and said that nothing could be gained simply by bombarding and passing Vicksburg with his fleet as long as the Confederates kept their communications open in the rear. Meanwhile, the Union fleet suffered far more from the snags in the river and the malaria in the swamps than from the bullets of the enemy.

At last the Department realized that Farragut was right about Vicksburg, and ordered him back to New Orleans. In the fall of 1862 David D. Porter, a son of the old commodore, and a foster brother of Farragut, was given command of the upper Mississippi squadron and did splendid work. When Grant settled down to the famous siege of Vicksburg he had invaluable help from Porter's fleet, as he gratefully acknowledged. With the surrender of Vicksburg to Grant on July 4, 1863, fell the last important stronghold of the river. In the autumn of 1863 the Union forces had the Mississippi and its tributaries completely in their grip.

Thereafter all help from the Western states of the Confederacy was cut off from the armies in the East. In fact, the Mississippi squadron was really a part of the blockade which every month was drawing more tightly around the Confederacy.

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At the very time Farragut was inspecting his fleet for the attack on the forts defending New Orleans, Emperor Napoleon III. was urging England to join France in breaking the blockade in order to recognize the Confederacy and get cotton. Englishmen and Frenchmen of wealth and influence had bought up a large number of Confederate bonds, and, naturally, they were anxious to have their governments do something to make sure that those bonds were a good investment.

But after the story of the *Monitor's* fight in Hampton Roads the French and English governments suddenly realized that they had practically nothing in their navies that could fight her—or the sister monitors that the Union navy-yards were turning out as fast as men could work. And the capture of the largest cotton port in the Confederacy took away the excuse that Europe must have a port in which to buy cotton. Uncle Sam was perfectly willing to “swap” cotton for European goods as long as it was *his* cotton; so after April, 1862, Confederate hopes of intervention grew steadily fainter.

XIV

THE BATTLE OF MOBILE BAY

Importance of Mobile—Its defenses—The *Tennessee*—Passing the forts—Loss of the *Tecumseh*—Conduct of the *Brooklyn*—Farragut's manœuver—Attack of the *Tennessee*—Friendly reunion between enemies—Honors for Farragut.

AFTER getting control of the Mississippi the Union Navy Department turned its attention toward capturing Confederate strongholds on the Gulf and Atlantic coasts. If there had been an efficient fleet in home waters at the outbreak of secession, and some other man in the White House than Buchanan, every one of these places that cost so much in blood and treasure afterward might have been seized with scarcely a blow. Even as it was, if Farragut had been allowed, as he wished, to take his fleet against Mobile in 1862 instead of making a useless demonstration before Vicksburg, he would not have had the grim experience which came so near being a Union disaster.

The fall of Port Royal and New Orleans awoke the South to the need of stouter forts, better guns, more torpedoes, and ironclads. So the defenses of Mobile Bay, which Farragut could easily have captured in 1862, had been by 1864 so strengthened that the problem was many times more difficult. In the summer of 1863 Farragut turned over the command of the whole Mississippi squadron above New Orleans to Porter and went north for a much-needed rest. Also, his heavy steam-sloops were in such a condition that they needed a thorough overhauling before beginning a new campaign. The following January

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Farragut and his ships were both back again with the blockading squadron in the Gulf.

After examining the defenses of Mobile Farragut wrote the Department, saying that ironclads were absolutely necessary, and asking for some of the monitors that were with the blockaders off Charleston. Instead, the authorities kept him waiting till the following August before sending him four monitors from elsewhere. Meanwhile the Confederates made good use of this long delay by strengthening the defenses of the bay still further. When at last the monitors arrived Farragut went right ahead with his attack.

After the fall of New Orleans Mobile became the chief port through which the Confederates could get their cotton out and their supplies in. Railroad lines ran into Mobile, and two large rivers emptied into the bay as well, so that military supplies brought to Mobile could be quickly shipped to those points in the Confederacy where they were most needed. And in spite of all the blockading-ships could do, time and again the daring little blockade-runners would dart past them, carrying on the trade that was so necessary to the South.

Mobile Bay is thirty miles long, but in those days it was for the most part too shallow for steamers of heavy draught. Only one narrow channel was deep enough to admit vessels like the *Hartford*, and that led directly under the strongest of the Confederate defenses, Fort Morgan. There were two other works—Fort Powell, at the western mouth of the bay, and Fort Gaines, on an island about midway between—but these two had no share in the battle. Fort Morgan, which guarded the ship entrance, was, for those days, a very strong fortification, having three tiers of cannon. Its brick wall was nearly five feet thick and in addition the whole front was protected by great heaps of sand-bags. At that time it was commanded by Gen. R. L. Page.

Besides the fort the Confederates had a squadron consisting of the ram *Tennessee* and three gunboats. To get a naval force together in Mobile Bay the Confederate Navy

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Department sent Admiral Buchanan, of *Merrimac* fame, and gathered the best engineers in Dixie to help him. Several gunboats were soon building, but the hopes of the Confederates were pinned to the *Tennessee*. All these vessels were built at Selma, one hundred and fifty miles up the Alabama River, at that time the largest navy-yard controlled by the South.

The *Tennessee* was practically an improved *Merrimac*. Her casemate was not so long as that of the *Merrimac*, and she mounted six guns instead of ten; but the armor—with a thickness of twenty-five inches of wood and five to six inches of iron—was even more solid, and she drew only thirteen feet of water instead of the *Merrimac's* twenty-two. Further, as a protection from ramming, her casemate sloped two feet under water and then bent again at the same angle, joining the hull about seven feet under water. The same “knuckle” effect was carried fore and aft, too, and in the bow—with its iron plating—made a beak that would not break off.

When she was launched the Confederates said proudly that she was the “most powerful ship afloat,” and that was no idle boast. There were only two drawbacks, one—the usual one with all Confederate rams—the engines were too light to drive such a heavy craft; the other, that the steering-chains were left exposed on deck.

Buchanan's work in building the *Tennessee* was much like Oliver H. Perry's with the *Lawrence* or the *Niagara*. Both were built from standing timber, and the *Tennessee* had to be raised five feet in order to float her over the Dog River bar. Buchanan did not have an enemy hovering close at hand, as Perry did, but he had his troubles. To raise the ram, floats had to be constructed. These cost immense labor, because the very boards had to be sawed out from green logs; and when one set had been finished the boards took fire and burned up, so that the whole slow labor had to be done all over again. Meanwhile the Southern newspaper men, who could not realize one-tenth of all

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this trouble, were saying disagreeable things about Buchanan.

At last the ram was afloat in Mobile Bay, and on May 18th Buchanan took her down for a surprise attack on the blockading-ships. After dark she was towed down by two steamers to a point in the channel where there was supposed to be enough water for her, but when the floats were taken away it was found that the tide had dropped so low that the ram was stuck in the mud. Before she could be floated it was broad daylight, and all hope of a surprise was gone. So Buchanan took his ram under the shelter of Fort Morgan and waited there, drilling his raw crew at the guns.

In addition to the squadron and the forts the Confederates had planted obstructions across the flats to prevent any boats of shallow draught crossing in the space between the forts. In the ship-channel itself they planted a double row of torpedoes, stretching from the western side of the channel to a point within three hundred feet of the water-battery under Fort Morgan. The end of the torpedo line was marked by a red buoy, and the remainder of the channel was left open for the blockade-runners.

As before, Farragut made the most careful preparations to protect his fleet for the attack. As a large number of his ships were light gunboats, he planned his advance to shelter them as much as possible. To do this he had his ships steam in pairs, on the right—the side toward the fort—a heavy sloop of war, on the left one of the gunboats lashed alongside. Besides protecting the thin sides of the gunboats this formation made it possible for one ship with a disabled engine to keep on with the help of the other. All these ships were protected, as in the New Orleans fight, with chains and bags of sand.

Farragut wanted a flood-tide and a westerly wind to roll the battle-smoke back upon the fort. On August 4th the last of two of the expected monitors arrived. At five-thirty the next morning, when Farragut saw that both conditions—flood-tide and wind—were just as he wanted

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them, he said quietly to his fleet captain, "Well, Drayton, we might as well get under way."

At the head of the column was the *Brooklyn*, with the *Octorara* lashed alongside, and next came the *Hartford* with the *Metacomet*. Farragut had wanted to lead the column with the *Hartford*, but the other officers, knowing that all the fire would be concentrated on the flag-ship, persuaded him to come second. Afterward he had bitter reason to regret his change of plan.

As Fort Morgan was able to rake the approaching ships before they could use their broadsides, Farragut sent the four monitors ahead to engage the fort and cover the advance of the fleet. Two of these monitors were of the later pattern, with two turrets, but all four were clumsy and always made slow headway.

Meanwhile the roll of drums from the fort, calling the defenders to their guns, showed that the Confederates were not to be taken by surprise. At the same time the *Tennessee* slipped out from the shadow of the fort and lay athwart the channel in such a position that her guns could rake the advancing line of ships. The three gunboats took similar positions, so that all the broadsides of the Confederate squadron as well as the guns of the fort were concentrated on the narrow channel through which the Union fleet had to pass, bows on.

Commander T. A. M. Craven was leading the line of monitors with the *Tecumseh*. For nearly half an hour the advancing ships had to bear a cruel fire, unable to reply except with the bow-chasers of the leading pair of ships and such of the monitors' guns as would bear. As the larger ships caught up with the slow line of monitors it was not long before the *Brooklyn* and the *Hartford* were both thundering full broadsides at the fort and clearing the men out of the water-batteries. Farragut had told Craven that he wanted the *Tecumseh* to engage the *Tennessee*, and Craven steered eagerly for the big ironclad. He had been ordered to keep to the eastward of the red buoy on account

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of the double line of torpedoes. What followed no one can be perfectly sure of, because the accounts differ. Farragut said that the monitor swerved to the west of the buoy. But Confederate eye-witnesses said that she kept well to the east of the buoy, and one hesitates to think that Craven disobeyed a clear order when there was no necessity for doing so. It is quite possible that a torpedo got adrift in the channel. At any rate, while Farragut, from the rigging of the *Hartford*, was watching with satisfaction the effect of his grape and shrapnel on the Confederate batteries, suddenly everything went wrong. A smothered boom drew his eye to the *Tecumseh*. A great jet of water shot up, fell back with a splash, and the monitor heeled over and went down. In two minutes there was only a whirling eddy where the *Tecumseh* had been. Out of 135 men 113 were lost, including her brave captain.

Commander Craven had had an enviable record. The Queen of Spain, for instance, had presented him a gold medal for his gallantry in rescuing the crew of a Spanish ship. But the last act of his life stamps the man. At the moment of the explosion Craven and his pilot instinctively rushed for the ladder of the pilot-house, the only means of escape, and there was just one chance. As they met at the foot of the ladder Craven stepped back. "After you, pilot," he said, quietly, but as the pilot gained the air the monitor sank under his feet.

Farragut immediately ordered Jouett, who commanded the *Metacomet*, to put out a boat to rescue the survivors, and a young ensign with a boat's crew rowed through that storm of bursting shells and coolly picked up the men who were struggling in the water. A Confederate gunner trained his piece on the boat. "Don't fire on him!" cried General Page. "He's saving drowning men!" And the ensign returned to his ship unhurt.

Captain Alden of the *Brooklyn*, who was leading the line, had seen the *Tecumseh* go down, and suddenly became panic-stricken. His lookout told him that there were

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torpedo-buoys almost under his bows. What they saw was a number of empty shell-boxes floating about the channel where they had been dropped overboard from the gunboats. But Alden was so sure that they were torpedo-buoys that he backed his engines and stopped.

"Go forward!" signaled Farragut, realizing that a fresh disaster would soon occur if the *Brooklyn* did not go on ahead, but she still hung motionless right in the channel. Meanwhile the other ships were steaming up, the other monitors were also in the channel, and the whole column in a few minutes would have been a mass of collisions, all on account of Captain Alden's fright. The *Brooklyn*, with the *Octorara*, now swung athwart the channel, suffering a terrible raking fire from Fort Morgan herself and making it impossible for a single Union vessel to get by her. The confusion was getting worse with every tick of the watch. The Confederates, seeing the plight of the Union fleet, redoubled their fire.

"Go ahead!" signaled Farragut again. It was, as he said afterward, the supreme moment of his life. All his plans seemed wrecked, and his ships lay in confusion at the mercy of the Confederates. So he breathed a prayer for help, and he felt that the answer was "Go on." The *Brooklyn* still lay like a log across the channel, making it impossible to pass her to the right. There was only one other way—to cross to the left. But to go that way meant to run across that deadly line of torpedoes—and there was the fate of the *Tecumseh*.

Better lose the *Hartford* and the *Metacomet* than the whole fleet. Farragut gave the order, and the two ships turned short around and steamed for Mobile Bay, clearing the *Brooklyn* to the left.

"Torpedoes ahead!" came the warning cry from the *Brooklyn*.

"Damn the torpedoes!" shouted Farragut. "Four bells! Captain Drayton, go ahead! Jouett, full speed!"

The men on board those ships would have gone anywhere

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with Farragut, but they caught their breath when the cutwaters went foaming across the torpedo line. Hadn't they just seen the *Tecumseh* go down? The two vessels surged along at full speed, the engines thumping till the decks quivered, and it is no disgrace to anybody if there were some hearts thumping, too. In another minute the ships were safe in the bay.

Afterward men below decks on both ships swore that they heard the torpedoes bump on the sides and even the snap of the primers. Probably the torpedoes had been carelessly made and had become useless after some time in the water. At any rate, no more exploded, and Farragut's daring manœuvre saved the day for the Union.

The tangled line straightened out, the *Richmond* and the *Port Royal*, the next pair of ships astern of the *Hartford*, followed the latter across the torpedo line, and the whole fleet steamed ahead. But during those moments of confusion the Union forces suffered heavily from the cross-fire. Shells from the *Tennessee* and the gunboats plunged into the bows of the ships, sweeping away whole gun-crews at a time, while from the right came the deadly fire of Fort Morgan at close range. In fact, the ships were so near the fort that, in a lull of the firing, the Union men could hear the Confederate officers giving orders to their men. It is hard to understand why none of the wooden vessels were sunk under the terrific pounding, but they had received few injuries near the water-line. Although there had been a good many killed and wounded, especially on the *Brooklyn* and the *Hartford*, the only one of the ships badly hurt in passing the fort was the *Oneida*, which was disabled by a shot that went through her boilers. Here the wisdom of Farragut's plan was shown, because, though the *Oneida* was helpless, the gunboat *Galena*, which was lashed to her port side, carried her safely past.

Buchanan now attempted to repeat the story of the *Cumberland*. As the *Hartford* came forging up the channel he tried to ram her. but the *Tennessee* was clumsy and slow,

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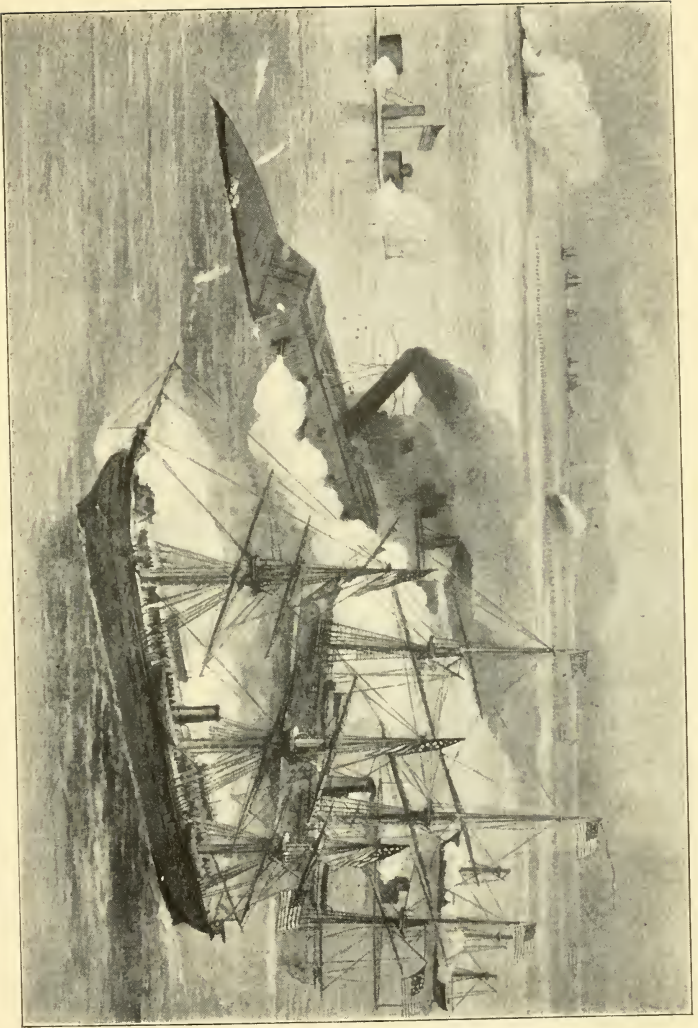
and a twist of the *Hartford's* wheel was all that was necessary to avoid her beak. The *Tennessee* went on trying vainly to ram the others, but Buchanan found that to hit a vessel under full steam was a very different thing from running into a motionless sailing-ship. As the dreaded ram went down the approaching line, the *Hartford* kept on into the bay till she could swing around safely. Then she turned her broadsides on the three gunboats that had done her so much harm and drove them away. One was nearly sunk, another was chased and captured by the *Metacomet*.

Soon all the Union ships were in the upper bay, and the order was given to anchor. Breakfast was prepared and the decks cleaned of their blood-stains. The *Tennessee* had retired to the shelter of Fort Morgan; and Farragut, as he saw her there, began planning to attack her with his monitors by night. He judged that in the darkness the gunners of Fort Morgan would hesitate to fire, because they would not be able to distinguish friend from foe.

Scarcely had he settled on this plan when he saw the *Tennessee* deliberately leave her berth and head for the Union fleet.

"Old Buck's coming out!" was shouted from ship to ship, and in a hurry the mess-gear was stowed and the gun-crews formed to give "old Buck" the fight he was evidently looking for. It makes anybody's blood tingle with admiration at the thought of that solitary *Tennessee* sallying out to fight the entire fleet. But it was another one of those things that are "magnificent, but not war." By so doing Buchanan threw away every advantage he had. His guns were of longer range than most of those in the Union fleet, and, lying snug under the shelter of the fort, or out in the shallows where the Union ships could not follow, he could have given Farragut's wooden fleet a great deal of trouble. Instead of that he came to close quarters in deep water, exactly where his enemy wanted him.

Farragut passed the order to attack the *Tennessee* "bows



FARRAGUT'S VICTORY IN MOBILE BAY—THE CAPTURE OF THE RAM "TENNESSEE"

(From a contemporary picture in *Harper's Weekly*, 1864)

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on," and one after another of the wooden ships crashed into the ironclad, wrenching their own bows and doing very little apparent damage. As in the battle between the *Cumberland* and the *Merrimac*, their broadsides at close quarters glanced harmlessly off the ram's casemate, while every now and then the *Tennessee* sent a shell that tore through the sides of the ships.

Once she tried to ram the *Hartford*, but struck only a glancing blow and went scraping along the side of her enemy. At that moment Farragut sprang into the mizzen shrouds and stood almost over the ram. For the third time that day one of his devoted shipmates passed a rope around him and fastened him to the shrouds so that no sudden shock might hurl him out. The *Hartford's* guns thundered away, but even at ten feet the heavy broadsides glanced off the heavy casemate. All this while at close quarters the *Tennessee* was able to fire only one shell, for her gun-primers refused to work properly.

Two of the Union monitors had troubles with their engines, guns, or turrets, and were not in condition to give much help, but the third, the *Chickasaw*, was still in good shape. She was commanded by the youngest of Farragut's captains, George Perkins, the same young man who piloted the *Cayuga* past Fort St. Philip, and with Captain Bailey marched through a yelling mob in New Orleans. Perkins took his ship close under the *Tennessee's* stern and smashed fifty-two of his eleven-inch steel shot into her after casemate, shattering the iron plates and letting daylight through the woodwork.

This sort of pounding changed the looks of things for Buchanan. Already the ramming had broken off the smoke-stack of the *Tennessee* under the casemate, and the stifling coal-smoke made it almost impossible to breathe. Three of the shutters on the port side were jammed by shot. The *Chickasaw* had closed the stern port in the same way, and the steering-chains had been cut through, so Buchanan ordered the ram to be headed back to Fort Morgan.

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Just at that time a shot from the *Chickasaw* jammed another port. While a machinist was at work trying to loosen it another shot struck the port fairly, killing the man and sending a nut with such force across the deck that it broke Buchanan's leg above the knee. It was almost the same kind of injury that he had received in Hampton Roads, and in the same leg.

Captain Johnson, who now took command of the ram, found her in a desperate condition. She could not be steered—there was hardly enough steam to move her, anyway—scarcely a gun could be fired, and it was only a question of minutes before the after part of the casemate would be broken down under the terrific hammering of the *Chickasaw*. After twenty minutes of playing target for the whole fleet, and being unable to bring a single gun to bear in reply, Johnson surrendered.

It happened that Johnson was a warm friend of Commander LeRoy of the ship *Ossipee*, which just at the moment of surrender came bumping into the *Tennessee*. The next moment there was a friendly shout: "Hello, Johnson! This is LeRoy. I'll send a boat for you!" And, by an odd coincidence, LeRoy had been one of those who had fought on the *Cumberland* in Hampton Roads on that March morning two years before. So when he went aboard the *Tennessee* to take Buchanan's surrender, he told the Confederate admiral with a smile that they had "met before."

The pleasantest feature about the naval story of the Civil War is the fact that the very men who fought each other like tigers as long as the flag was flying were friends again immediately after the surrender. These Confederate and Union officers had served together on shipboard in the "old navy," and many of them were personally great friends. As the wounded officers of both sides lay on the deck of the *Metacomet* after the battle they were soon swapping stories of the "old days."

There had been a pleasant reunion between the commanding officers when the *Metacomet* captured the *Selma*

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shortly before the *Tennessee* came out. Jouett, of the *Metacomet*, had served before the war as a midshipman under Murphy, of the *Selma*, who had been very kind to him. Jouett had set his heart on capturing Commander Murphy and had taken great pains to prepare all sorts of good things to eat in order to please his old friend, who was fond of a good table. When the *Selma's* flag was down Murphy came aboard the *Metacomet* to give up his sword, looking very stern and dignified with his erect figure and long white hair and beard. Jouett had sent every one forward, to spare the old gentleman's feelings, and before Murphy could begin his stiff little speech of surrender Jouett hooked one arm confidentially into his and remarked: "Come on, Murphy. I have had breakfast waiting some time."

Then when the Confederate officer sat down to a breakfast of the sort he delighted in but had not tasted for many a month the old warrior's eyes began to twinkle. "Jouett," he laughed, "why didn't you tell me you had all these good things? I would have surrendered to you long ago!"

It was a little over three hours from the first shot of the battle to the moment when the whole Union fleet burst into cheers over the surrender of the *Tennessee*. Besides those drowned in the *Tecumseh* the Union loss was 52 killed and 170 wounded, in comparison with which the Confederate casualties were trifling. But the great object had been attained. A few days later, after a heavy bombardment from the fleet, Fort Morgan surrendered, and Mobile Bay was in the hands of the Union.

"It was the most desperate fight I ever saw since the days of the old *Essex*," remarked Farragut, grimly, and unquestionably it was the greatest naval battle of the Civil War. Moreover, it came perilously near being an overwhelming defeat for the Union cause. That the threatened defeat became a victory was due to the superb courage and quick decision of Farragut himself. To use the words of the Confederate General Page, who took in the

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whole situation from Fort Morgan, "Farragut's coolness and quick perception saved the Union fleet from a great disaster and probably from destruction."

The capture of Mobile was the crowning achievement of the hero's career. Worn out by responsibility and fighting, he went north in December, 1864, and received the honors that the grateful nation was eager to shower upon him. In 1866 he was created Admiral of the Navy, the first in our history, and there have been but two others since who bore that honor. In 1867 he commanded a squadron which visited European waters and was everywhere received with enthusiasm and honors.

Farragut's career connected the Civil War and the War of 1812. In him we find every fine characteristic of that splendid set of officers who brought us honor in 1812, and to these qualities he added something still finer of his own. In the list of American naval heroes the name of David Glasgow Farragut stands first.

XV

TORPEDOES AND THE "ALBEMARLE"

History of torpedoes and submarines—The Confederate "Davids"—Sinking the *Housatonic*—Construction of the *Albemarle*—Attack on Union gunboats—Cushing's torpedo attack on the *Albemarle*—His escape.

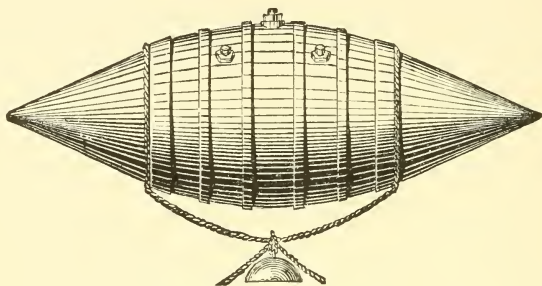
THE torpedo that sank the *Tecumseh* was probably one of a kind the Confederates used a great deal in their river and harbor defenses. This was a beer-barrel with a cone of wood at each end to steady it, a large quantity of gunpowder, and at the top a device for setting it off—sometimes a trigger that exploded a cap, sometimes a tube of sulphuric acid which would spill on a bit of metal and start combustion. The word "torpedo" during the Civil War covered all explosives under water; there was no distinction as there is to-day between a "torpedo," which is fired from a torpedo-tube, and the "mine," which is stationary.

As far back as the Revolutionary War a Connecticut inventor named Bushnell invented a submarine called the *Turtle*, in which he planned to go out and place a torpedo against the side of a British ship and blow it up. Although his invention never sank any ships of the enemy, it came near doing so, and the British were fearfully indignant at such "infernal means of warfare." In the War of 1812 Robert Fulton came forward with a better type of torpedo, but his ideas were coldly received. Commodore Rodgers—like the British commodores in the time of Bushnell—spoke of torpedo and submarine warfare as "dastardly." Poor

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Fulton came in for some very unpleasant names; the epithets could not have been more cruel if he had been caught blowing up his grandmother with one of his torpedoes.

It is interesting to see how closely the submarine is associated with the torpedo. The submarine idea is much



THE BARREL TORPEDO

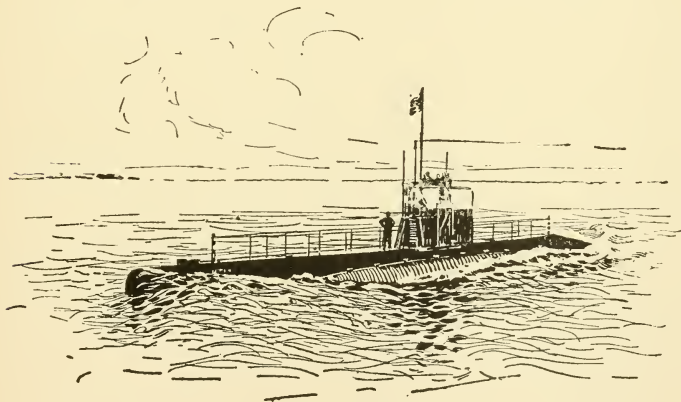
older. We know that the Dutch physician to King James I. invented a submarine and once gave his royal patient an hour's cruise under the Thames. Between that time and the day of Robert Fulton the submarine idea would pop up every now and then, but without any real success.

We are accustomed to think of Fulton as the man of the steamboat, but the fact is that he was much more interested in his submarine. Before the War of 1812 Fulton tried to sell his invention to the French. His submarine had the fish, or "cigar," shape which all the other submarines since then have adopted, and it was called the *Nautilus*. (Those who remember Captain Nemo's submarine *Nautilus* in *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* will know where Jules Verne got the name.) In 1807 Fulton was given a chance to show what he could do in the harbor of Brest. In the presence of a large crowd he stayed under water for three hours and blew up an old hulk in the harbor with a torpedo. Fulton had been

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perfectly successful, but the old fellows in the French Marine wagged their heads solemnly. They said that they were afraid that anybody caught using a submarine would be treated as a pirate, and while they were enchanted by the marvelous ingenuity of Monsieur Fulton, etc., etc., they could not buy the *Nautilus* for the French government.

Fulton then went to England and gave another perfect exhibition in the Thames. He blew up an old Danish ship put there for the purpose. But the wise ones of the British Admiralty, in discussing the matter over their port, decided that as long as Britain's strength lay in her "wooden walls" it would not do to encourage an invention that would smash those wooden walls from beneath. So they rejected Fulton's invention then just as a generation later the British Admiralty rejected Ericsson's inventions of the screw-propeller and the revolving iron turret.



A MODERN SUBMARINE

When the poor inventor turned back in despair to his own country all the appreciation he got was to be called a "low ruffian" by Commodore Rodgers, the senior officer

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of the United States navy. But to the day of his death Fulton kept pottering over his submarine and its torpedoes.

Another American inventor who got interested in torpedo warfare was Colt, famous for his invention of the revolver. He applied electricity instead of clockwork to the torpedo, and blew up an old ship in the James River to show Congress how easy it was. But, as usual, the old-timers would not have it.

When the Civil War began, the South, as we have already said, found itself compelled to adopt the newest "wrinkles" in warfare in order to oppose the fleets of the North. So the torpedo and the submarine were accepted as well as the iron-plated casemate. At first there was much opposition to these means of fighting, even among the leaders of the South. Such weapons were described as "unchivalrous," "ruffianly," and "dastardly." When it was discovered how useful the torpedo was, North and South got bravely over that fine sentiment. During the war twenty-eight ships were sunk or damaged by torpedoes.

In torpedo work the South led the way, thanks largely to the genius of Matthew F. Maury, the great scientist of the old navy. The North was compelled to follow in self-defense. In the use of submarines the Southerners had no imitators in the Northern navy. But, realizing what successful submarines might do against the blockading ships, the Confederate naval constructors went doggedly to work. What they managed to put together was a queer little boat which they called a David because they hoped that it would sink some of the Goliaths out in the blockading fleet.

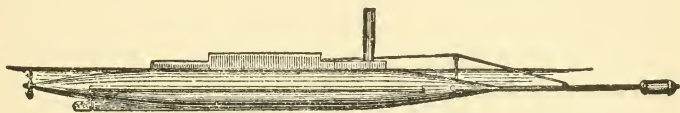
One of these Davids deserves a special mention. It was a very simple craft. The propeller-shaft was turned round by the crew of eight men with their hands. The captain sat forward at the wheel, and handled the ropes controlling a spar that projected several feet from the nose of the boat and held a torpedo at the end. She was designed to "dive under water," but she did it entirely too

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well. On her trial trip she went down to stay, and the ten men on board were all suffocated. She was raised, but time and again afterward she carried all or most of her crew to the bottom.

Submarine warfare was called "cowardly," even by some of the Confederate naval officers. But what shall be said of those five men and two officers who volunteered to go out in this little death-trap and blow up the *Housatonic* off Charleston harbor? When those men stepped into that David she had already sunk five times and caused the death of about thirty-five men!

On this occasion they attempted no diving, but went on the surface with the hatch standing out of water. It was about nine o'clock on the evening of February 17, 1864,



CONFEDERATE "DAVID"

when the watch on the steam-sloop *Housatonic* noticed a strange-looking thing rippling toward the ship. He gave the alarm, but before the steamer could move or fire a gun there was a muffled roar alongside, and the big ship lurched and went down. Fortunately, the water was so shallow there that as the *Housatonic* sank she settled on the bottom, with her masts well above the surface, so all the crew but one ensign and four men saved themselves by scampering up the shrouds.

Nothing was seen of the David after the *Housatonic* went down, and no one knew what had become of her. After the war, when the wrecks were being cleared out of Charleston Harbor, the divers discovered the little submarine wedged in the hole made by the torpedo. As the hatch was found open it is thought that it was probably left open when the attack was made—perhaps the men felt safer

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that way—and the waves from the torpedo explosion swamped her. Then she was sucked into the very wound she had made in the side of the *Housatonic*.

Crude as that little David was, she still holds the record of having been the only submarine that has ever sunk a vessel in time of war. And it is not likely that any other submarine will be manned by a braver crew.

The most daring and dramatic torpedo exploit has to do with the story of Union operations in those landlocked waters off the coast of North Carolina known as Albemarle and Pamlico sounds. These were important for the Union to control because, if left in Confederate hands, they would be a paradise for blockade-runners. They were also the key to many navigable rivers, four canals, and two railroad lines. The Union fleet got control before the Confederates had made much preparation for defense, but this fleet was a queer collection of old junk in the way of broken-down ferry-boats, little river-steamers, and tugs. They were not armored; in fact, their wooden sides were so flimsy that they were well named the "pasteboard fleet." The Confederates believed that they needed only to put together another ironclad ram to shoot this pasteboard fleet into splinters and regain control of the sounds. Of course it was the business of the Union vessels to prevent the building of such a ram, and the little steamers darted up this river and that, destroying military supplies wherever they found them.

In spite of the active work of the Union flotilla and the presence of Union troops in the neighborhood, too, the Confederates cleverly managed to get a ram built up the Roanoke River. How they succeeded in constructing any kind of ship at all is a mystery. Their ship-building plant consisted of a blacksmith shop, and the keel of the vessel was laid in a corn-field. One of the greatest difficulties in the work was the lack of iron, and Captain Cooke, the tireless builder of the ram, ransacked the country for miles in every direction to gather up every stray nut, bolt, or

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coupling-pin, till he became known as the "ironmonger captain."

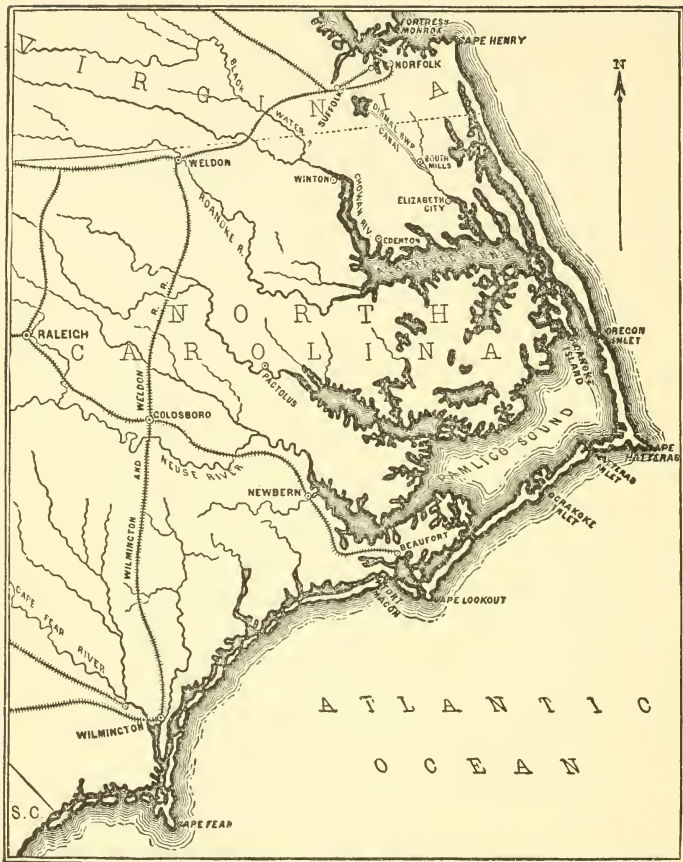
The new ram was called the *Albemarle*. Chief-Constructor John L. Porter, to whom most of the credit for the *Merrimac* is generally given, made the plans for the *Albemarle*, too, and she showed a strong family resemblance to the *Merrimac*. Still she had peculiarities of her own. Her casemate—sixty feet in length—was octagonal in shape, with four inches of iron laid over pine timbers and planking with the usual sloping sides. She mounted only two guns, but these were rifled hundred-pounders, and the casemate was so pierced that these powerful guns could be used on a broadside as well as fore and aft. A very important point was that she drew only eight feet of water.

In April, 1864, the *Albemarle* was practically finished. On learning of the existence of the ram the Union officers placed obstructions and torpedoes in the Roanoke River, above the town of Plymouth, to keep her from entering the sound. But unusually high water in the river gave Captain Cooke his chance, and on the night of April 18th he succeeded in getting the *Albemarle* over the obstructions. As the ram steamed down-river the workmen were still driving bolts into her, and at the same time her captain was drilling his crew at the big guns. One instant he was giving an order to his workmen, the next he was shouting to the gun-crew, but he was not going to lose a moment's time in getting the *Albemarle* out into the sound.

It was after midnight when she was discovered by the two Union picket boats stationed in the river below Plymouth. Lieutenant Flusser, who was in command of the *Miami*, had provided chains and spars connecting the two gunboats *Miami* and *Southfield*, so that in case the ram did get over the obstructions the gunboats might catch her between them and hold her till they could pound a hole in her casemate.

But Cooke saw what was expected of him, and when the two gunboats came on toward him he sheered off and

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ALBEMARLE AND PAMLICO SOUNDS

hugged the shore. Then, turning suddenly, he passed the bow of the *Miami* and rammed the *Southfield*, which went down like a stone. Both gunboats had already poured a heavy shell fire on the *Albemarle*, but had done no harm at all. Lieutenant Flusser fired a shell when the ram came

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to close quarters, but the pieces of the shell, bursting on the casemate only a few feet away, killed Flusser himself and wounded eight of his men. In the death of the "lion-hearted Flusser" the Union lost one of its finest young officers.

Realizing the hopelessness of fighting the ram single-handed, the *Miami* then fled down-river and out into the sound.

On May 5th the *Albemarle* sallied out from the mouth of the Roanoke River, followed by two small vessels carrying troops. Captain Cooke was to escort these transports to the Alligator River, and then he intended to cruise up and down the sounds. He hoped to destroy or frighten away the "pasteboard fleet" and, on those waters at least, to recover the "sea control" for the Confederacy.

As soon as the *Albemarle* appeared the Union gunboats promptly made for her, and an exciting time followed. One of the flimsy gunboats boldly rammed the ram itself, and received a hundred-pound shell in her boiler in payment. But the *Albemarle*, though she found it easy to send a shell tearing through the thin wooden sides of the Union gunboats, could not manœuvre fast enough to ram them in the open water of the sound. For some reason none of her hundred-pound shells struck at or near the water-line of any of the Union flotilla, so at a time when careful gunnery could have sunk almost the entire fleet, the *Albemarle* failed to sink or destroy a single one of these unprotected ships. Meanwhile, as was to be expected, the gunboats had failed to penetrate the casemate of the *Albemarle*. But they did injure the tiller, riddle the smoke-stack, and crack the muzzle of one of those two big Armstrongs. They also captured one of the transports. As night came on the *Albemarle* retreated up the Roanoke River, leaving the field to the "pasteboard fleet."

The *Albemarle* was quickly repaired, but she did not try to attack the Union gunboats again. Once she came down to the mouth of the river to drag for torpedoes, but retired

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when one of the gunboats opened fire on her. From that time on she stayed tied up to a wharf at Plymouth, doing nothing at all except to prevent the Union vessels from going any farther up the Roanoke River.

But as the Union officers out in the sound were expecting her to come out at any minute, they had to keep a close watch. When the rumor came to Washington that the Confederates had a sister ship to the *Albemarle* almost completed on the Roanoke River, the Navy Department decided that the ram must be destroyed at once.

The plan decided on was to run a light steam-launch up the river some dark night, take the Confederates by surprise, and blow up the *Albemarle* by means of a "spar torpedo." As it was with most "secret" plans of the Union in those days, every detail about the intended attack was soon made known to Captain Warley, who had become commander of the ram on the illness of Captain Cooke.

The man selected for the daring enterprise was Lieutenant Cushing, then only twenty-one years old, but already famous for his coolness and daredevil bravery in the operations about the Roanoke River. Cushing left the fleet and went to New York to superintend the building of the two launches that he wanted for the attack. One of these was lost in Chesapeake Bay on the way south.

With the other he made his way through the canal from Norfolk to the sounds and reported to the commanding officer in October, 1864.

Meanwhile the Confederates were going ahead with their preparations as well. They intended to make it absolutely impossible to reach the side of the *Albemarle* with a torpedo. In the first place, the ram lay controlling the bend in the river round which her enemies must come, and her big forward gun was loaded with grape and canister. There were also one thousand soldiers on shore in Plymouth, and a double set of sentries along the river. A squad was placed on the wreck of the *Southfield*, too, so that nothing might come up-river without challenge and discovery. In

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addition, a boom of cypress logs surrounding the *Albemarle* was laid well out from the side of the ram to make it impossible for any boat to get within striking-distance. And yet the Navy Department had counted on Cushing's attack being a complete surprise for the Confederates!

The night of October 27, 1864, turned out to be dark and drizzly, just the conditions that Cushing desired. So he slipped out from the flotilla and headed his little launch up the Roanoke River. Astern of the launch trailed a cutter filled with armed men, for Cushing thought that if he succeeded in taking the *Albemarle* by surprise he would board and capture her instead of blowing her up.

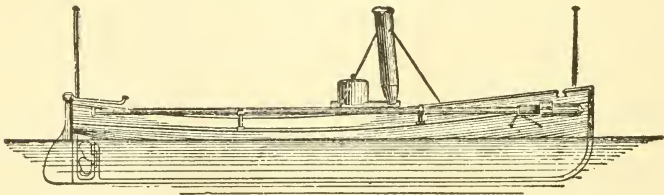
All went well for a while. The sentries had been waiting a good many nights for nothing, and wet weather helped to dampen their watchfulness. So the launch slipped silently up the river past all the guards without discovery till Cushing could see the *Albemarle* herself lying at her wharf, eight miles from the mouth of the river. He was just about to land his men at the lower wharf and make a rush to board the ram from the shore when a hail came from the *Albemarle* herself. At that Cushing turned loose the cutter, with orders for the men to go down-river and seize the Confederate guard on the *Southfield*. Meanwhile the crew of the ram had begun a musketry fire, and the bullets splashed all about the launch. A sentry on shore gave the alarm and set a huge bonfire ablaze. Then for the first time Cushing suddenly discovered the boom of logs which lay between him and the *Albemarle*. This was a disconcerting thing to find out at such a time as that, but Cushing had no idea of giving up. He decided that, as the logs probably had been some time in the water, they would be slippery; and he decided on a bold move. Making a wide circle across the river in order to get up headway, he came about and charged down directly upon the logs. There was a bump and a lurch, but the launch "hurdled" the boom successfully and shot directly for the side of the ram. All this while the little vessel was under a musket

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fire from the ram and from the soldiers on the bank, but no one was seriously hurt.

As soon as the launch got over the boom Cushing choked off steam and let the headway carry him alongside. Then he coolly stood up in the bow of his boat and adjusted his spar torpedo. Ten feet in front of his face was the muzzle of the huge forward gun of the ram, and he could hear the officer giving orders to the gun-crew. But Cushing went ahead as coolly as if there were no enemy in sight. He carefully lowered the spar with the torpedo on the end of it till he could feel that it was under the overhang of the ram. Then he pulled the line that released the torpedo, and after waiting an instant till it had floated snug up beneath the bottom of the ship, Cushing pulled another line. This released a bullet in the top of the torpedo, which fell on a percussion-cap in the powder at the bottom, and set off a tremendous explosion. At almost the same moment—but just a trifle later—the big gun went off, and only the lurch of the torpedo's explosion saved the entire launch crew from being blown to pieces. The *Albemarle* promptly sank.

As the great column of water caused by the explosion fell back and swamped the launch, the next minute found all of

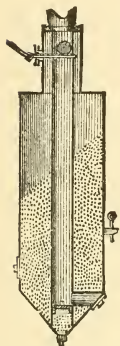


LAUNCH USED BY LIEUTENANT CUSHING

Cushing's party in the water. Most of these men surrendered to the Confederates, and two or three were drowned trying to escape. Cushing himself had no intention of being captured, and swam down-stream. For a

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while he helped keep afloat a poor swimmer and after the latter sank, exhausted, Cushing kept on, though he was himself very nearly spent. At last he succeeded in touching bottom on the edge of a swamp at some distance below the town. There he lay, half frozen, till daylight, when he found himself within forty yards of a Confederate fort. After a narrow escape from being discovered by a sentinel he hid himself all day in the swamp. There he found an old negro who went to the town to ask about the ram for him and brought back the cheerful news that the *Albemarle* "sho am done for!"



SECTION OF
TORPEDO
USED BY
CUSHING

Then Cushing plunged on through the swamp till by good luck he found a little dugout left by some Confederate sentries. Taking this, while the owners were eating their supper, he paddled for dear life down-river, and kept at it till he reached the sound, eight miles away. Fortunately, the sea was perfectly calm, so that he was able to keep the cranky little skiff afloat and going ahead. That evening the fleet lay scattered some miles from the mouth of the Roanoke, and it was only after long, back-breaking work, steering by the stars, that Cushing discovered one of the

vessels. After his feeble "Ship ahoy!" he dropped, utterly exhausted, in the bottom of his boat.

Finally he was once more in the hands of his friends, who had long before given him up for dead. As soon as the good news about the *Albemarle* was told, rockets shot up into the darkness to pass the word on to other ships of the fleet. With the *Albemarle* lying in the mud at her moorings, the Union fleet at once took possession of Plymouth, and the entire Albemarle district fell into the hands of the Union.

For his exploit in sinking the ram Cushing was honored by the thanks of Congress and immediate promotion to the

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rank of lieutenant-commander. It is hard to be generous to a successful enemy; and Captain Warley, of the *Albemarle*, honored himself as well as Cushing when he described the latter's feat in these words, "A more gallant thing was not done during the war."

XVI

CONFEDERATE CRUISERS

English sentiment for the South—Building ships for the Confederacy—Career of the *Alabama*—McDougal in Japan—The *Alabama* and the *Kearsarge*—Disappearance of American shipping.

ONE of the three lines of operation laid down for the Union navy was the pursuit of Confederate commerce-destroyers. At the outbreak of the war the South found itself somewhat in the position of the United States in the Revolution and the War of 1812. That is, the North had the sea-power, and the South had to buy or build ships as best it could. And, like England in those wars, the North had a large commerce open to attack on the high seas. But, whereas in the earlier wars Americans had a large carrying-trade and transformed many of their merchantmen into privateers, the Confederate States had almost no shipping at all. That meant that there was no Confederate commerce for the Union fleet to destroy, but it also meant that there were no ships to be turned into privateers.

In order to get vessels which could prey on the commerce of the Northern states the Confederates turned to England. To-day we rejoice in the fact that England is our best friend in the family of nations; and it is, or should be, our national policy to make that friendship stronger. But in 1861 it was very different. At that time the United States was England's greatest rival in the carrying-trade, and when the war broke out the English had the pleasant satisfaction of seeing their upstart rival in trouble. The

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“upper classes” in England also were enthusiastic for the Confederacy, because it was based on the slave system, which was the very opposite of democracy. The fine gentry of that time felt that democratic ideas were getting entirely too strong, and the smash-up of the United States would be a very fitting rebuke to people who held dangerous notions about a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people.” So there was a good sale for Confederate bonds in London, and throughout the war heavy pressure was laid on the British Ministry to intervene in the great struggle, or at least to recognize the independence of the South.

The day after DuPont captured Port Royal, November 8, 1861, Captain Wilkes, of the *San Jacinto*, overhauled the *Trent*, a British steamer, and took off the Confederate agents, Mason and Slidell, who were going to England and France to plead the cause of the South. This was exactly the sort of thing that Great Britain had been doing before the War of 1812, except that in this case the persons “impressed” were undoubtedly American subjects. Though she had dropped the practice, England had never yielded the right to search a neutral ship and take off any Englishmen she wanted. But when the shoe went on the other foot it pinched horribly. Without waiting for an explanation or an apology the British government collected arms and rushed troops to Canada, threatening to make war if the United States did not give up those men within seven days.

Captain Wilkes was in the wrong, and the agents were turned over to England, but the incident gave Lincoln a chance to remark to the British Ministry that this point, which England had made such a great fuss over, was just the principle the United States had been trying to make her admit for fifty years.

From that time till the news of Appomattox the sentiment in England and in all the English colonies was overwhelmingly in favor of the Confederacy. The very newspapers, which for years had been sneering at America on

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account of slavery—always picturing Uncle Sam as a brutal slave-driver—in 1861 began quoting Bible verses to prove that slavery was inspired from heaven and printed hideous caricatures of Lincoln. During the war Confederate cruisers were welcomed in every British port and allowed to do just as they pleased without worrying about the rules of neutrality. And, what was of most importance, the English shipyards built the cruisers that the Confederates needed.

While any one of these was on the ways the shipwrights would give it out that the new vessel was designed for the "Turkish navy," the "Swiss navy," or something equally probable. When the ship was completed she would put out to sea, followed by another steamer loaded with "hardware." Then the two steamers would meet at sea and the cargo of "hardware," consisting of cannon and small arms, would be transferred to the cruiser. The British flag would go down, up would go the Stars and Bars, and the Confederacy would have another man-of-war.

This story was repeated again and again; for, although the American minister, Mr. Adams, was untiring in his efforts to collect evidence about these Confederate cruisers and present it to the British government, the latter was reluctant to take any action. In fact, it was only Mr. Adams' quiet reply to Lord Russell, "My lord, it is superfluous for me to tell you that this means war," that kept a great double-turreted ironclad from going to the Confederates in 1864. According to international law, it is a very serious breach of neutrality for a neutral nation to allow her own citizens to build fighting-ships for either party in the war, and Mr. Adams was always reminding the British Ministry of this annoying fact.

The most famous of these English-built cruisers was the *Alabama*. She was simply called "No. 290" while she lay in the Lairds' shipyards at Liverpool, because she was the 290th ship turned out by that firm. Mr. Adams collected plenty of evidence to prove that the vessel was being built

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for the Confederacy, and he would not let the British authorities rest till they reluctantly ordered the ship to be held in port. But a kind friend in the office passed the tip by wire, and the cruiser slipped from her moorings for a trial spin in the Mersey. She never came back from that trial trip, but steamed on to Praya, a port in Terceira, one of the islands of the Azores. There she was met by a ship from London containing the "hardware," and a steamer from Liverpool followed with the future officers of the man-of-war, including Capt. Raphael Semmes.

Every one at Praya knew exactly what was going on, and the feeble protests of the Portuguese officials did not prevent Captain Semmes from going right ahead with his preparations. On August 24, 1862, he took his ship out to sea, called his crew together, and told them of the commerce-destroying cruise he intended to make. Then he read aloud his commission as captain of the Confederate navy, hauled up the Confederate colors, and "No. 290" of the Lairds' shipyard became the Confederate cruiser *Alabama*.

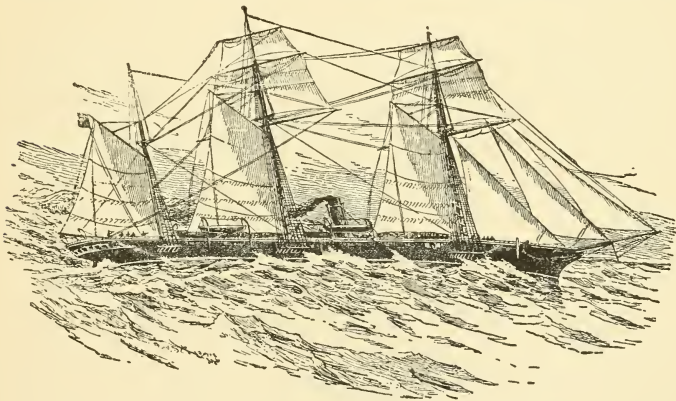
This famous ship is often spoken of as a "privateer," but this is a mistake. A privateer is a privately owned vessel carrying a "letter of marque," which is an official permission for the owner of the boat to go ahead and make all he can by plundering the ships of the enemy. But the *Alabama* belonged to the Confederate government and was captained by an officer in the Confederate service, so she was not a privateer at all. Moreover, she was not what Secretary Seward and the Northern newspapers called her—a "pirate ship." Semmes was no more a pirate than any other officer who has ever attacked the commerce of an enemy. The *Alabama* belongs in the same class as the old *Essex* in the War of 1812. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that before the war Semmes himself had written a thumping denunciation of commerce-destroying as a means of warfare.

After Semmes had told his crew of his intentions eighty-five of them stepped forward and signed their articles. Many

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of these English sailors had served in the British navy and were accustomed to the discipline and duties of a man-of-war. There was a sprinkling of Southern coast pilots who had come with the officers, and the rest of the crew was made up by occasional enlistments from the crews of the prizes taken by the *Alabama* during her career. There were Englishmen among the officers as well. Master's-Mate Fullam, Assistant-Surgeon Llewellyn, and Fourth-Lieutenant Low were Englishmen, Fullam and Low belonging to the Royal Naval Reserve. The other officers came from the Confederate states.

The *Alabama* was especially designed for her work, which necessitated long cruises and infrequent chances for coaling.



THE "ALABAMA"

She was completely rigged as a barkentine, and her screw could readily be detached from the shaft and hoisted so as not to hinder her progress under sail. She made good speed under canvas, and most of the time Semmes depended entirely on sails in order to save coal.

After leaving Terceira he began capturing and burning prizes at once. He cruised slowly across the Atlantic

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toward the West Indies, picking up prizes as he went. At Martinique he took on coal and then continued his course to the Gulf. Off Galveston he lured away one of the blockading ships, the *Hatteras*, an old side-wheel river-boat, and sank her in a few minutes. From the Gulf Semmes cruised down the Brazilian coast, then headed across for the Cape of Good Hope. Leaving Cape Town, he turned to the East Indies, where he spent some months. At last, having done all the damage he could in those waters, he returned round the Cape and headed north. On June 11, 1864, he entered the harbor of Cherbourg, France, to give the *Alabama* an overhauling and take on coal. By that time Semmes had been on a continuous cruise for nearly two years, having traveled seventy-five thousand miles, burned fifty-seven ships, and released a large number on bond or ransom. To the ships he had actually taken must be added the far greater number which were kept in port on account of his presence on the high seas. This meant, as the English had hoped, that the trade that had formerly gone in American bottoms was turned over to British ships. Many American vessels were sold in order that they might have the protection of the British flag.

All this time Union cruisers were hunting the seas for the *Alabama*, but Semmes always managed to give them the slip. The reason that he had so much greater success than the other Confederate commerce-destroyers—and there were ten others—was not luck, but science. Semmes worked out the exact time it would take for the news of his whereabouts to reach the nearest Union cruiser, and how much time it would take that cruiser to make the distance. The result was that the Union ships were always just missing the *Alabama*.

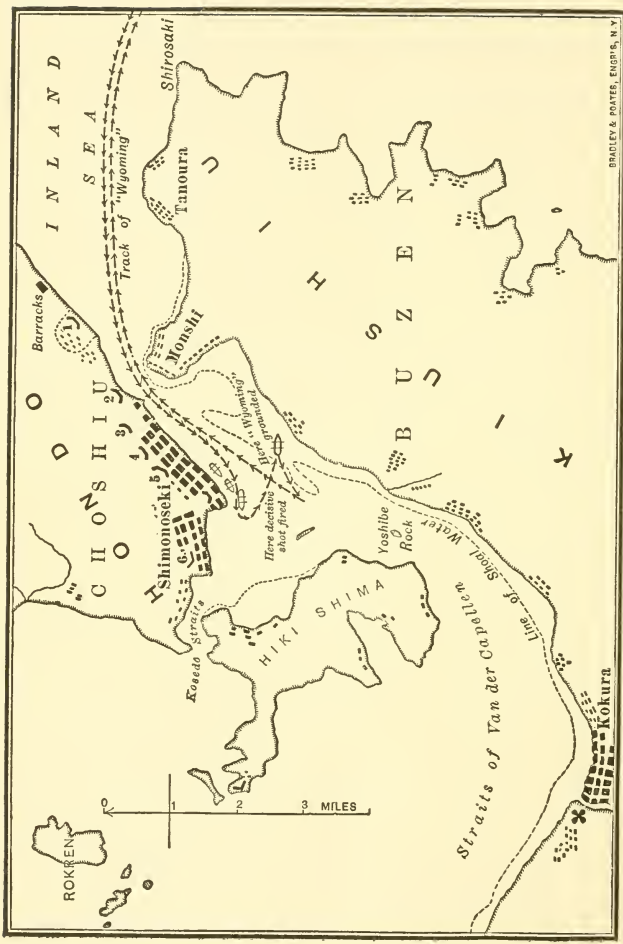
One of these cruisers was the *Wyoming*, under Commander David McDougal. The *Wyoming* trailed the *Alabama* to the east, but lost track of her in the East Indies. At Singapore Captain McDougal was astonished to re-

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ceive flowers and files of late newspapers from English merchants. For Union officers, accustomed to sneers and thinly veiled insults at every British port, this was a pleasant surprise, but it soon turned out that the *Wyoming* had been mistaken for the *Alabama*. It was the first and last courtesy the *Wyoming* enjoyed during the cruise. As McDougal turned north to Japan Semmes doubled on his tracks and headed in the opposite direction. What McDougal did in Japanese waters has nothing to do with the *Alabama*, but it was too fine an exploit to be left out of this story. He was sadly disappointed to learn that nothing had been seen of the *Alabama* near Japan, but he soon had an urgent and unexpected call for his ship.

On his arrival he learned that the opening of Japan to the foreigners by Commodore Perry had been hotly resented by the "patriotic" party in Japan, and a rebellion had broken out which the government was unable to put down. The rebel clans fortified the narrow strait of Shimonoseki and proceeded to fire on all foreign ships that tried to get through. One of these ships fired on was an American merchantman, and the rumor came to McDougal that she had been sunk.

Realizing that it was the time for vigorous action, McDougal went to Shimonoseki by way of the Inland Sea, and on the 16th of July, 1863, steamed in to teach these Japanese rebels to respect the American flag. As he came to the narrows he noticed a line of stakes in mid-channel which he rightly guessed had been placed there for the Japanese gunners to use in gauging their aim, so he avoided them by steaming closer under the bluff, although he ran the risk of going aground. This manœuver saved the *Wyoming*, for the batteries opened a tremendous fire that tore through the rigging. Ahead of the *Wyoming*, where the straits widened, lay three ships, heavily armed and manned, their crews yelling defiance at the Americans. McDougal steamed alongside two of them, exchanging a very hot fire at close quarters,



THE PATH OF THE "WYOMING" AT SHIMONOEKI

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then swung around the bows of the third. All this while the *Wyoming* was under fire from the heavy shore batteries as well as the ships. Once the treacherous currents sent her aground so that for a while she lay helpless under a hot bombardment, but after a few minutes she pulled loose, and by accurate gun fire sank all three of the Japanese ships. Then McDougal turned his attention to the forts and completely silenced them. Finally, having overcome the last trace of resistance, he took his ship out again by the same way that he had entered, only this time not a gun was fired.

Some months later the Japanese rebels repaired their forts and made a stubborn resistance, which the European powers had to help put down, but nothing impressed the Japanese imagination so much as the exploit of McDougal in the *Wyoming*.

A Dutch steam-frigate had gone into the straits shortly before the *Wyoming*. She went on through into the Inland Sea with thirty-one shot-holes in her as souvenirs of Japanese marksmanship, and without accomplishing anything. On getting back to Holland the Dutch captain was knighted for his "gallantry," and all the crew were given medals. But McDougal, who, with a smaller ship, had gone into the straits and stayed till he had sunk the ships and silenced the forts, received from his countrymen nothing at all—scarcely a newspaper mention. So much was going on at home in that summer of 1863 that no one paid any attention to this brilliant exploit performed on the other side of the world.

The *Wyoming* was not the only Union vessel which had been given the slip by the *Alabama*. There were several cruisers diligently scouring the seas; but in the days when there were few cables, and when all the sentiment at foreign ports was in favor of the Confederate cruiser, it was the most difficult task to run her down.

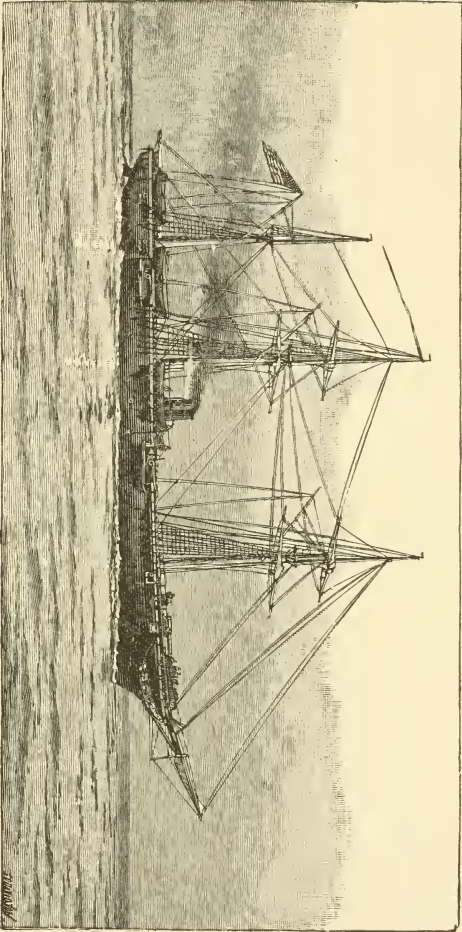
When the *Alabama* entered Cherbourg the United States minister to France telegraphed the news at once to Commander Winslow, of the U.S.S. *Kearsarge*, at that time

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lying off the little town of Flushing, Holland. The *Kearsarge* promptly pulled up her "mud-hook" and steamed for Cherbourg. On approaching that port she steamed in close enough to enable Winslow to see the *Alabama* at her moorings, but he did not anchor, fearing that the twenty-four-hour rule would be applied by the French authorities. This means that if there are two hostile ships in a neutral harbor one must be detained till the other has been twenty-four hours at sea. So he steamed back and forth outside the breakwater, determined to wait all summer, if necessary, to make the *Alabama* fight.

Meanwhile, Captain Semmes had the cool assurance to ask permission to use the government naval dock at Cherbourg for two months; but that was going rather far, especially as the American minister made an indignant protest at once. So Semmes went ahead with the ordinary overhauling and coaling that he could attend to in any friendly port. Up to this time he had avoided fighting any of the Union cruisers because his business was destroying commerce. But the French officers at Cherbourg, who were longing to see a fight, informed Semmes that the conduct of the *Kearsarge* amounted to a "challenge," and that if he were a "man of honor" he could not avoid going out to fight.

At the time of the war the dueling-code was still taken seriously in the Southern states, and this reference to "honor" touched Semmes on a tender spot, so he sent word out to Winslow that if he'd wait the *Alabama* would come out. In doing so Semmes had everything to lose and little to gain, because if he sank the *Kearsarge* there were many other Union cruisers to take her place, but the Confederacy had no other vessel to take the place of the *Alabama*. Probably Semmes counted on a victory, and hoped that a victory in European waters would raise the price of Confederate bonds, which were beginning to sag on the market. He may have felt, too, like David Porter, of the *Essex*, that, since he had destroyed all the enemy's commerce he



THE "KEARSARGE"

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could reach, it would be a fine thing to wind up the cruise with the capture of a man-of-war.

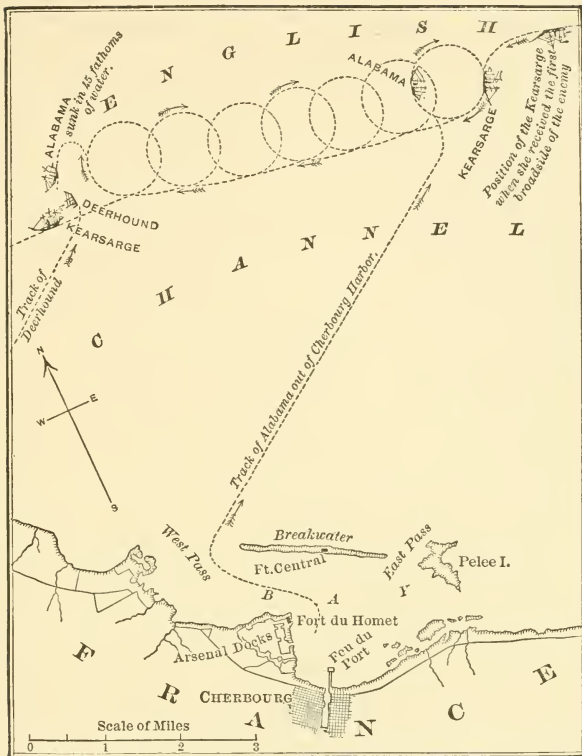
Meanwhile the *Kearsarge* steamed slowly back and forth off Cherbourg for five days. Shortly after ten o'clock on the morning of June 19, 1864, the *Alabama* left the harbor to meet the *Kearsarge*. As she came out she was accompanied by the French ironclad *Couronne*, whose business it was to see that the duel took place beyond the three-mile limit of French water along the coast. An English steam-yacht, the *Deerhound*, followed at a respectful distance in order for the owner and his family to enjoy the spectacle of a naval battle. Semmes had told of his intention to fight on Sunday—Sunday, by the way, was regarded by his crew as the *Alabama's* "lucky day"—so the enterprising railway managers ran excursion trains from Paris to bring the thousands who wanted to look on from the bluffs along the shore.

The *Kearsarge* led the way out into the Channel. When both antagonists were well beyond the three-mile limit the *Couronne* returned to port, and when the *Kearsarge* had gone about eight miles off shore she turned about and headed for the *Alabama*.

The battle opened at the range of about a mile, with the ships moving in circles about a common center, in order to prevent either side's gaining a raking position, and both using their starboard batteries. They continued this rotary movement to the end, while the tide carried them steadily westward. At long range the *Alabama's* huge rifled pivot-gun was much better than any of the smooth bores of the *Kearsarge*. In a few minutes a 110-pound shell crashed into the *Kearsarge's* stern-post near her screw, but, luckily for her, did not go off. This was the only serious wound received by the Union ship.

As Semmes had shifted over an extra gun from the port side, the *Alabama* listed to starboard about two feet. This reduced her speed, and Winslow soon discovered that the *Kearsarge* could outsteam the *Alabama*. So he shortened

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MOVEMENTS OF THE "ALABAMA" AND THE "KEARSARGE"

the distance to "point-blank" range, where his eleven-inch guns would be more effective, and the battle went on with heavy firing on both sides.

At this shortened range the *Kearsarge* had the advantage, and the *Alabama* began to suffer badly. The lighter batteries of the *Kearsarge* were sweeping her spar-deck, while the heavy eleven-inch shells were exploding on her berth-deck and tearing great holes near the water-line. The firing of the *Kearsarge* from this stage of the fight to the end was

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one of the few instances of really good naval gunnery shown on either side during the Civil War.

The fire of the *Alabama* seems to have been rather demoralized by this severe punishment. Although the Confederate officers themselves thought the poor effect of their shooting must have been due to damaged powder, yet the fact that the injuries received by the *Kearsarge* at this time were chiefly aloft—in the smoke-stack and the rigging—suggests that the aim was wild and high. The *Alabama* fired three broadsides to every one of the *Kearsarge*, but the deliberation of the Union gunners was well worth while.

Realizing that he was beaten, Captain Semmes set sail to help him to reach the shelter of neutral waters, but Winslow checked that move by steaming between him and the coast. The *Alabama* was already filling, but an eleven-inch shell about this time gave her the death-blow. It exploded in the engine-room, let in a flood of water, and the *Alabama* settled rapidly.

Semmes then struck his colors and passed the word for all hands to save themselves. The wounded were then despatched to the *Kearsarge* in one of the two serviceable boats. To the surprise of the *Alabama's* officers, the *Kearsarge* fired again shortly after the colors were struck. At this Semmes was furiously indignant. At the same time Winslow and his officers were just as angry because they insisted that two of the *Alabama's* guns were fired after the flag came down, and backed up their statement by testimony from some of the prisoners. As Semmes contradicted this afterward, all one can say is that each captain honestly believed the other was guilty of bad faith.

Meanwhile the yacht *Deerhound* came on the scene, and Winslow asked the owner to do what he could to help save life. Suddenly the *Alabama's* nose shot upward, and she plunged to the bottom, stern first, leaving most of her company, including Captain Semmes, struggling in the water. As only two of the *Kearsarge's* boats were serviceable after the battle—and those two stowed where they

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took some time to get overboard—Captain Winslow took every other means of saving the drowning men. He allowed Master's-Mate Fullam, who had come alongside with the *Alabama's* wounded, to go back and help rescue the survivors, on his word of honor to return to the *Kearsarge*. Fullam promptly broke his word by taking his boat, with those whom he had picked up, to the *Deerhound* instead. Finally, with forty-two of the *Alabama's* officers and men on board, including Captain Semmes, the yacht edged away from the *Kearsarge* and then put on full speed for Southampton. One officer alone, refusing to escape on the *Deerhound*, surrendered his sword to Captain Winslow as a point of honor. This was Second-Lieutenant Joseph Wilson; and Captain Winslow arranged for his immediate exchange, as a mark of his appreciation.

Captain Semmes, after surrendering to the *Kearsarge*, had no right to escape on the *Deerhound* except for his firm belief that Captain Winslow had deliberately fired on a surrendered ship, and had therefore forfeited all rights. The Union captain was criticized at home because he had not fired on the *Deerhound* and taken off the prisoners by force, but that would have been another bad blunder like the case of the *Trent*. This *Deerhound* incident led to a new rule in international law. To-day in the same circumstances a neutral vessel would be forced to surrender the rescued prisoners to the victor.

After the battle of Mobile Bay we saw the pleasant reunion of Confederate and Union naval officers who had been friends before the war and were friends again in spite of the war. Captain Semmes had served many years in the navy before the war, but he had none of that kindly feeling. Perhaps because it was that he was the best-hated man in the Confederate service and had been called a "black-hearted, cowardly pirate" so often that he felt very bitter. At any rate, he had scarcely landed in England before he wrote indignant letters to the papers about Captain Winslow, full of much overheated nonsense

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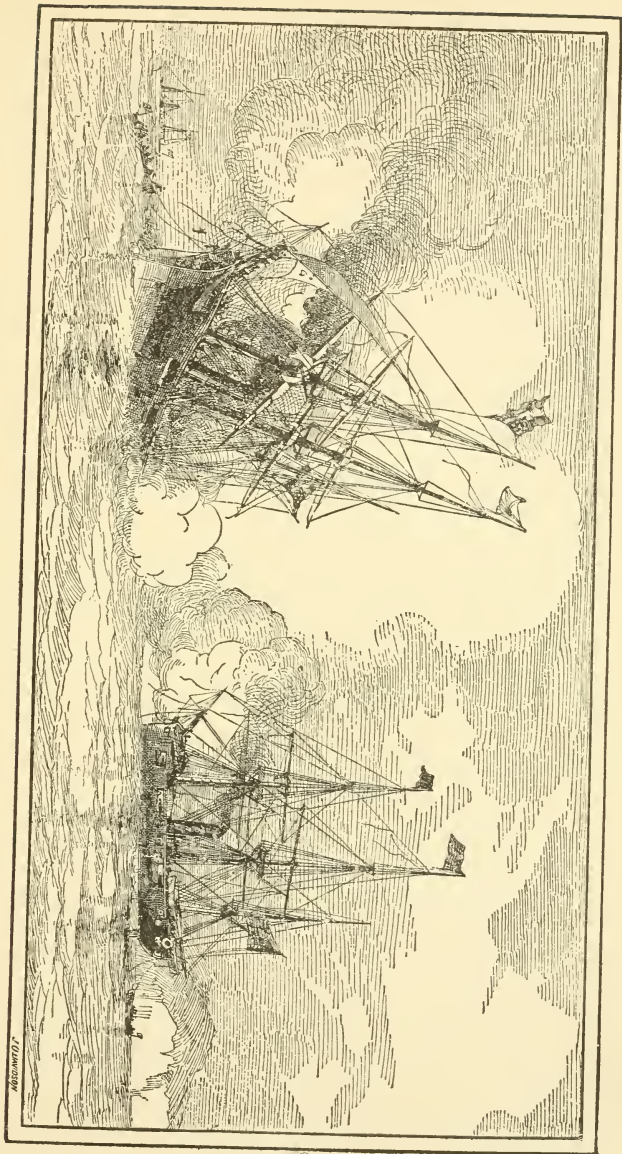
quite unworthy of him. These provoked equally hot replies from the officers of the *Kearsarge*, and a lively newspaper fight went on for some time. But we do not need to dig it all up again here.

Sympathy in England was, of course, almost entirely with Captain Semmes, and he was received everywhere as a great hero. This was perfectly natural; for, as we have seen, the Confederacy was the popular cause, and Semmes had paralyzed the only commerce in the world that rivaled that of England. From one point of view the *Alabama* can hardly be considered as a Confederate ship at all. She had been built, armed, and equipped by Englishmen, her crew were nearly all Englishmen, and so, too, were several of her officers. It might be said that the *Kearsarge* had sunk an English ship, under a Confederate captain and Confederate colors.

But England had to pay for her fun. The "Geneva Tribunal," which met in 1872 to settle by arbitration the claims made by the United States against Great Britain for permitting Confederate cruisers to be built in her ports, awarded a verdict of \$15,500,000 to the United States. This amounted, with interest, to about sixteen millions. The sum more than covered all the actual damage done, but our commerce never revived after the war. Strange to say, it was not the *Alabama*, but our own government, which destroyed the American carrying-trade.

After the war the ships that had gone temporarily under foreign colors for safety we refused to allow to come back under the American flag. We also refused to allow ships built abroad to fly the Stars and Stripes. And, since we began laying a heavy duty on the things needed to build and equip a merchantman, it became impossible for American-built ships to compete with the cheaper ships of Europe. So, although the *Alabama* destroyed much and drove whole fleets of ships to cover during the Civil War, it is due to our own short-sighted politicians that since that time the American carrying-trade has vanished from the seas.

SINKING OF THE "ALABAMA"



1865-1871

XVII

BLOCKADE-RUNNERS AND FORT FISHER

Description of typical blockade-runner—Blockade duty—Attempts against Charleston—Importance of Fort Fisher—First attack—Second attack, the naval assault—Importance of the naval blockade in the Civil War.

THE Confederate cruisers, especially the *Alabama*, did the commerce of the North a great deal of harm. But it was not the sort of harm that had any effect on the outcome of the war. The only military result was to keep several Union men-of-war busy hunting for them abroad instead of doing blockade duty at home. And all the damage done by the *Shenandoah*, another one of the English-built, English-manned cruisers, was just a needless waste. She destroyed the whaling fleet in the north Pacific, but did it after the war was over.

There was another class of Confederate vessels, also English-built, which were not famous individually like the *Alabama*, but were far more important to the South than all the commerce-destroyers taken together. These were the blockade-runners.

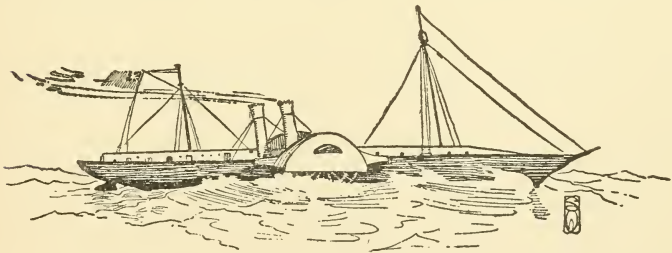
In an earlier chapter on the Civil War we saw that the South was wholly a farming country based on slave labor, and that manufactured things of every sort had to be either captured from the North, like the cannon in the Norfolk Navy Yard, or bought from England. Since Lee's two attempts to invade the North had failed, one at Antietam and the other at Gettysburg, the South was forced to depend entirely on England for the things that the soldiers

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needed. To pay for them the Confederacy had little cash, but plenty of cotton, which was just as good. In those days cotton grew nowhere else but in the Southern states, and it was a staple needed by all the world.

It was the business of the blockading fleet to stop this exchange of cotton for manufactured goods, but that was a slow and difficult task. Besides the long coast line, with its countless harbors, little and big, which had to be blockaded, there were the British island possessions, the Bermudas, the Bahamas, and Jamaica, which lay at the very door of the South. The nearest and most important town in these islands was Nassau, in the Bahamas. Here the British merchant steamers could land their cargoes for the Confederacy without interference from the North. Then these cargoes would be transferred to swift little steamers known as blockade-runners, which would dash through the long straggling line of Union ships to some port in the Confederate States. A few days later the same boats would come rushing back to Nassau, their decks stacked high with the precious cotton bales.

As the business soon developed a special type of steamer we must pause to see what she was like. The typical



A BLOCKADE-RUNNER

blockade-runner was a small, side-wheel steamer capable of making great speed for those days. She had a shallow draught in order that she might slip over bars and shoals

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or hug the shore in waters where the blockading ships could not follow.

In order that she might be as nearly invisible as possible she was painted a slaty gray; her raking masts had no yards—just a tiny crow's-nest for the lookout. As she swam low in the water, she had a "turtle-back" forward deck to enable her to weather heavy seas. Her smoke-stacks were so built that they could be "telescoped" or flattened almost to the deck. As smoke is the worst thing to betray a steamer, the blockade-runner burned only hard coal. The result was that these little vessels were very hard to see at a distance even in broad daylight, and they offered such a small target that they were very hard to hit as they dashed by at full speed.

Naturally, the problem was still more difficult when the blockade-runners "ran" the blockading fleet at night, as they usually did. Then they showed no lights whatever, steam was blown off under water, and there was nothing but the faint splash of the paddle-wheels to betray them. The officers on these little craft had all sorts of clever tricks, too, for dodging and fooling the Union fleet. Of course, the blockade-runners were always helped by signal-lights displayed on shore.

It was risky work, but many of these little craft made trips as regularly as if running on schedule, up to the last year of the war. There was so much dashing excitement in the work and such huge profits, besides, that many English naval officers got leave and went into blockade-running under assumed names. In those days it was not unusual for the captain of a blockade-runner to be paid as much as £1,000 for one round trip between Nassau and a Southern port. When cotton sold in the South at eight cents a pound and in Liverpool at fifty cents a pound it is easy to see that it needed only a few successful trips to make the owners of a blockade-runner rich. In fact, if one of these little vessels was chased ashore or sunk on its third venture the profits had been enough on the other two

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runs to leave the owners comfortably on the right side of the ledger.

As the Union navy buckled down to the task of catching these nimble little enemies the forces were divided into two parts. Close about the ports and along the shore ranged the blockading ships proper, while well out to sea cruised a "flying squadron." The blockade-runner might pick the darkest night for slipping through the blockade in or out of port, but she had to reckon with these other ships in bright daylight somewhere near the paths to Nassau or Jamaica.

For the blockading fleet the duty was very wearing. Month after month the vessels steamed back and forth on their "beats," the officers and men always on a strain of watching, and often without even the glimpse of a blockade-runner to break the monotony for weeks at a time. It was particularly bad during the hot summer months when nothing would keep fresh aboard ship and the heat was intolerable. Since those were the days before the scientific canning and refrigerating of food, officers and men had to live chiefly on salt meat, and scurvy became a far greater danger than the shore batteries or torpedoes of the enemy. There was little excitement and no glory in blockading, but in all the operations of the North there was no duty more important, and it was faithfully performed. By the end of the war the blockading squadrons had taken over eleven hundred and fifty ships, representing with their cargoes a value of thirty million dollars.

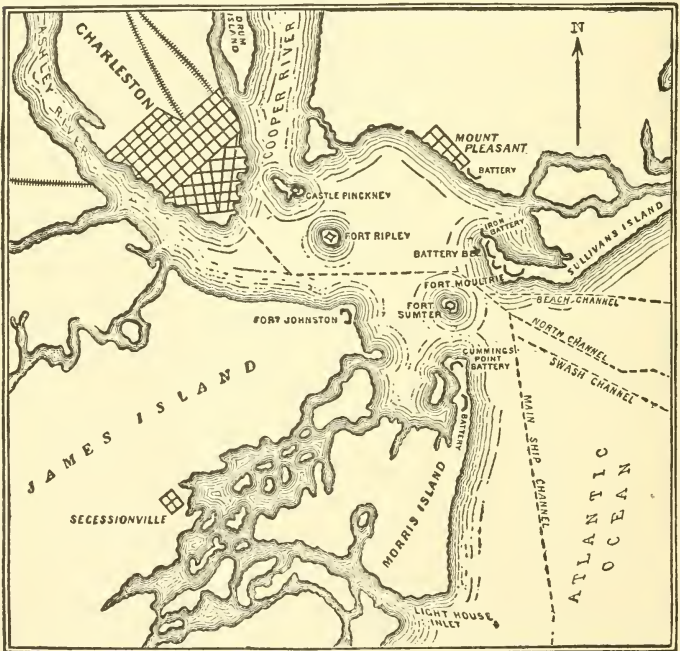
Meanwhile, as the ships patrolled back and forth along the coast other squadrons were, as we have seen, attacking and capturing important seaports of the South, like Port Royal, New Orleans, and Mobile Bay. Charleston had been the starting-point of the Civil War, and the Northern people were very anxious to have that city surrender to the Union navy.

Accordingly, after taking Port Royal DuPont was ordered to capture Charleston, and he was sent a number of monitors to help as soon as they were put in commission.

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But he soon realized that he had a formidable task. Naturally, the Southerners had as much interest in holding Charleston as the Northerners had in capturing it. Besides the natural defenses of sand-bars and crooked channels in Charleston harbor, the Confederates had at this point strong forts, aided by torpedoes, ironclads, and a large army. There was no chance to run by these defenses, as there had been at New Orleans and Mobile Bay, because the harbor was simply a pocket.

After several tests DuPont discovered that it was hopeless to attempt to capture the port by naval bombardment. Accordingly, he reported that Charleston could be taken



MAP OF CHARLESTON HARBOR

THE STORY OF OUR NAVY

only by an army operating in the rear. Meanwhile he had maintained a good blockade. He had destroyed the Confederate ram *Atlanta* and the cruiser *Nashville*. The only vessel he had lost was a monitor which had been sunk by the fire of Fort Sumter during one of those useless naval bombardments which DuPont had been ordered to make contrary to his judgment. But the Northern newspapers berated him as a failure because he had not forced Charleston to surrender. So DuPont was recalled, and Dahlgren was sent to take his place.

Rear-Admiral Dahlgren was famous as the inventor of the Dahlgren gun, the favorite type of smooth-bore cannon used on ships during the Civil War. As soon as Dahlgren arrived he saw that DuPont was right, that Charleston could not be taken by any naval force that the North could spare. In spite of the nagging he got from the arm-chair war experts in the North he very sensibly refused to repeat a useless bombardment. When Charleston fell, in February, 1865, the capture was brought about, just as DuPont had predicted, by a Union army attacking in the rear.

There was another harbor which, toward the end of the war, was much more valuable to the Confederate armies than Charleston. This was the mouth of the Cape Fear River, the port of Wilmington, North Carolina. The many shoals off the river-mouth, which made the place dangerous of approach for the Northern men-of-war, offered no obstacle to the little blockade-runners. In 1864, as other ports were taken or tightly closed by the blockade, Wilmington became more and more important to the Confederacy. Blockade-runners brought in enormous quantities of food, clothing, ammunition, cannon, and rifles from Nassau and carried back bales of cotton in payment. Toward the end of the year Wilmington became the last source of supplies for Lee's army and did a tremendous business. It was therefore essential for the North to get control at that point.

Naturally, the Confederates were just as alive to the

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necessity of holding Wilmington for the South. They had constructed at the mouth of the river a large earthwork called Fort Fisher. This lay at the end of a long peninsula, with one side facing the sea, and another side built at right angles and extending across the neck of land to the river in order to defend the fort from any approach by land. Nothing was spared to make it the strongest fort in the Confederacy. The walls were twenty-five feet thick and mounted forty-four guns. In front was a log palisade with loopholes for rifle fire, and beyond lay buried a quantity of torpedoes. To protect the gunners in the fort there were bomb-proof chambers.

It was an immense fortification, well designed and carefully built, but its defenders had their difficulties. There were less than two thousand soldiers to man the work, with only a small supply of ammunition for the guns. For their best gun, a 150-pounder rifle, they had only thirteen shells. Furthermore, the very thickness of the walls made it necessary for the men to expose themselves on top of the parapet if they wanted to see anything within a hundred feet of the fort.

On December 20, 1864, Admiral David D. Porter arrived off Fort Fisher with about sixty vessels—in fact, more men-of-war than had ever before been collected under the American flag. He was accompanied by General Butler, commanding sixty-five hundred soldiers. Three days later, to please General Butler, an old gunboat loaded with two hundred and thirty-five tons of powder was towed under the fort by a monitor, the idea being to blow a big hole in the fort by the explosion of the powder. The rest of the fleet retreated to a safe distance till the clockwork device set off the charge. When that happened there was an explosion that shook earth and water, but all the damage it did to Fort Fisher was to crack a pane of glass or two in the barracks.

If Butler's gunpowder plot proved a fizzle, it was no worse than his land attack which followed. All day on



CHASE OF A BLOCKADE-RUNNER

(From a contemporary picture in *Harpur's Weekly*, 1864)

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the 24th the fleet rained projectiles on the fort without interruption. The next day the troops were landed to attack the fort by the land face, but Butler only looked around the corner and came back, saying that "the place cannot be carried by assault." Meanwhile, during the bombardment, the Confederates had kept snugly in their bomb-proofs, so that nothing had been accomplished for the Union, after all.

But Porter was not the man to be balked by one failure. He asked General Grant for a better type of military commander than Butler, and Grant responded by sending General Terry, a gallant and able officer. Meanwhile the fleet retired to Beaufort for replenishing stores and repairing engines. In a fortnight the ships were back before Fort Fisher again. The Confederates made the most of the two weeks' respite by strengthening their defenses.

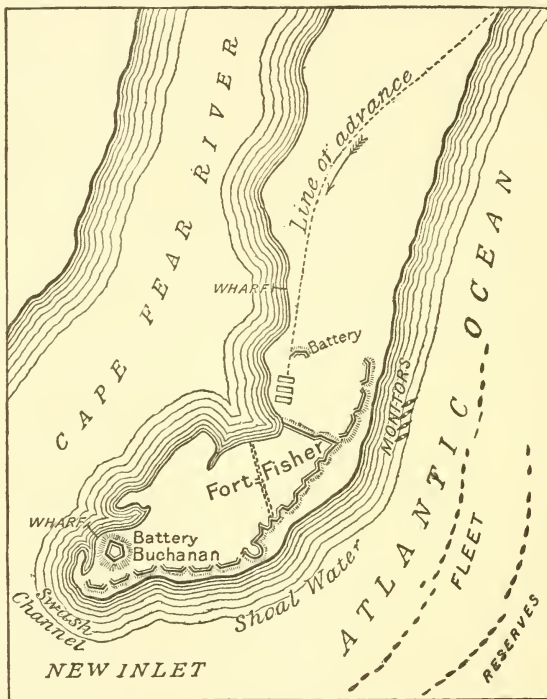
The two commanders, Porter and Terry, decided that the army should attack the fort at the northwest angle, and at the same time, in order to divert the attention of the defenders, a naval brigade should make an assault on the sea face as well. This, as everybody knew, was going to be a very dangerous undertaking, and, instead of ordering officers and men for the duty, Porter called for volunteers. But as whole ship's companies came forward as volunteers, the members of the assaulting party had to be detailed, after all.

All day on January 14th the fleet bombarded the fort again. On the following morning the naval brigade was landed about a mile and a half from the northeast angle of Fort Fisher. The landing was accomplished under cover of a fire from the ironclads, which moved close inshore for the purpose. All the while, since dawn, the rest of the fleet had kept up a merciless bombardment. This had permitted a detachment of men to dig rifle-pits near the fort, with the idea of filling them with marines, whose rifle fire was to keep the Confederates down from their parapets till the bluejackets were at close quarters.

The fire of the fleet had done good service. Every gun

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on the sea face but one had been dismantled, the stockade had been wrecked, and the elaborate system of underground torpedoes cut to pieces. Early in the afternoon the divisions on shore formed into line and advanced to a point about half a mile from the fort. About three o'clock the



FORT FISHER

"Line of advance" indicates the march of the army.

order to charge was signaled by the whistles of the fleet, and the men went forward on the run. When the brigade was about half-way toward the fort the fleet ceased firing, and instantly the garrison swarmed up on the parapet and poured a murderous rifle fire on the advancing columns.

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The officers, eager to set an example to their men, had all pressed forward in the lead, and the rear divisions of marines, struck by the sudden hail of bullets before they reached the rifle-pits that had been dug for them, broke and retreated in disorder, with no officers to rally them. This left the bluejackets without the support of the rifle fire from the marines, and since by a great blunder the sailors had been armed only with the pistol and cutlass, they were helpless under the muskets of the Confederate garrison. Three times, however, they rallied and ran forward toward the parapet, but they were shot down like sheep. The officers especially showed splendid courage, rallying their men under fire and setting a good example by pressing on in advance till some of them actually got inside the stockade at the foot of the parapet.

By a miracle Captain Breeze, the commander of the naval brigade, was unhurt, though he stood waving his sword in the very front of his men, trying in vain to rally his broken columns. The slaughter was very severe, and the attack faltered, crumpled up at the line of the stockade, and surged back. Those who were able to get back ran around and joined the columns of infantry which were charging the northwest salient at the same time. A few of the survivors crawled to the rifle-pits or flattened out behind some hillock of sand and kept up a sputtering fire on the fort. Among those who penetrated within the stockade at the head of the column was a young midshipman who lay badly wounded and helpless and a target for sharpshooters in the fort. A marine named Wasmouth at the risk of his life picked up the midshipman and carried him to a place of comparative safety. A few minutes later the brave man was shot dead. The midshipman finally recovered from his wounds and became famous later as "Fighting Bob Evans."

There was another act of self-sacrifice that ought to be remembered. A young assistant surgeon named William Longshaw discovered a wounded sailor lying helpless in

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the sand, with the incoming tide lapping about him and threatening to drown him in a few minutes. He sprang to his feet and, paying no attention to the bullets that sang past his head, dragged the sailor up to a place of safety and did what he could for his wounds. A wounded marine was lying with another group that still kept up a rifle fire from behind a hillock of sand.

"Surgeon," he cried, "can you look at my wounds, sir?"

Longshaw ran to him, and just as he was in the act of bandaging the man he was shot dead. That very day he had received his leave of absence, but had volunteered for the assault.

The attack of the naval brigade had failed because it had been beaten back by a concentrated rifle fire to which the sailors were unable to reply. But it was successful in that it led the Confederates to believe that the naval brigade was making the main assault.

This diversion made it possible for the army to get a foothold at the northwestern angle of the fort before the defenders could concentrate at that point. Although this is naval rather than military history, we must pause a moment to speak of the superb courage of those veterans of the Army of the Potomac as they slowly fought their way from one line of defense, from one gun to another, and the equally gallant and stubborn resistance of the Confederates, who contested every inch of the way. Some bastions were captured and recaptured five or six times before the men in blue poured over them in triumph. Darkness came on, but the battle raged only with sharper fury, and it was not till ten o'clock that evening that the brave defenders yielded. Then from the parapet flashed a signal-lantern, and as the waiting fleet spelled out, "The fort is ours," men cheered from ship to ship and guns of the whole fleet thundered a mighty salute.

The fortress had been captured with a loss of nearly a thousand men in killed, wounded, and missing, but the cost was small compared with the result. Its capture meant

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the speedy fall of Wilmington and the end of blockade-running for the Confederacy. Not even Richmond was so important to the South in the winter of '64-'65 as Wilmington. With Wilmington lost, there was no other source of supplies left open, and from that moment Lee's army was doomed. As we all know, the war was practically ended when Lee's ragged and hungry troops surrendered at Appomattox the following April.

In this great conflict the Confederates had a real advantage at the outset in military matters. They had trained and experienced officers in plenty. The men of the South were accustomed to the use of arms and an out-of-door life, they were fighting on their own soil, and the fact that there were slaves at home to work the plantations made it possible for almost every white man in the South to be conscripted into the Confederate armies. But in naval affairs the Confederates were at great disadvantage. They had brilliant naval officers, to be sure, but dependence on slave labor left the South without seamen, mechanics, shipyards, or engine-works. It is a tribute to the energy and resourcefulness of the Confederate naval officers that their famous "rams" did so well, in view of the enormous difficulties attending their construction. But it was hopeless to try to rival the resources of the North, backed by a determination to "see the war through."

When the news of the downfall of the Confederacy reached England a cartoon came out in *Punch* depicting the end of a gladiatorial combat. The prostrate South was represented as the gladiator with the helmet and the short sword, the victorious North was the one with the trident and net. In this picture the trident and net stood for sea power. Only in later years have we come to realize the full truth of the cartoon—namely, that the deciding factor in that great struggle was the control of the sea held by the North. If the trade between cotton and supplies had gone on the South could have kept on fighting indefinitely. As this trade was steadily narrowed down by

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the Union fleet the Confederacy grew weaker, till the fall of Fort Fisher left the South helpless. Only once was the sea power of the North seriously threatened, and that was the day of the *Merrimac's* overwhelming victory over the wooden ships in Hampton Roads. For the rest of the war the story of the navy is one of an ever-increasing effectiveness, of one port taken after another, and of a more and more compact wall of ships between the Confederacy and the outside world. In 1865 the blockade held unchallenged sway from Cairo, Illinois—for the Mississippi River was an important part of the line—all the way round to Fortress Monroe. As we have seen, the work was dull and hard, with much sickness and little chance for glory, but we must remember that, after all, it was the naval blockade that counted most in saving the Union.

XVIII

THIRTY YEARS OF PEACE

Decay of the navy after the war—Beginnings of the "new navy"—
—Wreck and rescue of the *Saginaw*—*Jeannette* expedition—Samoan
hurricane.

THE long period of galleys—ships of war propelled by oars—came to an end about the time of the Great Armada. Then followed three hundred years in which the sail was supreme. The period of the sail gave way in turn to the era of steam at the time of our Civil War. The change from oars to canvas came gradually, but the transition from sail to steam was sudden and swift. And steam was not the only innovation. With it came the long-ranged rifle-gun, the armor, the ram, and the torpedo, so that ten years in the middle of the nineteenth century revolutionized naval warfare far more than the preceding three hundred years had done.

During the Civil War the rivalry of North and South rapidly developed ironclads and torpedoes in advance of anything in European navies. But with the close of the great struggle the United States dropped back to the very end of the procession. The country was weary of the burden of war and its costly armaments, and reduced the army and navy at once to a peace footing. In the case of the navy there was good reason for cutting down the fleet. A great number of vessels carried on the naval list were old ferry-boats or river-steamers hastily transformed into gunboats. Others had been hurriedly built from unseasoned timber, and still more were too badly designed to be worth keeping.

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But, while Congress weeded out the unfit, it neglected to replace them with vessels of a modern type. In this policy Congress only reflected the indifference of the whole country. People could not see why we should have an army or a navy in times of peace, and both were so reduced that Thomas Nast, the famous cartoonist of *Harper's Weekly*, used to represent these two arms of the service as skeletons. The sad story of Custer and his men would never have been told if our soldiers had been equipped with the modern repeating-rifles which the Indians owned, instead of the old-fashioned Sharp's rifle of Civil War days.

No such tragedy as the Custer massacre befell the navy, because the navy was not called on to fight, but one hates to think what might have happened if war had suddenly broken out at any time during the twenty-five years that followed the Civil War. In the year 1881 the United States navy was weaker than at any time in our history since the days when Barbary pirates demanded tribute as the price of peace. In 1881 the navy contained not one ironclad, and consisted mainly of worm-eaten relics from Civil War days or earlier. Our naval officers had to make cruises on ships like the *Powhatan*, a side-wheeler built in the forties, or the *Constitution*, a frigate of 1797, and bear the ridicule of the whole world. The guns on these old tubs were the muzzle-loading smooth-bores of the Civil War.

But the year 1881 marks also the beginning of a change of public opinion about the navy. The weakness of our fleet was felt when we were on the verge of war with Spain in 1873, and again in 1880 when France went ahead to dig a canal in Panama without any respect for the Monroe Doctrine. When Vice-President Arthur became President he urged in strong terms the need of a modern navy; and, although he was hindered by the indifference of Congress, he finally succeeded in making a beginning. The act of March 3, 1883, provided for four steel ships, the cruisers *Chicago*, *Boston*, *Atlanta*, and the gunboat *Dolphin*. These

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were the first of the "White Squadron," and mark the beginning of the "new navy."

When work on these vessels was begun it was realized that there were no facilities in the United States for making the necessary steel plates or manufacturing the guns. But in five years the prospect of building steel ships of war at home developed manufacturing-plants to supply every detail of construction needed. In 1885 four more vessels were ordered—the cruisers *Charleston* and *Newark* and the gunboats *Petrel* and *Yorktown*. The *Charleston* was the first of our navy to abandon the old-fashioned masts with yards and sails for the simple "military mast." Every succeeding year saw new ships ordered, and in 1890 Congress took a forward step by authorizing the construction of three first-class battle-ships—the *Indiana*, the *Massachusetts*, and the *Oregon*. Finally, our naval successes in the war with Spain in 1898 gave the navy such an impetus that we now rank among the foremost naval powers of the world.

The period of over thirty years and more between the Civil War and the war with Spain is too long to cover in detail, but a few incidents can be selected to show that, miserable as were our ships and guns during that period of neglect, the phrase "naval decay" must not apply to the officers and men. The traditions of Jones, Macdonough, and Farragut were as scrupulously honored in the eighties, when nobody cared about the navy, as in the sixties, when the nation depended on the navy to strangle the Confederacy. Before the Spanish War only as many graduates of the Naval Academy were commissioned as were needed to fill the vacancies in the list. These men, of course, were selected from the top of the class, and the rest were retired to civil life. The result was a navy personnel of picked men.

The three incidents told here cover this "period of neglect" at about ten-year intervals. The first is the story of the *Saginaw*. On October 29, 1870, the little

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steam-sloop *Saginaw* finished her appointed task of dredging a channel for mail-steamers at Midway Island in the Pacific, and Captain Sicard turned her bows toward Ocean Island, sixty miles away, about which he had been ordered to make a report. During the night a strong ocean current drew the *Saginaw* out of her course, and about three in the morning a sudden crash sent all hands on deck with a rush. From the deck officers and men were driven into the rigging for safety, because huge breakers were curling and breaking right over the bulwarks. A few minutes of this pounding served to drive the ship higher up on the reef, so that men could return to the deck.

It was a time to try the discipline of the ship. Nothing could be seen in the darkness, and every boat on the weather side was smashed. Suddenly the smoke-stack fell over, and a few minutes later the loosened mainmast went by the board. Dawn showed that the vessel had been driven on a reef of Ocean Island itself. By that time the ship had broken in two, with the forward half driven still higher on the reef, but the sight of the island gave hope to the crew, and they worked with a will to launch the undamaged boats.

All that day officers and men toiled to save as much of the ship's provisions as they could, together with the carpenter's chest and the sailors' hammocks, which served as tents. When the shipwrecked men had time to examine the island they found it was simply a low sand-spit covered with bushes. There was no spring on the island, the water reached by digging proved to be brackish, and for a while it looked as if the seventy officers and men of the *Saginaw* had escaped death in the breakers only to face a more dreadful death from thirst. Here the trained mind of an officer came to the rescue. By means of the ship's boiler and some rubber hose he devised a condenser which was able to provide forty or fifty gallons a day. The fuel for the condenser was supplied by the bleached timbers of an

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old whaler that had been wrecked on the island many years before. For food, the supply rescued from the ship was carefully saved and doled out to officers and men at quarter rations. The rest had to be made up by fish and seal meat, both of which proved unwholesome.

For the time being the shipwrecked men were safe, but the fuel supplied by the whaler could not last for ever, and the stock of provisions was scant. Moreover, Ocean Island was so far from the track of steamers that there was small chance of rescue. Something must be done to get help or all would perish together. So Captain Sicard decided to fit out one of the boats saved from the *Saginaw* and send her with a volunteer crew to the Hawaiian Islands, twelve hundred miles away, to get help.

As soon as he proposed the plan volunteers pressed eagerly forward for the perilous undertaking. From these he selected Lieut. John Talbot and four sturdy seamen. The boat was only twenty-six feet long, but it was the best available. She was decked over with painted canvas, leaving only a little cockpit open. A few navigating-instruments, twenty-five days' provisions, and ninety gallons of water were put aboard, and, just three weeks after the *Saginaw* struck the reef the little gig spread sail for the Hawaiian Islands. Scarcely had the boat been five days on its way when the heavy seas put out the little fire that was kept on board and drenched all the matches, so that thereafter there was no way of drying clothes or cooking food. For the rest of the voyage the food had to be eaten raw and soggy with salt-water, with the result that Lieutenant Talbot and his men were miserably sick for days and weeks at a time. Meanwhile the weather grew steadily worse. The pounding waves started leaks in the canvas decking, and soon there was not a dry spot in the boat. Twice the little cockle-shell had to lie to with an improvised sea-anchor to keep from swamping in the fearful seas. Twice this drag broke loose, leaving the sick crew battling for their lives to keep afloat. Three such gales were en-

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countered. Finally, at the end of thirty-eight days, during which the boat had covered a course of nearly sixteen hundred miles, one of the Hawaiian Islands was sighted. Even then the weather was so rough that the gig had to be kept offshore for three days before Talbot dared to risk a landing. On December 19th, about dawn, the boat was caught by just such a current as had wrecked the *Saginaw* herself and was sucked in among the breakers on the shore. Over and over they tossed and rolled the tiny craft, and the men were too weak with sickness and exhaustion to struggle long. Out of the five only one, Coxswain Halford, staggered ashore alive. In his arms he dragged one of his mates, but the man soon died after reaching the shore. As quickly as he could Halford sent the news of the *Saginaw's* plight to Honolulu. Soon afterward the anxious watchers on Ocean Island caught a faint streak of smoke on the horizon, then with a great cheer they saw that a relief steamer was actually coming at last.

The only lives lost in the wreck of the *Saginaw* were those of the four who perished in the little gig on its errand of rescue. The boat itself hangs now in the Seamanship Building at the Naval Academy; and in the Memorial Hall of the midshipmen's great dormitory stands a tablet, placed there by the officers of the *Saginaw*, to the memory of Lieut. John Talbot. The inscription ends with this fitting quotation: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

In the next story the scene shifts from the Pacific to the snowbound wilderness of northern Siberia. The navy had been engaged in polar exploration before the Civil War. Captain Wilkes, who very nearly got us into war with England over his seizure of the *Trent*, was the first to discover the existence of the antarctic continent in 1840. In 1850 two ships, under Lieutenant de Haven, joined in the vain search for Sir John Franklin's party. Both of these vessels were frozen in the arctic ice-pack and drifted with

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it eight months over a thousand miles before they got free under a midsummer sun.

The Civil War interrupted exploration for the navy, but interest in finding the north pole revived after the war was over. In 1879 James Gordon Bennett, proprietor of the New York *Herald*, contributed funds to co-operate with the government in an expedition to discover the north pole. The idea was to use a hitherto untried route. It was known that in Bering Straits the Japanese Current splits into two branches, one turning south along the western coast of North America, and the other veering northeast into the arctic circle. It was planned to follow this northerly current toward the pole.

Accordingly, the steamer *Jeannette* left San Francisco in the summer of 1879, under the command of Lieutenant-Commander C. W. de Long, on a preliminary voyage of exploration before attempting the dash for the pole. But scarcely had the little vessel passed Bering Straits when she was met by huge ice-floes which forced her away to the west. De Long decided that he would winter on Wrangell Land, which in those days was supposed to be a huge arctic continent, but before the end of the first week of September the *Jeannette* was frozen solid in the ice-floes. A steady westerly drift carried her along past Wrangell Land, which then proved to be only a comparatively small island. Then the arctic-winter night shut down on the imprisoned ship. Every day the grinding, cracking masses of ice threatened to crush the vessel like a nutshell, and there was no way of escape. Month after month of frightful cold, hardship, and peril dragged by.

With the return of the sun and the long summer days the explorers confidently hoped that they should get free, as Lieutenant de Haven's ships had done at the end of their long winter's drifting. But not even the July sunshine could release the *Jeannette* from her icy prison. To the despair of all, September came again with no escape. Another dreadful winter had to be lived through, and this

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time there was much sickness on board. Under the conditions it took all of a man's nerve to keep from giving way to despair. Again all hope was fixed on the prospect of better luck when another summer came. Meanwhile the men were confronted with the hourly danger of being shipwrecked and stranded by the ice, but the stout little ship stood the strain throughout the winter. At last the long days of June brought thawing, the floes shrank and fell away, but instead of freeing the *Jeannette* on an even keel the shifting ice crushed her hull and sank her. The officers and crew had only time to escape to the ice with some provisions, sledges, and three boats. This disaster occurred on the 12th of June, 1881.

The point where the *Jeannette* foundered was in the midst of the Arctic Ocean, north of Siberia. The nearest source of help was the scattered villages around the Lena Delta, five hundred miles away. There was nothing for the castaways to do but to try to reach that point by boat, wherever there was open water; otherwise, by marching over the ice, dragging the boats after them. It looked like a hopeless undertaking, but it offered the only chance of escape. The natural hardships were added to by the fact that when the *Jeannette* was wrecked two of the officers and three of the men were sick, their provisions were scanty, and their boots and clothing worn through. Then, as if these troubles were not enough, although the party tramped steadily southwest, the northerly drift of the ice-floes took them twenty-eight miles in the opposite direction before they could make a single mile southward.

It was exactly three months after the shipwreck when the party reached the delta of the Lena River. There the three boats were separated by a gale. Chief-Engineer Melville, in command of the whale-boat, managed to enter one of the mouths of the river. After indescribable sufferings he and his nine men reached a little Siberian village on its banks. One of his men went insane from the effects of exhaustion, starvation, and cold.

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The second cutter must have foundered in the gale, for nothing more was ever heard of it. De Long, in the first cutter, containing the surgeon and twelve men, also succeeded in entering the river, and continued southward. Unfortunately, no one of the party knew just where the Siberian villages were, and it was their misfortune not to encounter a single native. They landed, and then, as they were on the verge of starvation, De Long sent his two strongest men to go on up the river ahead and find help. The others plodded slowly after.

By the end of October these two messengers, almost dead from starvation, tottered into a village. They gave a despatch scrawled in pencil to one of the natives to be carried to the nearest Russian official. But the man, having heard of Melville's arrival in a neighboring village, carried the message to him instead. At that time Melville was in such a condition from frost-bitten limbs and feet that he was unable to stand. By that time, too, the early Siberian winter had set in, but Melville knew only one line of duty, to try to rescue his shipmates. He made up a sledging party, had himself placed on a sledge, and started for the village where the two sailors were. With them as guides he started out to find De Long and his men. Here and there he discovered traces left by the party, but lost the clue because De Long had toward the end of his march crossed on the ice to the opposite bank. On November 14th a blizzard overwhelmed the rescuers and came very near blotting out the lives of the entire party.

As soon as conditions permitted the next spring Melville set out again, and on March 23, 1882, discovered the bodies of De Long and his men. The last entry in De Long's diary was October 30, 1881. It told of the death from starvation of two and the dying condition of a third. Probably all were dead by the first of November. In order that the scientific observations and records of the *Jeannette* might not be lost De Long had put them in an inside pocket and used his last remaining strength to crawl to a little higher

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ground near the camp. Then he braced his arm upward in the snow, evidently so that his body might be more readily discovered.

These records of the *Jeannette*—whatever their scientific value—were paid for at a dreadful price of brave men. But it is a proud thing for us to realize that during those years of suffering in the arctic, ending in slow death by cold and starvation, there was never a whimper. As men they worked together and sacrificed themselves for one another; as men they suffered, and as men they died. So the little *Jeannette* has taken her place in the honor list of the American navy.

The third story brings us again to the Pacific. In 1888 the German government interfered very seriously with affairs in the Samoan Islands. It deposed one king and set up another in his place. The natives refused to submit to this new king and showed fight. In December, 1888, German sailors landed under arms, but were met by such a determined resistance from the natives that they drew back to their ships with a loss of fifty killed and wounded. Then Germany declared war, and England and the United States sent ships to protect their interests in the islands.

In March, 1889, there were ships representing these three nations in the harbor of Apia. This is a small semicircular bay opening on the north, with a coral reef extending in front from east to west. A break in the reef about a quarter of a mile wide serves as entrance and exit for the harbor. Within the harbor is scant anchoring-ground, because from the east shore there is a wide mud-shoal, and from the opposite side projects another reef that reaches out into the middle of the bay, as may be seen from the map. Here were collected three German men-of-war—the *Olga*, the *Eber*, the *Adler*; three American—the *Trenton*, the *Vanaulia*, the *Nipsic*; one English—the *Calliope*. Owing to the cramped space in the harbor, the *Trenton* and the *Vandalia* anchored in the harbor entrance.

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After several weeks of bad weather the wind rose on March 15th to a heavy gale. As the day wore on the wind only increased in fury, and all the men-of-war made ready by housing their upper spars and getting up steam. By night the storm was a hurricane, with the war-ships pitching and jerking at their anchor-cables. About midnight the *Eber* began dragging anchors, and an hour later the *Vandalia* was in the same condition, both using their steam to keep from drifting upon the inner reef or colliding with the other vessels.

Daybreak found all the ships dragging anchors and drifting down upon the inner reef. The *Eber* seemed utterly helpless. Suddenly she was hurled upon the reef by the great combing breakers, rolled over on her side, and in a few minutes smashed to pieces. By this time the Samoans had gathered on the shore, and, though the Germans were their enemies, the instant they saw the plight of the *Eber* they grasped hands and made a human life-line—standing far out in the surf where no white man could have lived—and hauled in the few survivors who came ashore. Only one officer and four men of the *Eber* were saved.

The next ship to strike the reef was the *Adler*, but the hull was driven so high out of the water that all but twenty were saved by staying in the wreck out of the reach of the breakers. Meanwhile the *Nipsic's* anchors were dragging badly; and just as her crew were sending over an eight-inch gun at the end of a hawser as an additional anchor, the *Nipsic* was struck by the *Olga*, which knocked the smoke-stack of the American vessel over and left her without sufficient steam to head the gale. The *Nipsic* then turned and, with what steam she had, sheered along the inner reef, cleared it successfully, and ran upon the beach. Then, at the greatest peril of their own lives, the Samoans managed to rescue the Americans from the fore-castle of the *Nipsic* in the very teeth of the tremendous surf.

For a while the four larger men-of-war—the *Olga*, the

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HARBOR OF APIA

Trenton, the *Calliope*, and the *Vandalia*—were still afloat and off the reef. The gale, however, was, if anything, more terrific than before, and the big vessels began to show distress. About ten in the morning the *Trenton* was helpless. Floating wreckage had knocked off her rudder and propellers, and she was drifting slowly upon the inner reef. At the same time the *Vandalia* and the *Calliope* were dragging, too. It looked as if all three vessels would soon be together in collision just on the very edge of the reef.

In this crisis Captain Kane, of the *Calliope*, made a quick decision, on which depended his ship and the lives of all his men. He would let go his cables and try to steam

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out of the harbor in the teeth of the hurricane. It looked like a forlorn chance, but it was the one thing to do. Clouds of black smoke rolled out of the *Calliope's* stack as her engines were taxed for the supreme effort. For a few minutes the ship remained stationary, battling against the wind and sea. Then slowly she inched forward, gathering headway with every moment. To get to sea the English ship had to pass close between the helpless *Trenton* and the outer reef, and to accomplish the feat demanded superb seamanship. As the *Calliope* surged close to the *Trenton* the Americans, who seemed doomed to certain death that very hour, suddenly forgot their own danger in admiration of the English captain's daring manœuvre and the faultless way in which he executed it.

"Three cheers for the *Calliope!*" shouted some one, and the hurrahs were given with a will.

Down the gale came the quick answering cheer of the British tars, and the *Calliope*, wreathed in black smoke, weathered the harbor mouth and fought her way triumphantly to the open sea.

Meanwhile the *Vandalia*, unable to steam against the wind, had been forced, like the *Nipsic*, to skirt the edge of the reef and run up on the beach, where she was soon pounding to pieces. Her entire company crowded on the wave-swept forecastle, but not for a moment was discipline relaxed. One brave sailor volunteered to swim through the surf with a line, but he was scarcely overboard before he was dashed to death against the hull of the ship. Officers and men clung to whatever offered a hold, but one after another, weakened by the terrible strain, was swept overboard. Unfortunately, the ship was stranded too far out to be helped in any way by the life-savers ashore.

At the same time that the *Vandalia* was in such distress the *Trenton* was drifting helplessly toward the reef. The *Olga* tried to steam away, and in doing so collided with the *Trenton*. The latter, now worse off than ever, with leaks gaining on the pumps and no means of steaming or steering,

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seemed doomed to perish like the *Eber* and the *Adler* in the smother of foaming breakers on the reef. As every one knew, from the anxious watchers on the shore to the American admiral on the *Trenton's* bridge, when that happened there was small chance of a single man's reaching the shore alive. If only there were some way of moving away from that deadly reef! The *Trenton* had sails, but nothing larger than a tiny storm-sail would hold against the force of that hurricane. Meanwhile she was drifting, broadside on, directly toward the reef.

Suddenly Lieutenant Brown had an inspiration. He proposed his idea to the admiral, and it was instantly accepted. Hoarse orders were shouted up and down the length of the deck. There was a scurry of feet, and a midshipman led the way for the entire crew to clamber into the weather mizzen shrouds. These were soon black with men crowded together, beaten flat against the tarred ropes by the violence of the wind, and clinging for their very lives. Canvas would not hold against such a wind, but strong men could—and did. Lieutenant Brown's idea was to make a *human* sail.

Under the pressure on the port shrouds the *Trenton* heeled over to port and pointed seaward again. By this time her stern was only a few feet from the line of leaping breakers that marked the reef, but slowly she began to forge ahead, sheering close alongside of the reef—so close that her people hardly dared hope to get by. Foot by foot the old ship edged along, just cleared the end of the reef, and then drove full before the gale toward the beach and the wreck of the *Vandalia*. Without a rudder it was impossible to steer, and as the big flag-ship came down on the latter it seemed as if a collision would knock overboard the battered survivors of the *Vandalia* who still clung to her rigging. Nevertheless, the brave men on the *Vandalia* raised a feeble cheer for the *Trenton* and her human sail. "Three cheers for the *Vandalia*!" was shouted on the flag-ship. Again men who expected death were cheering each

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others' gallantry. The *Trenton's* bandsmen were hurriedly mustered, and the strains of the "Star-spangled Banner" were heard over the roar of the tempest.

Now the *Trenton's* bow struck the beach, and she swung around; but, instead of crashing against the *Vandalia* and knocking her exhausted crew into the sea, the *Trenton* merely swung close aboard. Instead of bringing death the stranded *Trenton* actually brought rescue to the survivors of the *Vandalia*, for the *Trenton's* men were now able to help them to drop off the yards of the *Vandalia* upon the deck of the flag-ship. As she drove high on the beach her deck rose far enough above the breakers for the crews to remain on board in safety throughout the rest of the hurricane.

When the storm had subsided a muster was taken of the crews. It was found that ninety-one Germans and fifty-three Americans had been drowned. After ramming the *Trenton* the *Olga* had steamed ashore on the mud-flats at the opposite side of the bay from the reef and escaped shipwreck. As we have seen, the *Calliope* got to sea, and all the rest of the ships were lying wrecked on the beach or on the inner reef.

The three American vessels, *Trenton*, *Vandalia*, and *Nipsic*, were old-fashioned wooden ships such as our navy had to get along with in those days. As men-of-war they were not creditable to a country as rich as the United States, but no one can read the story of the Samoan hurricane, or, for that matter, of the *Saginaw* and the *Jeannette*, without realizing that the officers and men on these old ships showed as fine a standard of discipline, of cool resourcefulness, and superb heroism in the face of death as the navy had ever boasted in its proudest days.

XIX

THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

Causes of the Spanish-American War—Preparations of the United States—Comparison of navies—Dewey's preparations in the East—Entering Manila Bay—The battle—German interference—Importance of the victory.

THE island of Cuba figured in many a controversy before the United States freed it from the misrule of Spain. During the earlier years of the nineteenth century our government was afraid that England or France was going to acquire the island and establish a powerful colonial station at our very doors. But after the Mexican War the slavery party was anxious to annex Cuba, like Texas, in order to increase the slave-holding area of the country. As Spain refused even to consider the matter of selling Cuba, and the North was hostile to making another war simply to increase slave territory, the plan fell through.

Meanwhile the bad government of Spanish officials provoked one rebellion after another, and, as Americans were always in sympathy with the rebels, there were many filibustering expeditions from our shores, carrying arms and ammunition to the insurgent Cubans. The "Ten Years' War," between 1868 and 1878, was waged with savage cruelty on both sides and wholesale destruction of property, most of which belonged to the Americans. President Grant threatened to intervene, but, as Spain promised to do better, the threat was never carried out. One incident of this war aroused the United States to such anger against Spain that the two countries nearly came to blows over

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it. The American schooner *Virginus* was seized by a Spanish gunboat and taken to Havana on the charge of carrying munitions of war to the rebels. The officers and crew of the vessel were brought to trial, with the result that most of them were lined up against a wall and shot. Among the victims were thirty Americans. Only full reparations and apologies for this barbarous act prevented war.

In 1876 General Campos went to Cuba with a milder policy toward the insurgents, and succeeded in bringing to the unhappy island a peace which lasted from 1878 to 1895. Then a new rebellion broke out which he could not put down. So he resigned and was replaced by General Weyler. This officer decided to crush the revolt with an iron hand. He shot people for small offenses, herded all the inhabitants he could lay hands on into the cities, so that the fields were left uncultivated and there was soon nothing to eat. At that time Americans owned fifty million dollars' worth of property in Cuba, much of which was destroyed by Weyler's policy and the guerrilla warfare. But the suffering of the *reconcentrados*, the women and children huddled together in starvation camps, did much more to anger the American nation. President Cleveland offered to help Spain in bringing about peace in Cuba, but the offer was declined. Later President McKinley sent a polite protest against Weyler's barbarities, but Spain was indifferent to this also. Meanwhile the American Red Cross Society sent quantities of food, clothing, and medicine to relieve the distress of the *reconcentrados*, and especially for the five hundred to six hundred Americans who were among the sufferers. Finally, in 1897, Weyler was recalled, but General Blanco, who succeeded him, was unable to make matters much better.

As the American newspapers were very sharp in their criticism of Spain and General Weyler, the Havana papers took an anti-American tone. Anti-American riots took place in Havana as well, so the battle-ship *Maine* was sent there as a reminder that the rights of American citizens

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must be respected. The *Maine* arrived in Havana in January, 1898. In February a private letter written from the Spanish minister in Washington to an editor in Madrid somehow fell into the hands of the insurgents, who published it. In this the minister described President McKinley as "weak and catering to the mob," and said some other unpleasant things besides. American anger over that incident had scarcely begun to find expression when the incident was forgotten in the horror caused by a tragedy that followed a few days later.

At 9.45 on the evening of February 15, 1898, there was a sudden and frightful explosion in the harbor of Havana. A moment later a great jet of fire shot up from the magazines of the *Maine*, and the noble ship sank rapidly to the bottom. All but two of her officers were saved, but of the crew of 353 men only 48 escaped unhurt. The *Maine* had been blown up in the harbor of Havana; the question was "How?"

As soon as possible a naval court of inquiry made a careful survey and reported that the ship had been blown up by an external explosion. In the words of the report, she had been "destroyed by a submarine mine, which caused the partial explosion of two or more of her magazines." This fact was established beyond the shadow of a doubt by the careful examination of the wreck made in 1912, when it was raised, towed out to sea, and sunk with military honors.

The Spanish authorities made what they were pleased to call an investigation, too. They promptly reported that the blowing up of the *Maine* was due to an explosion from within the ship, but no one took their report very seriously. Popular feeling in the United States laid the atrocious crime at the door of Spanish officials in Cuba. The long simmering fires of indignation against Spain now burst into a flame of passion that swept the country from one end to the other. A few voices called for moderation, but they were drowned in the cry from all sides, "Remember the *Maine*!" Although diplomatic correspondence continued

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for a few weeks longer, intervention seemed more and more certain to come. Finally, on April 25, 1898, the United States declared war.

A comparison of the two nations shows at once the great advantage of the United States. Spain was one of the poorest nations in the civilized world, while the United States ranked as one of the richest. But there was no such difference in the navies—at least, on paper. Some experts ranked the United States as sixth among the naval powers, and Spain eighth, but in Europe the Spanish navy was regarded by many as superior. There were 137 vessels of war on the Spanish list to 86 on the American. Besides this, the long, exposed coast-lines of the United States, with only a few weak coast defenses, offered tempting places for fleet attack on the great seaport cities.

The fact is that the Department at Washington did not know just how strong the Spanish fleet was; furthermore, such was the state of things in Madrid that many prominent Spanish officials did not know, either. Later, when all the paper pretense was broken down by the hard facts of the war, it was seen that, except for nine armored ships ranging from 6,840 to 9,900 tons, the Spanish navy was made up of old vessels of wood and iron that were unfit for modern warfare. There was not a single vessel under the Spanish flag equal to any one of our four 10,000-ton battle-ships *Oregon*, *Iowa*, *Massachusetts*, and *Indiana*. So far we have spoken only of the ships themselves. Of the comparative efficiency of the two navies we will let the events of the war tell their own story.

In October, 1897, six months before the declaration of war, Commodore George Dewey was ordered to take command of the Asiatic squadron. At that time few people believed that war was actually going to break out because of the Cuban situation, but Commodore Dewey made the most of the month left him before going west by studying all the books and charts he could find relating to the Philippine Islands. He well knew that if war did come it would be

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his duty to attack the Spanish in the Philippines. At the same time he cut a good deal of official red tape in order to get for his squadron the ammunition it would need in case of war.

On April 24th Dewey was in the harbor of Hongkong when a cable message came to him announcing the declaration of war, and ordering him to proceed to the Philippines and capture or destroy the enemy's fleet. The news did not find him unprepared. For weeks he had been making ready for the conflict, secretly arranging for the purchase of coal, provisions, and tenders, and seeing that officers and men were drilled to the top notch of efficiency. As Hongkong was a British port, Dewey had to take his squadron away twenty-four hours after the declaration of war in order to conform with the laws of neutrality. These forbid ships of a nation engaged in war to stay longer than that time in the port of a neutral nation. As China had not yet announced its neutrality, Dewey took his squadron to Mirs Bay, about thirty miles north on the Chinese coast, partly to complete his preparations, but more to await the coming of our consul from Manila, from whom the commodore expected to get definite news about the Spanish defenses.

The consul arrived on the morning of the 27th. A council of war was held on the flag-ship immediately, and at two in the afternoon the American squadron set out for Manila, six hundred miles away. The squadron moved in two columns, the fighting-ships forming one and the auxiliaries forming another, twelve hundred yards in the rear. The fighting-column consisted of the flag-ship *Olympia*, the *Boston*, the *Raleigh*, the *Baltimore*, the *Concord*, and the *Petrel*, four cruisers and two gunboats. The only armored vessel was the *Olympia*, which had a four-inch protection for the turret-guns.

For weeks before the declaration of war the papers in Hongkong had laid great emphasis on the powerful fortifications and mine-fields which, in addition to the

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Spanish fleet under Admiral Montojo, made Manila Bay "impregnable." In spite of the friendly feeling of the British officers Admiral Dewey writes in his autobiography that it was impossible for the American officers to get bets at the Hongkong club even at heavy odds that the Americans could win. "A fine set of fellows," remarked the Englishmen after the American fleet started out, "but, unhappily, we shall never see them again."

But we have already noted that this was just the way "war experts"—especially in Europe—talked and wrote about the defenses of New Orleans in 1862, and some of them took pains to inform Farragut that he was going to certain destruction. Dewey at the age of twenty-four had been the executive officer of the *Mississippi* during that hot night battle under Forts Jackson and St. Philip. It was there that he received his first taste of hard fighting, and during all that strenuous river campaign he was under the personal influence of Farragut. "Valuable as the training at Annapolis was," writes Admiral Dewey, "it was poor schooling beside that of serving under Farragut in time of war."

Through all the days of planning and preparation the American commodore in 1898 took as his guiding principle, "What would Farragut do?" Like his hero, Dewey was now sixty years old at the outbreak of the war. Like him, too, he had the problem of forcing an entrance into a fortified and mined channel, with the gravest consequences hanging on his decisions. If the American fleet failed at Manila the entire Pacific coast of the United States would lie at the mercy of the Spanish ships.

For Spain the issue of the coming battle was quite as important as it was for the United States, and the authorities at Manila had much to help them in the advantages of a defensive position. Admiral Montojo's fleet was much inferior in guns to Dewey's, but the Spaniards had torpedoes, mines, and the shore batteries, which included some modern rifled guns of a heavier caliber than

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any in Dewey's squadron. And accurate range-marks could have been prepared for any portion of the bay. Moreover, by occupying Subig Bay, about thirty miles north from the mouth of Manila Bay, Montojo could have made Dewey's task very difficult and dangerous, for Subig Bay offered a splendid strategic position. In fact, intelligent Spaniards had long before urged the fortification of Subig Bay; but, as it was a dull place for officers, too far from the pleasant social life of Manila, these suggestions had never been carried out.

When war seemed certain Montojo gave orders to fortify Subig Bay, but when he took his ships there on April 27th he found the cannon lying in the grass where they had been dropped over a month before, and practically nothing done. Even then Montojo would have done far better to wait for Dewey in Subig Bay, but instead he turned about and steamed back to Cavite.

The Spanish authorities in Manila seemed to be in a strange condition of self-sufficiency. A few days before the Americans arrived the Spanish captain-general issued a boastful proclamation, calling the Americans some very unpleasant names and declaring that they were too contemptible to fight. And the Archbishop of Manila caused to be read in the churches a report that the United States had begged the Pope to intercede and save the Yankee nation from the terrible wrath of Spain. As soon as Dewey left Mirs Bay the Spanish consul at Hongkong cabled to Manila the fact that the American squadron was on its way, but the very afternoon that it was approaching the entrance to Manila Bay Admiral Montojo and his officers were attending an afternoon tea given by Señora Montojo herself in Manila, and many of his officers were still on shore when the battle began. In this careless fashion the Spaniards made ready to defend the Philippines and dispute with the Americans for the sea power of the Pacific. We shall see presently how they awaited the American attack.

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On the afternoon of April 30th the American squadron arrived at Subig Bay, but, to the commodore's relief, he found no Spanish ships. He knew then that he should find the Spanish squadron near Manila. There had been terrifying accounts of the submarine mines at the entrance of the bay, but there was no hesitation in the commodore's mind about entering. This was not mere recklessness. He had reasoned that the three-mile main channel was too wide and deep for successful mine-planting, and that the contact-mines which might have been moored there would deteriorate so rapidly in the warm water as to be useless within a few weeks of their being laid. In addition he felt sure of careless and ignorant work in laying them.

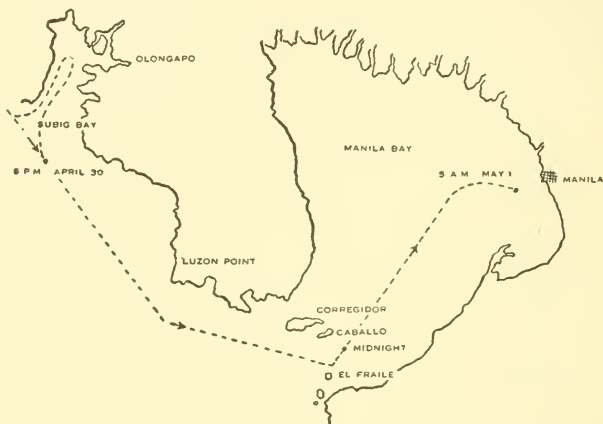
But entering the bay proved far safer and easier than Dewey had anticipated. While his column was skirting the coast about ten miles from the entrance it had evidently been sighted, for signal-lights and rockets flashed on shore. Accordingly, Dewey expected to have to run a gauntlet of fire from the big guns on the islands of Corregidor, Caballo, and El Fraile, commanding the entrance, as well as a torpedo attack from the Spanish fleet. But when, about midnight, the squadron swung into the narrow waters past these islands, no searchlight was turned on them, no vessels disputed the entrance, no torpedo-boats dashed at them in the darkness; in fact, it seemed as if nobody was even awake. When all but the rear ships were past, the battery on El Fraile fired one shot, which passed between the *Petrel* and the *Raleigh*. The American ships answered with a few shots; and the Spanish battery, after firing two more shells, was silent. The modern rifled six-inch guns on Caballo were not fired once, and the fort on Corregidor was strangely silent. The garrison there saw the American ships plainly, but for some reason, never explained, the commanding officer could not make up his mind to give the order to fire.

In a few minutes the squadron was safe inside the harbor. Then Dewey slowed down to four knots, as he did not wish

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to reach Manila till daylight showed him the position of the Spanish fleet. Meanwhile, the men were allowed to get a little sleep beside their guns.

Dewey expected, as a matter of course, that Montojo would be found in the anchorage off Manila, where, in addition to his own guns, he would have the powerful batteries that defended the city. But, as daybreak showed only merchantmen, Dewey steamed toward Cavite, having first sent his auxiliaries to a harbor where they would be



DEWEY'S ENTRANCE INTO MANILA BAY

safe. As the American column passed within two miles of the shore the Manila batteries opened fire, but except for four shells fired by the *Boston* and the *Concord* the squadron reserved its limited supply of ammunition. All the Spanish shots went wild. To the American sailors crouched beside their guns the order was passed, "Hold your fire till the bugle sounds."

At sunrise the Americans sighted Montojo's squadron of seven ships ranged in a crescent formation off Cavite, with its eastern flank, near Sangley Point, covered by the Cavite

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batteries, and the eastern end protected by a shoal and a shore battery. From east to west the line lay in the following order: *Reina Cristina* (flag-ship), *Castilla*, *Don Juan de Austria*, *Don Antonio de Ulloa*, *Isla de Luzon*, *Isla de Cuba*, and *Marques del Duero*. The cruiser *Castilla* had protected her sides by heavy iron lighters loaded with stone. Two more ships lay off the southern extremity of Cavite Point, but took no part in the battle except to surrender when it was over.

On sighting the enemy Dewey signaled his command to close up to a distance of two hundred yards, and headed the *Olympia* toward the enemy. The American line was as follows: the *Olympia*, *Baltimore*, *Raleigh*, *Petrel*, *Concord*, *Boston*. The ships steamed on in silence, heading on a converging course toward the enemy's line. At 5.15, when the squadron was still at long range, the Spanish ships and the Cavite batteries boomed a challenge and thereafter rained shells at the advancing line. It was hard for the impatient jackies to wait, but Dewey held his fire for another half-hour. Then he turned to his captain with the quiet remark, "You may fire when you're ready, Gridley."

The eight-inch gun from the forward turret thundered in answer, and at the signal the other ships opened fire, one after another, with every gun that bore. The Spanish ships were smothered in the smoke of a very rapid fire, but their aim was hopelessly bad. After concentrating his starboard guns on the eastern end of the Spanish line, as he bore down toward that end of their formation, Dewey turned westward and steamed the length of the enemy's line, pouring in a fire from his port batteries. On reaching the western end he led his ships back again, and repeated the manœuver, making in all three runs from the eastward and two runs from the westward. This manœuver was similar to that of DuPoint at Port Royal and had the same advantages.

The Spanish fire, which was wild at best, was utterly

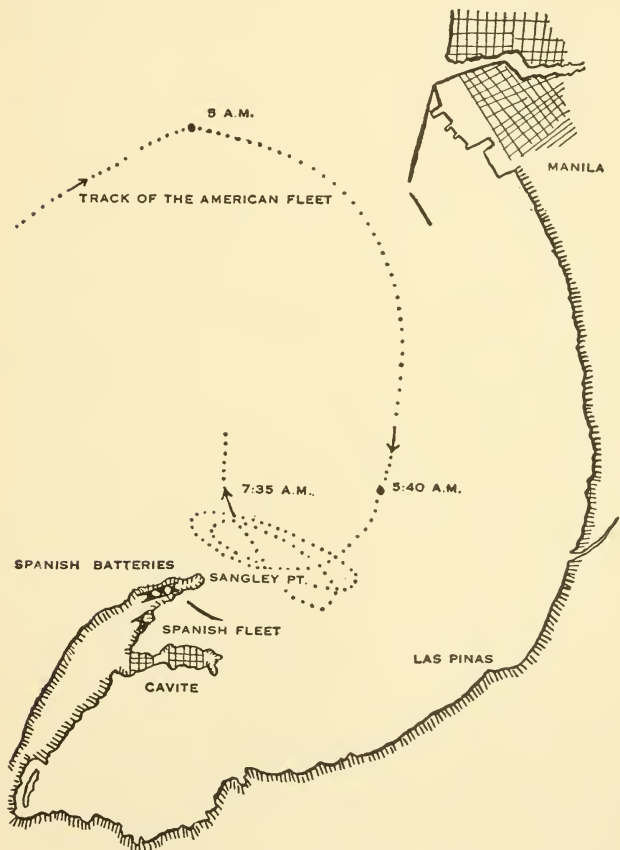
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unable to find this moving, shifting target. On the other hand, the fire of the American ships in close formation, though rather inaccurate at first, became deadly. The two largest Spanish ships, which were at the eastern end of their line, got the brunt of the attack and suffered fearfully. These were the *Reina Cristina* (flag-ship) and the *Castilla*. In desperation the Spanish commanders resorted to the ramming tactics of the Civil War. The *Don Juan de Austria* first and then the *Reina Cristina* left their places in the line and made a brave attempt to ram the *Olympia*, but both were driven back by a staggering fire. One eight-inch shell alone raked the Spanish flag-ship, putting out of action twenty men and wrecking her steering-gear. Two more gallant sorties were made by little torpedo-launches against the *Olympia*; one was promptly sunk, the other was beached in a sinking condition. By seven o'clock the *Reina Cristina* had lost half her crew, her batteries were useless, and she was unmanageable, so Admiral Montojo abandoned her for the *Isla de Cuba*. In spite of her stone lighters the *Castilla* was almost as badly damaged as the flag-ship, and she, too, was abandoned. The other ships in the line were in a desperate condition also, yet so dense was the curtain of powder-smoke that the Americans could not make out what the effect of their shooting was.

About 7.30 Captain Gridley reported to the commodore that there were only fifteen rounds of ammunition left for the five-inch battery. As this amount could be shot away in five minutes, it was a serious moment for the American commander, especially as at that time he could not see what injuries had been inflicted on the enemy. Accordingly, he decided to withdraw for a few minutes so that there could be a fresh distribution of ammunition. In a few minutes Commodore Dewey was relieved to learn that the report about the *Olympia's* ammunition was a mistake, that fifteen rounds was the amount that she had *already* fired. As the American ships steamed out of range the lifting smoke began to reveal the distress of the Spanish fleet.

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Realizing that the Spaniards were thoroughly beaten, Dewey ordered breakfast, as the men had had nothing but a cup of coffee at four o'clock. During this breathing-spell the commodore summoned his captains aboard the *Olympia*. To the astonishment of all, the report from each ship was



BATTLE OF MANILA, MAY 1, 1898

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Thus the President's order to Dewey to "destroy the Spanish fleet at Manila" had been obeyed to the letter, and at one blow the Philippine Islands and the mastery of the Pacific passed to the hands of Commodore Dewey.

Never in history had there been such a one-sided victory. The total loss on the American side was four men slightly wounded, and none of the ships had been seriously hurt. On the other hand, the Spaniards had lost about four hundred men, eleven vessels were destroyed, the Cavite batteries had been knocked to pieces, the arsenal was captured, and the city of Manila lay helpless under the guns of the American fleet. In view of the gloomy predictions made at home and abroad about Dewey's chances in attacking Manila, it is not to be wondered at if the American people went wild with pride and joy and said some extravagant things about their sailormen.

But Dewey had another and more trying problem on his hands. Pending the arrival of troops he maintained a blockade of Manila. The German government had been hostile to the United States in this war, going to the extent, it is said, of asking the co-operation of Great Britain in intervention. Although England had signified a "hands-off" policy, the Germans seemed bent on showing hostility. The German Pacific squadron under Vice-Admiral Diederichs soon appeared in Manila Bay. The presence of neutral men-of-war in a harbor controlled by one of the parties to a war is permitted only as a matter of international courtesy. All the other men-of-war, representing England, France, and Japan, had complied with the customary regulations, such as reporting to Dewey and applying to him for anchorage. But the German admiral paid no attention whatever to Dewey. Every day brought fresh instances of German arrogance and insolence which strained the patience of the Americans to the breaking-point. Finally, when word came that the Germans were actually landing supplies for the Spaniards Dewey sent an ultimatum to Diederichs. "And you may tell him," he

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concluded, instructing the lieutenant who carried the message, "that if he wants a fight he can have it right now." The German was furious, and cleared for action. Thereupon the British admiral, Chichester, asked Dewey's permission to weigh anchor and take a new position, which was granted. Then the British squadron anchored between the lines of the German and the American ships, with the English bands playing "Star-spangled Banner." After this broad hint as to what might be expected from the British fleet, Diederichs decided that he did not want to fight after all, and came round to terms.

In recognition of the victory at Manila Congress awarded Dewey a vote of thanks and a sword, and the President immediately promoted him to the rank of Rear-Admiral. Later the rank of Admiral of the Navy was revived and bestowed upon him. The same critics who said that the Spanish fleet was really quite the equal of the American and that Manila Bay was impregnable turned face about after the battle and began sneering at the Americans for being proud of Dewey because he destroyed a very inferior fleet. Unquestionably Montojo's ships were no match for the American squadron; but if Montojo had shown the least enterprise or strategic sense, or if the men in the ships or forts had shown a reasonable efficiency in handling the guns, the Spaniards could have held Subig Bay, or disputed the entrance of Dewey's fleet into Manila Bay, with excellent chance of success. But it never occurred to the Spaniards that anybody would have the audacity to enter the bay at night, with forts controlling the channel and the lighthouses extinguished.

Dewey's fame rests, not on his annihilation of a weaker fleet, but on his long and careful preparation and planning, his clear reasoning-out of the whole situation, which culminated in his superb night entry into Manila Bay. No better answer than that could have been made to the question, "What would Farragut do?"

At the time of the war the sympathy of continental Eu-

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rope was wholly with the Spanish—they were the “chivalrous” people—whatever that overworked word means—and we were dull, money-grabbing louts who couldn't fight. The news of the victory of Manila promptly stunned into silence all European talk of intervention. If “chivalry” means courage it is true that the Spaniards fought and died bravely enough at their guns, but the great lesson taught by Preble and magnificently emphasized by Farragut was that bravery in a naval man is taken for granted, that it is only the first of his virtues. To that must be added training, discipline, resourcefulness, clear thinking, and decisive action; and it is evident that this essential truth had never been taught in the Spanish navy.

XX

THE SANTIAGO CAMPAIGN

Cuban blockade—Search for Cervera—Hobson and the *Merrimac*—
Battle of Santiago—The controversy—Spanish inefficiency during
the war—Treaty of peace—Effect of the war.

WHILE Commodore Dewey was waiting and preparing at Hongkong, just before the declaration of war, the North Atlantic fleet was drilling at target practice off Key West, and a reserve fleet called the "Flying Squadron" was waiting orders at Hampton Roads. In spite of the strained feeling which followed the sinking of the *Maine* and pointed clearly to war the Spaniards had in West-Indian waters only a few light vessels and one old cruiser, the *Reina Mercedes*, and the engines of the *Mercedes* were in such bad condition that she could not get up steam. Just before the war broke out the Spaniards collected their Atlantic fleet under Admiral Cervera in the harbor of St. Vincent, Cape Verde Islands, and there they stayed for several days after war was declared, although the Cape Verde Islands belong to Portugal, which was supposed to be neutral.

This squadron of Cervera's consisted of four armored cruisers, three torpedo-boat destroyers, and three small torpedo-boats, with an auxiliary ship which acted as tender for the torpedo squadron. The last four vessels were left behind when Cervera started across the Atlantic. The cruisers were fine modern ships, with an armored deck, protecting engines and magazine, and a six-inch armor belt. The newest of them, the *Cristobal Colon*, had been launched

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only two years before, but it was characteristic of Spanish procrastination that the new big guns for her forward and after turrets were not ready when they were needed and expected. As the old ones had already been taken out of the ship, it meant that the finest cruiser of the squadron had to go out to fight without her heaviest guns. The destroyers were of the most modern type, built in England and launched hardly more than a year before the declaration of war.

Although there were no battle-ships in this squadron, it was capable of striking a very effective blow, and when it finally sailed westward on April 29th for parts unknown it made people on our own Atlantic seaboard very nervous. Unfortunately, certain "yellow" newspapers, which had done their best to force war, made as much exciting news as they could out of the approaching Spanish fleet. One of them, which earned for itself the name of the "one-cent liar" during the war, published as a Sunday "feature" a lurid story of a bloody battle in mid-Atlantic.

Nobody knew where Cervera's squadron was for ten or twelve days, and during that time, if newspaper rumors could be believed, the whole Atlantic was black with Spanish ships. To quiet the fears in some of our seaport towns the government hastily organized a "northern patrol" squadron to guard the coast north of the Delaware. Later, when the foolish panic was over, these vessels were sent south to join the blockade of Cuban ports.

On Rear-Admiral Sampson, commander-in-chief of the Atlantic fleet, depended the responsibility of finding Cervera's squadron and destroying it. He had decided that the natural aim of the Spanish fleet would be some point in the West Indies near Cuba, and probably at Porto Rico. Accordingly, on the 8th of May he left Key West to intercept the enemy, reckoning the time of their arrival by the rate of speed the Spaniards ought to make.

But they were so slow that it was not until four days later that the arrival of the Spanish squadron was re-

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ported. The destroyer *Furor* had touched at St. Pierre, in Martinique, on the night of the 11th. Here Cervera had to leave one of his destroyers on account of broken-down boilers. The rest of the squadron was sighted the following day, headed north.

Acting on this news, Sampson sent off ships to watch the Windward and Mona passages and ordered Schley's "Flying Squadron" to patrol the southern coast of Cuba. As soon as Sampson had coaled his own battle-ships he took them to the north side of the island. For another week nothing more was heard of the Spaniards. On the 18th of May three ships of Schley's squadron came close to the entrance of Santiago Harbor and exchanged shots with the fort. That very afternoon they steamed away again, and at sunrise next morning Cervera's squadron entered the harbor. It turned out that Cervera had gone to the Dutch island of Curaçoa to meet the colliers he needed and had arranged for. Here again the officials in Madrid failed him. When he got to Curaçoa he found, to his dismay, that there were no colliers awaiting him; and, as the Dutch authorities held him to the twenty-four-hour rule, he had to steam away without getting more than six hundred tons of coal aboard. So he headed for Santiago for more coal and other supplies.

Up to this time there had been so many false rumors about the whereabouts of the Spanish fleet that the Department at Washington were slow to believe that the enemy was really at Santiago, especially as Schley had seen smoke behind the forts at Cienfuegos and reported as a fact that the Spaniards had gone there instead. It was not till May 27 that Schley satisfied himself that he was mistaken and that Cervera was in Santiago Harbor. Then he began a blockade, and when the news reached Sampson he brought his fleet round from the north to join forces and take command.

Cervera's actions up to the time he entered the harbor had been creditable enough. But once inside the wooded

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headlands of Santiago he seemed to have been struck with the same paralysis that afflicted all Spanish officials and commanders during this strange war. He needed coal and was trying to get it aboard, yet he let his whole squadron lie idle while the American liner *St. Paul* captured, just off the port, a steamer that was bringing him three thousand tons of coal. Any one of his four cruisers could have gone out, rescued the coal, and taken the American ship as well. Furthermore, he allowed Schley to blockade him with an inferior force, remaining inactive in the harbor till Sampson's arrival made the odds against him overwhelming.

Then followed a month of close blockade. Since the narrow entrance to the harbor made it impossible for the American fleet to attack the Spaniards inside, Sampson attempted to bottle up their squadron by sinking a hulk in the narrows. At 3.30 on the morning of June 3d Naval-Constructor Hobson, with seven volunteers, took the collier *Merrimac* directly into the narrows under cover of darkness. But there was still enough moonlight to make her a distinct target, and the batteries on each side at once opened a heavy cross-fire of rifle and cannon as soon as she entered the channel. To the anxious watchers in the fleet it seemed as if not one of the gallant handful on the ship could be left alive. And yet, so wretched was the Spanish marksmanship that, although this cross-fire killed fourteen and wounded thirty-seven of the Spanish gunners, not a man on the *Merrimac* was wounded. One shot, however, had cut away the rudder-chains so that Hobson was unable to steer the vessel to the point where she was to ground and swing across the channel. On reaching the best position he could make he set off the explosives in her hull, but she drifted farther in than was intended and went down at a spot where there was still room enough for ships to get safely by. So as far as its purpose was concerned Hobson's exploit was a failure, but the splendid daring of the act fired the nation with enthusiasm. "I venture to say,"

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wrote Sampson to the Secretary of the Navy, "that a more brave and daring thing has not been done since Cushing blew up the *Albemarle*."

As the *Merrimac* settled, her crew clung to a raft and surrendered to a launch from the Spanish flag-ship. A pleasant incident of the war was the courteous act of Cervera in sending out his chief of staff with a flag of truce to the American fleet, telling Sampson of the safety of Hobson and his men and praising their courage. About a month later they were exchanged and welcomed back to the fleet.

Meanwhile the troops under Shafter had been landed some miles to the east of Santiago and were attempting to capture the city by assault. Provisions were scarce in Santiago, especially as the presence of the fleet made a great drain on the store of supplies. But half starving as they were, the Spanish soldiers under General Linares fought with obstinate courage, and succeeded in defending the city with the loss of only two outposts. Sickness soon broke out among the American soldiers, chiefly because the most stupid mismanagement in the matter of food, medicines, and shelter hampered every step of the American army. General Shafter, ill himself and discouraged at his failure to capture Santiago, telegraphed a gloomy report to Washington, early on the morning of Sunday, July 3d, suggesting a retreat.

The arrival of this message brought deep anxiety to President McKinley and his advisers, but that very evening another cablegram gave news of a wholly different kind. Shafter had also telegraphed to Sampson the day before to force the entrance with the fleet at all costs, and on Sunday morning, July 3d, about nine o'clock, Sampson left the blockading line in his flag-ship, the *New York*, accompanied by the gunboat *Hist*, to go four miles east in order to confer with Shafter. The rest of the fleet, ranging in a wide half-circle, lay off the harbor in the following order from east to west: the battle-ships *Indiana*, *Oregon*, *Iowa*,

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Texas, and the armored cruiser *Brooklyn*. The regular position of the *New York* had been between the *Indiana* and the *Oregon*. The *Gloucester*, formerly J. Pierpont Morgan's yacht *Corsair*, lay a little to the east of the *Indiana* and much nearer the harbor. Away to the western end of the line, near the *Brooklyn*, was a small gunboat, the *Vixen*.

At 9.30 the bugles sounded the regular Sunday inspection, and the officers and men of each ship were soon lined up for review on the quarter-deck. Suddenly a young sailor on the *Iowa* noticed an unusual amount of black smoke rising above the headlands that screened the harbor. A moment later the black prow of the Spanish flag-ship appeared in the narrows. Boom! a gun from the *Iowa* gave the alarm, but every other ship in the squadron caught sight of the enemy, too. The bugles shrilled the signal, "General Quarters," and in a flash the stiff lines of sailors and marines melted into scurrying groups as each man made at top speed for his battle station.

The ships had kept up little steam as they rocked at their stations doing blockade duty; but now, with forced draughts and the stokers shoveling like demons, each ship in the line worked its utmost to get up steam, close in on the Spanish cruisers, and destroy them before they could escape. The Spanish column left the harbor in the following order: *Infanta Maria Teresa* (flag-ship), *Vizcaya*, *Cristobal Colon*, and *Almirante Oquendo*. As the American squadron headed toward them it was a question for a few moments whether the Spanish ships would scatter as soon as they got out or whether they would keep together on a single course. Officers and men on the distant *New York* prayed that the *Maria Teresa* would lead her column east, but as soon as she was clear of shoal water she turned west, followed by the rest of the line.

"I wish you a speedy victory," was the signal Cervera flew to encourage his captains, and as the bows of the flag-ship turned west her broadside opened on the American

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fleet. The next fifteen minutes were exciting indeed. Of the blockading fleet the stanch old *Oregon*, which had just arrived from a trip all the way round from the Pacific coast, bore off the honors in getting up speed. But soon the others came charging down upon the Spanish line, too, their guns flashing and booming and clouds of black smoke pouring out of their funnels.

Each Spanish cruiser as well was wreathed in smoke from her own guns as she wheeled to the right and fled westward. But the concentrated fire was terrific, and the cruisers staggered under its effect almost as soon as they reached open water. Still they kept going at full speed, with their guns booming incessantly, and in the clouds of battle-smoke the Americans could not tell for some time whether any of their shots were taking effect. Since the Spanish fleet came out of the harbor under full steam, they got a good running start, while the American ships were working with might and main to get under way; consequently the battle soon became a chase, with all the American ships but the *Brooklyn* running westward on a course nearly parallel with the Spanish column.

Cervera's plan had been to concentrate his attack on the *Brooklyn* at the western end of the American line, and by putting it out of the fight leave a free road to Cienfuegos. Besides the *Brooklyn* there was no other American ship but the *New York* which could make anything like the speed of which his four cruisers were capable. This plan was helped by the fact that the *New York* had gone four miles to the east on the very morning of the sortie. It was also helped by an amazing manœuvre on the part of the *Brooklyn* herself. When the *Teresa* came out the *Brooklyn* steered in for her and was still on a northerly course when the rest of the fleet were heading westward. In the evident hope of running down the *Brooklyn* Cervera turned the bows of his ship directly toward the *Brooklyn*, and the latter, instead of swerving to the northwest, made a wide turn to the east and south. In doing so she cut directly across the American

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line, and only a lucky lift of powder-smoke gave the captain of the *Texas* a chance to back his engines at full speed to avoid being rammed and sunk by the *Brooklyn*.

By this movement the *Texas* was checked and the *Brooklyn* herself lost much headway before swerving once more to the west in pursuit. Had it not been for the woodwork on the Spanish flag-ship she might have escaped, after all, in spite of the terrible slaughter on her decks, for her armored hull was still sound. But the exploding shells set the woodwork afire and cut the water-main. In a few minutes the ship was all ablaze, and to save his surviving officers and men Cervera headed toward the beach, ran aground, and struck his colors. The concentration of fire on the flag-ship had spared the second and third ships in the line, the *Vizcaya* and the *Colon*, especially as they got up high speed and the *Colon* shielded herself from the American fire by passing between her sister ships and the shore. The surrender of the *Teresa* left the *Oquendo* to bear the full weight of fire from the rearmost American ships and she soon went aground in flames within a half-mile of the *Teresa*.

When the lifting smoke showed the *Oquendo* also aground every ship within range trained her guns on the *Vizcaya*, for by this time the *Colon* was outfooting the Americans and seemed to be getting safely out of reach. Again in the case of the *Vizcaya* it was the woodwork that proved fatal. The shell fire had set her ablaze, too, and at about eleven o'clock she ran aground with flames shooting out of her ports and magazines bursting.

While the big ships were thundering at each other a plucky fight with the torpedo-boat destroyers was going on at the harbor mouth. Lieutenant-Commander Wainwright, commanding the *Gloucester*, was nearest to the entrance when the Spanish squadron was seen coming out. Paying no attention to the guns of the shore batteries, he ran in close to them and peppered away at the big ships with his light guns. But, knowing that he could do them

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little harm, he bottled up steam and waited till the destroyers should appear. These two—the *Furor* and the *Pluton*—came rushing out at the end of the column of cruisers, and the *Gloucester* dashed for them at full speed, pouring a steady stream of shells from her rapid-fire guns. The guns on either of the destroyers were more powerful than those of the *Gloucester*, not to mention their torpedoes. But, as Farragut said, "the best defense against an enemy's fire is a well-directed fire from your own guns." Though the *Gloucester* was nothing but a pleasure yacht mounting a few small guns, her well-aimed fire delivered at close quarters wrecked the two destroyers, while she herself was untouched by a single shot. The *Indiana* got a few shells into them at long distance, but the *Gloucester* had already settled their fate. The *Furor* blew up in a great jet of steam and water; the *Pluton* barely reached shore before she sank.

Of the entire Spanish squadron only one ship remained, but she seemed to be sure of escape. This was the *Colon*. She had the reputation of making twenty-three knots on her trial trip, she had escaped injury, and she already had a lead of six miles. There were no ships in the American fleet capable of anything like twenty-three knots, but the nearest vessels—*Texas*, *New York*, *Brooklyn*, and *Oregon*—stuck to the chase, making all possible speed. At a signal from Sampson the other ships gave up the pursuit and turned to the dangerous work of rescuing the Spaniards from the burning and exploding hulks that lined the shore.

It seemed as if only some extraordinary luck would enable the Americans to capture the fleeing *Colon*, but, to their surprise, they discovered that they were gaining on her. As a matter of fact, instead of making twenty-three knots during this chase she did no better than fourteen. It was simply another case of lack of preparation and training. Had the *Colon's* fire-room force been trained and efficient she could easily have run away from her pursuers. Instead, the leading American ships, the *Oregon* and the



THE LAST OF CERVERA'S FLEET
(The *Colorado's* final effort)

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Brooklyn, steadily gained on her. Soon the turret-guns from the American ships boomed, and jets of water near the Spanish cruiser showed that she was falling within range. Since, as we have seen, the *Colon* had been sent from Spain without her heavy forward and after guns, she was unable to reply to this long-range fire. Soon a shell dropped just beyond the *Colon*, and her captain, despairing of escape, turned her bows ran the vessel ashore, and lowered his flag.

The surrender of the *Colon* took place at 1.20 P.M. By that time every vessel in the Spanish fleet had been destroyed, with the loss of about 350 killed and 150 wounded. On the American side not a vessel was seriously hurt; only one man had been killed and two wounded. No defeat could be more overwhelming. The destruction of Cervera's squadron led to the surrender of Santiago and, added to a similar disaster in Manila Bay, it meant a speedy end to the war. On August 12th a protocol was arranged suspending hostilities, and a treaty of peace was signed by our commissioners in Paris on December 10, 1898.

Of course, the American fleet at Santiago was far stronger than the Spanish. But the wholesale disaster at Santiago, as at Manila, was due not so much to the difference in ships and guns as to the miserable inefficiency that disgraced every step of the Spanish operations.

In the first place, the reason Cervera abandoned a sheltered harbor in the face of a much superior force was that he had been ordered out by General Blanco. And Blanco's reason was the famine in Santiago, which made the presence of the fleet more of a burden than a help. But that very condition was due to the fact that it had never occurred to the Spanish officials to lay in a store of provisions even when they knew that the city was going to be besieged.

In the second place, if Cervera was forced to go out he should have made the attempt by night. The thing that had kept him from trying a night sortie was the powerful

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searchlight which Sampson kept playing on the entrance during every moment of darkness. But there had been several squally and foggy nights which had offered ideal conditions of escape, in spite of the searchlight, and kept the watchers in the American fleet tense with anxiety. And yet Cervera preferred to linger in port, only to go out to certain destruction in broad daylight.

We have already noted the bad engine-room work on the *Colon* which alone was responsible for the loss of that ship. As for gunnery, the same lack of training which was displayed in Montojo's squadron was just as evident in Cervera's. In spite of the rapid fire from the Spanish ships, maintained during the first hour of the fight, only two American ships were hit at all. Some light may be thrown on this wild shooting by the fact that when the *Teresa* went out the guns of her secondary battery had never been fired before. In short, there never was a better example of the fact that victories depend on what has been done before the fight itself begins.

If there was shiftlessness and inefficiency in the Spanish fleet, it was more than matched by the short-sightedness of the Spanish government. The chief reason why the Spaniards had been unable to put down the Cuban rebellion was that, while a huge army of two hundred thousand soldiers had been sent from Spain to the island, scarcely a single supply or ammunition wagon had been taken with them. Certain shipping companies made a good profit from every soldier they transported to Cuba; but, as wagons took up too much room on shipboard and were therefore not profitable to carry, they were left behind. The result was that the Spanish troops were unable to make a march of more than a day or two out from Havana or Santiago.

The Minister of Marine, however, more than any one else, was responsible for the ill-prepared state of the Spanish navy. We have already noted the matter of the *Colon's* guns and that of the colliers for Cervera's fleet. During the month preceding the war Cervera begged this

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man for definite information regarding the American ships, and for charts of the American coast, but the Minister had nothing to give but vague promises. His colleague, the Minister of War, was equally brilliant. When, with coal-bunkers nearly empty, Cervera lay blockaded in Santiago Harbor by an overwhelming force, this amazing official cabled him orders to run the blockade at once, go to Manila and destroy Dewey's squadron, and then come back again to Cuba!

But when the war began no one dreamed that Spanish officials could be guilty of such unbelievable stupidity and negligence. It is only fair to remember that fact in these days when it is the fashion to sneer at our victories simply because they were so easy and so overwhelming. For example, three of the best-known military authorities in Germany were consulted by an American newspaper at the beginning of the war as to the chances of the United States in attacking Cuba. All three agreed that it would be hopeless to try to take the island unless the Americans landed an army of at least two hundred thousand men. As it turned out, with the brilliant support of the navy, the army accomplished the task with hardly more than one-tenth of two hundred thousand men.

The navy won well-deserved laurels in this war, but, unfortunately, the victory of Santiago was stained by an ugly controversy that sprang up immediately afterward between the partisans of Sampson and Schley as to who deserved the credit of the victory. The ordinary citizen, who knew nothing about Sampson's invaluable services before the battle and of Schley's questionable conduct during the same time, felt that the latter had not received full credit from Sampson when he telegraphed the news of the victory. The wording of this message, unfortunately, was left to a subordinate, and an unpleasant effect was made which the "yellow" journals and certain politicians were quick to take up against Sampson. The critics of Schley answered back with great bitterness, and the quarrel was on.

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Finally Schley asked for a court of inquiry (July, 1901) to examine his conduct during the war. The court returned the decision that his service before June 1st was characterized by "vacillation, dilatoriness, and lack of enterprise." Admiral Dewey, who was president of the court, said, however, that he thought Schley ought to have the chief credit for the Santiago victory because he was in nominal command during most of the actual fighting. This point had not been discussed by the court at all, and the statement made the confusion only worse. Schley then appealed from the court to President Roosevelt. The latter reviewed the evidence and reported that the court had not treated Schley unfairly; moreover, that after the battle began no ship took orders from either Sampson or Schley, that the battle itself was simply "a captains' fight." It is worth noting, too, that in this quarrel the opinion of Schley's brother officers, though silent, was overwhelmingly against him; and this not so much on account of his strange manœuvre during the battle as because of what seemed to them inaction and even insubordination during the early part of the campaign.

It was most unfortunate for both officers that their unwise friends insisted on this controversy. Schley, whatever his shortcomings during the Santiago campaign, had a good record, notably in his fine rescue of the arctic explorer Lieutenant Greely in 1884. But the controversy left him estranged from many of his brothers in arms, in spite of his following among the people.

The most cruel injustice fell upon Sampson, who was fairly hounded to his grave by scurrilous and venomous attacks in newspapers, public speeches, and personal letters from every part of the country he had served so well. If naval history means anything it means, as we have seen, that victories are won chiefly by what has been done before the actual shooting begins. In selecting Sampson for war command the Department picked an officer who had no political friends, no "family" influence, and one who had

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not even hinted at wanting the position. He was chosen simply on his record of splendid efficiency, dating from the day of his graduation at the head of his class in Annapolis down to the time when he was drilling the Atlantic fleet at target practice in anticipation of the war. The choice of Sampson was applauded by the entire navy, and the organization he perfected, the skill with which he prepared for every emergency, and the vigilance of his blockade confirmed this choice over and over. The easy victory over the Spanish ships in broad daylight was chiefly the result of his tactics during the entire month before. The accident of chance which took the flag-ship so far east that she had only a small share in the actual battle is a trifling consideration compared with the real things that made the victory for which he was so largely responsible.

In view of all the printed and spoken abuse of Sampson which broke him down and yet drew from him never a word in self-defense, we may consider the following quotation from Rear-Admiral Chadwick, who served under him as captain of the flag-ship and who was in a position to know him thoroughly. "Sampson was the hero by nature, for nature made him great. Without thought of self, of incomparable simplicity and truthfulness, quiet and reserved, though most kindly, with never a harsh word, with absolute courage both physical and moral, with an unbending purpose when once his decision was made, and with a judgment which seemed unswerving, he was fitly the hero to officers and men, and to none more than to those who were closest to him."

This unhappy controversy in the navy, combined with the "embalmed beef" scandals in the army, brought the Spanish War to an unpleasant close. But as the smoke of those conflicts has now cleared away we ought to be able to look back over the war and consider it fairly. Undoubtedly the conflict could have been avoided altogether—and that is true of most wars—but the results seem to have been, after all, beneficial to both nations. To Spain the

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loss of Cuba and the Philippines was like a successful operation that removed two diseased members, because for many years these two colonies, with their rebellions and misgovernment, had been only a heavy drain on the Spanish treasury. To the United States the war gave a new place abroad among the world powers, and at home it served to draw together North and South under the same flag for the first time since the Civil War. For example, Gen. Fitzhugh Lee and Gen. Joseph Wheeler, who commanded volunteers in 1898, had in 1861 fought for the South; and among Roosevelt's Rough Riders those whose fathers had worn the gray outnumbered the sons of the men in blue. The war also taught the army several important lessons which it has made the most of since, and the brilliant services of the navy overcame throughout the nation the old indifference and opposition to maintaining a fleet, and led to a rapid increase in ships and men.

XXI

EVENTS FROM THE SPANISH WAR TO VERA CRUZ

The Boxer Rebellion—Lieutenant Clark's work on the Tientsin railroad—Battle-fleet cruise—Nicaraguan service—Occupation of Vera Cruz.

IN the two years which followed the Spanish War the navy saw difficult and dangerous service in the Philippines. The cruiser *Charleston* was wrecked upon an uncharted reef off Luzon, and one small gunboat went aground in a river and was captured by the Filipinos. The task of subduing the Filipino insurrection fell chiefly on the army, but the navy performed a very important service in patrolling the rivers and shores of the territory held by the rebels.

In 1900 trouble broke out in China. Certain over-patriotic Chinese, like the Japanese in 1863, banded themselves together for the purpose of driving all foreigners from the Flowery Kingdom. To this end they organized a society called the "Fist of Righteous Harmony," which was shortened by English and Americans to the more convenient name of "Boxers." The movement spread fast, with wide-spread attacks on mission stations and foreigners generally. Our minister in Peking telegraphed to Rear-Admiral Kempff on the *Newark*, then at the port of Taku, that the American legation at Peking needed protection. Kempff despatched a guard of United States marines, who arrived at Peking just before the railroad was destroyed, and the American and European legations were besieged by the Boxers.

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The situation at Peking was critical, but the consuls and officers representing the various nations at Tientsin talked endlessly without being able to agree on what should be done. Disgusted with such proceedings, Captain McCalla of the *Newark* announced, "Well, I have only one hundred and twelve officers and men, but I'm going to march to Peking at once, even if I have to go alone!"

This straightforward speech had a good effect. The British, Austrian, Japanese, and Italian officers joined with McCalla, and finally the Germans, French, and Russians came along, too. The allies succeeded in reaching Langfang, a place within forty miles of Peking, but meanwhile the Imperial troops had gone over to the Boxers and ripped up the railroad-tracks in the rear of the allied force. As the railroad to Peking had already been destroyed, the foreigners were left stranded, with their communications cut and their supply of food and ammunition very low. After a consultation the commanding officers agreed that it was necessary to fall back to Tientsin to await reinforcements. The retreat was accompanied by some sharp fighting, the brunt of which was borne by the Americans, who formed the vanguard. Hardly had the allies, numbering about seven hundred, reached Tientsin when they were besieged by several thousand Boxers. Then it became necessary to rush men and supplies from the seaport Taku to Tientsin.

While the allies had been bombarding the forts at Taku the American gunboat *Monocacy*, a funny, double-ended, side-wheeler mounting ancient smooth-bores, was the representative of our navy at that port. She was called the "Noah's Ark of the Asiatic Station," and was the joke of all the other navies in the Pacific; but she came out of this affair with flying colors. Orders from Washington obliged her commander to hold aloof from the bombardment, but after the forts were abandoned, and the neighboring cities of Taku and Tongku fell into the hands of the allies, the admirals of the various nations signed an agreement by which the control of the two cities should be turned

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over to the captain of the *Monocacy*. That is, he was to take charge of the waterworks, the public buildings, rolling-stock, etc. Probably the choice of an American officer from a little gunboat was an easy way out of a tangle where the officers of every European nation distrusted the others. To help him, the American captain was given an officer of every nationality represented in the allied forces.

Commander Wise of the *Monocacy* took for his own personal supervision the management of the water-supply, a matter of first importance, for every drop of drinking-water used by the allied troops before they entered Tientsin had to come from the Taku waterworks. The next thing to do was to get the railroad between Tongku and Tientsin into working order. He turned to his lieutenant, George R. Clark.

"Clark," said he, "that road must be put in commission at once. Go ahead."

Lieutenant Clark might have answered that, being a sailor, he knew nothing at all about railroading, not to mention patching up track and rolling-stock that the Boxers had destroyed. But when you are told to do a thing in the American navy you go ahead and do it, and without any remarks. No matter how hard the task is you are expected to do it well, too. That is what a naval man means by his favorite word, "efficiency."

Lieutenant Clark promptly went ashore with a squad of bluejackets and marched to the railroad yard. There he found a discouraging spectacle. Locomotives lay in the ditch covered with rust, and all around were weather-beaten cars with their wheels in the air. The rickety single-track railroad that led from the yard in the direction of Tientsin he knew was ripped out in any number of places. And this was the railroad that would have to be made to work before a single soldier or a single round of cartridges could reach Tientsin.

Clark called his sailors about him and told them exactly what the problem was, and they responded in the way

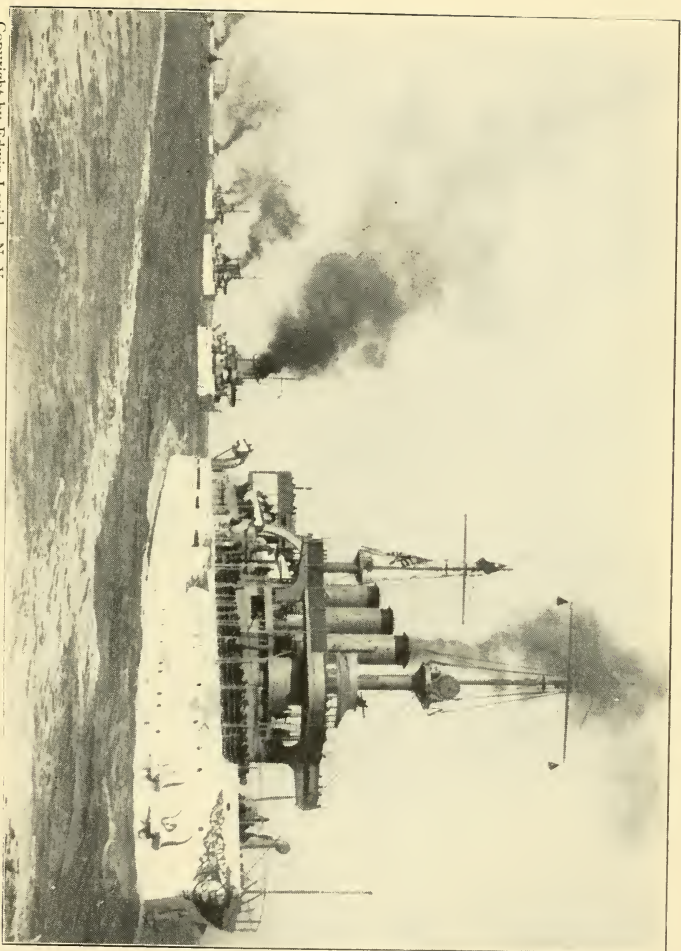
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that makes us proud of our enlisted men. They took hold as if the whole affair were a new kind of lark. It turned out that two of them had worked on locomotive machinery before they entered the navy, and they began examining the injuries to the locomotives with a fine professional air. The others pried and hauled till cars and locomotives were back again on the tracks. As they all knew how to get up steam on a ship's launch, they applied the same principles to the engines, and before long had some of them smoking and sizzling. In less than two days they had patched up five locomotives; four were manned by our jackies, and the other by a squad of British sailors, who seemed to be as delighted as the rest with this novel style of cruising. These engines were first sent ahead on short trial trips, and every one of them that was able to crawl back to the yard under her own steam was called "ready for duty."

Meanwhile Clark was overhauling the small outfit of cars, sawing here, building there, in order to adapt them for carrying troops, horses, water, provisions, and ammunition. At the same time he collected and loaded on flat-cars the wrecked telegraph poles, in order that telegraphic communication might be set up the instant the line to Tientsin was clear.

When the cars were ready he had worked out a system of operation by which trains could be run with the least possible delay in going and returning, and made out a schedule accordingly. Not the least of his troubles was the matter of arranging for carrying the forces and supplies of various nations, all of whose commanding officers wanted to go first. But he managed to meet that situation with fine tact, and things went far more smoothly than he had dared to hope.

Of course, the rickety locomotives would break down from time to time, and the train crews of sailormen had fighting to do along the line as well as railroading. It was a familiar excuse for a late train, "Sir, we had to



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THE UNITED STATES BATTLE-SHIP FLEET ON ITS CRUISE AROUND THE WORLD

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stop to fight a crowd of Boxers who were putting obstructions on the track." Time and again, too, the railroad yard at Tongku was threatened by night attacks, so it can be imagined that Lieutenant Clark did not get much sleep during those busy weeks.

But the work was done. In a few weeks thirteen thousand men were transported over the track to Tientsin, along with several hundred horses and a corresponding amount of water, ammunition, and provisions. Not a life was lost, not a car went off the track; the troops raised the siege at Tientsin, and then went on to Peking and relieved the beleaguered foreigners there. The relief of Peking meant the collapse of the Boxer rebellion. It is easy to see that the thing that made the relief of Tientsin and Peking possible was the opening of the railroad from Tongku. The reason that the feat deserves the space given it here is because it is the sort of thing that is likely to go unappreciated because it does not play to the gallery. It was hard, wearing, and very prosaic work, but it was the service that counted most. It showed the energy and resourcefulness of our officers and men, and is even better evidence than the splendid fighting done by our sailors and marines at Tientsin and Peking of the fact that our navy understands the meaning of the word "duty."

The service done by the Americans at Tongku did not attract much attention in America, but it was appreciated by the foreign officers in China. Letters of congratulation from commanding officers came in on all sides, and when the old *Monocacy* returned home her captain was decorated by the German Emperor with the order of the Red Eagle as a mark of Germany's appreciation of the services rendered by the officers and men of the American gunboat during the Boxer rebellion.

Since the troubles in the Philippines and China our navy has had a respite from actual fighting, with the exception of the occupation of Vera Cruz. Its problem has been to increase power and efficiency in readiness for war.

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To this end great progress has been made both in ships and personnel.

An important event which made for efficiency was the cruise of the battle-ship fleet round the world in 1907-1909. On December 16, 1907, sixteen first-class battle-ships set out from Hampton Roads under command of Rear-Admiral Robley D. Evans, the same Evans whom we saw as a midshipman lying wounded at the foot of the stockade at Fort Fisher. The fleet passed through the Straits of Magellan and came north to San Francisco, where Admiral Evans was obliged by ill health to yield the command to Rear-Admiral Sperry. From San Francisco the ships proceeded to Honolulu, Auckland, Sydney, Melbourne, Manila, Yokohama, Amoy, and Suez. On arriving in the Mediterranean the fleet divided, some of the ships arriving at Messina just in time to assist in the relief of the stricken city after the earthquake. Finally, after a cruise of forty-six thousand miles, the battle-ship fleet arrived back again in Hampton Roads on Washington's Birthday, 1909.

The results of this cruise were of great value. Just how much the friendly reception of the American fleet at Yokohama did to dispel the Japan war-talk in both the United States and Japan is hard to say; but it probably did a great deal. From the naval point of view the results were very important. The long cruise was a practical test of such problems as the navy would have to meet in case of war involving a move against a distant coast. The fleet stood the test with great credit. It made its own repairs; it worked out new standards of economy in coal consumption; it solved problems of big-fleet organization. At the same time the cruise showed clearly that we were badly in need of colliers and that in many points our battle-ships were capable of being improved. It is far better to discover weaknesses like these in peace than in war.

In the autumn of 1912 a naval force was sent to restore order in Nicaragua. The trouble was quickly suppressed by our sailors and marines, with the loss of only five men

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killed. Short as the affair was, it lasted long enough to prove the discipline, gallantry, and accurate shooting of our men. Their temper is well illustrated by one incident. During an attack on the insurgent works the commanding officer sent back to the rear a detachment of sailors because they had landed in white uniforms, which were fatally conspicuous. The sailors retired, but, finding a little stream, they rolled over and over in the mud till their white clothes were plastered brown. Then they went back on the run to the firing-line, and a few minutes later, together with the marines, rushed a position described as practically impregnable.

Two years later trouble in Mexico brought a still better opportunity to test the tone of the present navy and answer the prediction made by some that in the popularity enjoyed by the navy since the Spanish War the service would lose the fine edge of proficiency and become careless.

To the long history of Mexican revolutions there had been added, in 1911, the deposition of President Diaz by revolutionists headed by Francisco I. Madero. The latter was overthrown and slain in February, 1913, in another revolt which brought to the fore Gen. Victoriano Huerta as provisional president. He was never officially recognized by the United States. There followed a long chapter of increasingly successful rebellions against Huerta by the Mexican "Constitutionalists," accompanied by troubles along the frontier, and the loss of American lives and property in Mexico.

In April, 1914, several things happened which looked like deliberate attempts to provoke trouble. At Tampico on April 9th the paymaster of the *Dolphin* was arrested with his entire boat party and paraded up the streets of the city to the jail. The officer and his men were unarmed, but in full uniform, and the American flag was flying in the stern-sheets of the boat. About the same time a mail orderly was arrested in Vera Cruz, in spite of the fact that he, too, was in uniform and proceeding quietly about his

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business. Furthermore, the telegraphic despatches from our government to our representative in Mexico City were tampered with and held up by Huerta officials. As all these acts occurred within a few days and amounted in each case to a deliberate insult, the President demanded a complete apology and upheld Rear-Admiral Mayo, at Tampico, in the latter's demand for a salute to the flag as a reparation for the arrest of the *Dolphin's* paymaster. As Huerta refused to pay the salute as demanded, our fleet was ordered to Vera Cruz, and on April 21st Rear-Admiral Fletcher sent a landing-party to seize the custom-house at that port. After some sharp fighting in the streets the sailors and marines took possession of the city with a loss of only nineteen men killed. Four days later the three leading South American countries, Argentine, Brazil, and Chile, offered their services in an effort to mediate between the United States and Huerta, and to put an end to the destruction of life and property in Mexico. President Wilson accepted their friendly offer under certain conditions, and another period of waiting followed, with the Americans in control of Vera Cruz. A little later Huerta resigned and departed from the country, leaving the Constitutionalists practically in power.

Such is a bare outline of events. Let us see how far the navy showed readiness and efficiency in the crisis. Within eighteen hours of the call for the fleet Rear-Admiral Badger had hoisted his flag on the *Arkansas* and steamed out of Hampton Roads, followed by such of the fleet as lay in Norfolk. At the same time other dreadnoughts were steaming out from other Atlantic ports to join the *Arkansas* in midocean. One of these battle-ships took on eighteen hundred tons of coal, provisions for one thousand men for six weeks, enormous quantities of other supplies, rounded up officers and men who were on shore leave, and was ready to trip her anchor in twelve hours. At the Newport training-station one thousand men were all ready to embark for Mexico within fifteen minutes of the receipt



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SEA-FIGHTERS ON THEIR WAY TO MEXICAN WATERS

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of the telegram. When Secretary Daniels told Paymaster-General Cowie that the navy needed a large merchant steamer at once as an auxiliary to the fleet off Tampico it took the Paymaster-General just sixty minutes to arrange for the use of the Ward line steamer *Esperanza*, at that time lying off Vera Cruz. An hour and a half more sufficed to get word by wireless to Rear-Admiral Fletcher that he could use the *Esperanza*.

When the landing was made at Vera Cruz, officers and men who had never before been under fire suddenly found themselves under the most trying conditions of warfare imaginable. They had to advance along open streets, an easy target for numerous "snipers" hidden in windows, towers, or behind barricades. For a detailed story of how our men behaved one must turn to Admiral Fletcher's report, which makes stirring reading. For example, Boatswain's Mate Nickerson of the *Utah* was slightly wounded three times, but after first-aid bandages had been applied he took charge of a squad that built an advanced barricade under fire. Here he was wounded again three times, two shots breaking his leg above and below the knee. In another part of the city Ensign McDonnell and four men from the *Florida* were stationed on the roof of the Terminal Hotel to send signals to the gunboat *Prairie*. Naturally, this group were the target for all the snipers in the neighborhood, and the marvel is that they were not all killed. A marine stationed near them was killed and two others wounded, but in spite of the bullets singing about their heads all day the squad took and sent messages without a moment's interruption.

Meanwhile the gunners on the *Prairie* had a chance to show what they could do. They had received the signal that there was a large body of snipers in the tower of the Naval Academy building. Long before this the officers had ascertained the exact ranges between the ship's anchorage and every principal building in the city. It needed only the signal to open fire, and the *Prairie* fired six times,

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each a perfect shot. After the sixth shell there was not much tower and no more fight in the Mexican Naval Academy.

In short, the Vera Cruz affair, although it lasted only a day or two, tested the navy and found it keyed up to concert pitch. This must be gratifying to the nation whose flag it serves; but we should demand of our navy nothing less than the best. We spend many millions every year on ships and men, not because we desire war, but as an insurance against war. It was our miserable unreadiness for war that brought us our humiliations in the War of 1812, that dragged our Civil War through four awful years, and, on the part of the army, made the few months of the Spanish War so heavy with sickness and death. The burden of war in these days falls largely upon the navy, because more than ever before sea-power turns the scales of war. If war must come, the navy should be ready like a keen, well-tempered sword with which the nation can strike swiftly and decisively.

XXII

THE MODERN NAVY

Development in ships since the Spanish War—Improvements in gunnery—Target practice—The man behind the gun—The advantages of the modern enlisted man—The navy as an industrial school—The marines—The officers—Conclusion.

A NEW naval policy has been steadily developing since the Spanish War. That war left the United States in a new position. From being a republic wholly concerned with its own affairs the nation suddenly found itself in the position of an empire with distant colonies and new responsibilities. We became a "world power." We insisted on an "open door" policy in China, and stood firmly against the partition of that country, which the Continental powers seemed bent on accomplishing after the Boxer rebellion. The Monroe Doctrine was affirmed in stronger terms than before, but our government soon realized that the doctrine was regarded by some Continental rulers as "Yankee bluff," which would be respected only so long as it was backed up by a first-class navy.

The result was that new ships were built in greater numbers than ever before in times of peace, classes at the Naval Academy were doubled to meet the demand for trained officers, and the entire Academy was rebuilt at the cost of nearly eleven million dollars. In a few years the United States sprang from sixth to third place among the naval powers of the world. Finally, the Panama Canal adds immensely to our sea-power, because it makes it possible for our fleets to pass in a short time from one coast to the other.

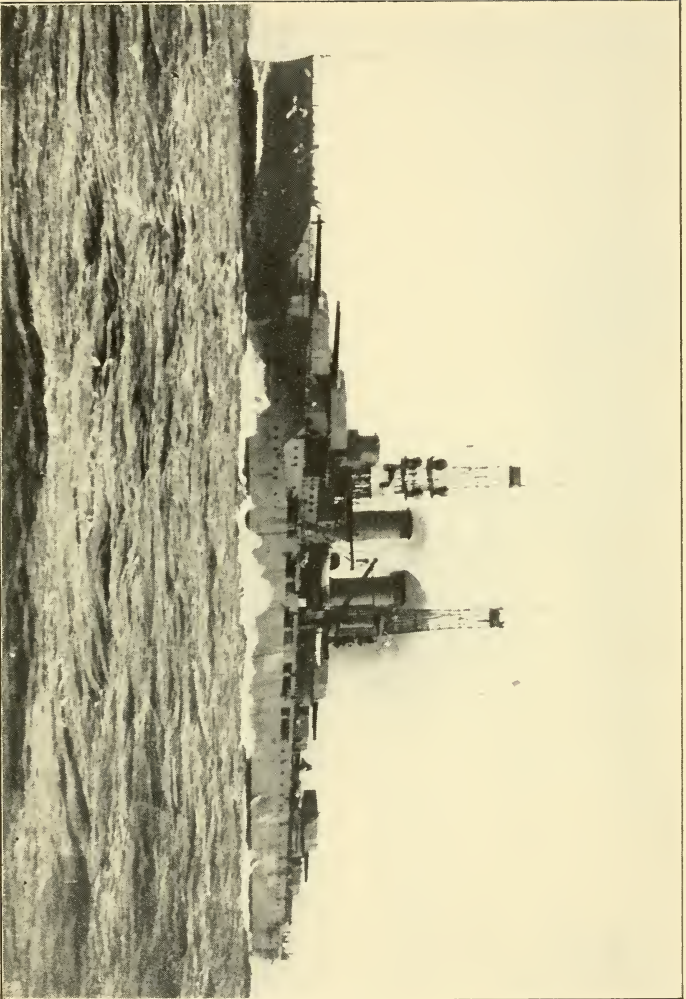
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But the growth in numbers is not so interesting as the development of the ships themselves. A first-class battle-ship of the Spanish War, like the *Indiana*, would cut a sorry figure beside a first-class battle-ship of 1914, like the *Wyoming*, because the latter has much greater speed, tougher armor, and a far more powerful battery. In 1905 the English led the way by producing a new type, the famous *Dreadnought*, which relied wholly on her great guns for battle, mounting a secondary battery only for use against torpedo-boats. And, as heavier guns have been made or their number on a ship increased, the dreadnought has been superseded by a type called the "super-dreadnought." But these names are not official. Battle-ships are rated in three classes, and it is significant of the changes since the Spanish War that a first-class battle-ship of that time is now relegated to the third class and called "obsolete."

The British, Germans, and Japanese have a type just below the battle-ship, the "battle-cruiser." There is some difference of opinion as to its value compared with that of a dreadnought, which is cheaper to build than the speedier but less powerful and more vulnerable battle-cruiser. Opinion on this side of the water has decided against it, and it does not exist in the American navy. We have, however, the armored cruiser and the unprotected but speedy scout cruiser, and both these types have developed correspondingly.

The torpedo-boat has undergone still greater development, for the modern "destroyers" are several times as large as the *Pluton* and *Furor*, which represented the finest of their type in 1898, and are far speedier. Our modern destroyers can make about thirty-three knots. Moreover, the destroyer of to-day is capable of making long cruises independently of the big ships.

The same thing is true of the modern submarine. Again following the lead of the English, we are building submarines three or four times as large as the type we had



Photograph by Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.

THE U. S. S. "WYOMING"

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ten years ago. To-day a submarine makes cruises of several hundred miles independently of tender or squadron, and, as we are just beginning to realize the immense possibilities of the submarine, that fact means a great deal. Submarines did not figure in our Spanish War or in the Russo-Japanese War, and the crude little *David*, which sank the *Housatonic* in our Civil War, still holds the honor of being the only submarine that ever destroyed an enemy's ship, although a new record is likely to be made in the great European war of 1914. The developments in the submarine have been so marvelous that it must be carefully reckoned with. Recent fleet manœuvres had made one point clear as daylight—namely, that the most powerful "super-dreadnought" in the world has little protection against these venomous little ships operating under water. Of course, the submarine is wholly a weapon of harbor and coast defense; but the fact that it can go out and attack a fleet of battle-ships several hundred miles off the coast without any serious risk of getting hurt by the enemy contains infinite possibilities.

An important innovation in naval tactics is the aeroplane. This, too, has not developed very far as a weapon of offense, because its effectiveness in dropping bombs upon an enemy's fleet has not been clearly proved. But there is no doubt about its value in scouting; and as the naval aeroplane, or "hydroplane," can make its flights from the deck of a battle-ship, these scouts of the air can accompany the fleet wherever it goes. A good test under war conditions was made in the harbor of Vera Cruz in the spring of 1914, and the results were very satisfactory.

Another improvement regarding the ships of our navy is in the direction of fleet action. Before the Spanish War individual ships were well handled, but the ships were the units, and when Rear-Admiral Sampson organized his fleet in the blockade of Santiago he realized how much the navy needed practice in fleet organization and fleet action. To-day the unit of operation is the fleet, and a new virtue has

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been added to the American navy—"fleet efficiency"—which did not exist in 1898.

Such efficiency is a matter of men rather than ships, and it brings us to another important point—namely, that the development in the *materiel* of the navy is hardly as interesting as the improvement in *personnel*. In 1898 we laughed at the pitiable shooting done by the Spaniards, but the wiser officers shook their heads at the small percentage of hits made by the American gunners and declared that we must do better. To this problem the keenest minds in the service have been devoted ever since that war, with the result that modern American naval gunnery is probably not surpassed anywhere. It is estimated that in 1914 the "man behind the gun" shot one thousand per cent. better than in 1898.

We are rightly proud of our progress in this regard; yet, since gunnery is the prime essential in battle, we can never be satisfied with anything short of perfection. During the War of 1812, as we have seen, our gunnery surpassed that of the English, but during the years of dry rot and politics that preceded the Civil War it went to pieces so badly that during the Civil War our naval gunnery, with few exceptions, was of a low order.

The immense improvement in our naval gunnery since the Spanish War is due to several things. One of the greatest obstacles to gun practice at the time of that war was the fact that it was so costly to fire even a single shot from a turret-gun. Even the practice of loading a heavy shell wore out the breech of a gun seriously. In 1903 a British naval officer invented a "dummy loader" which enables a gun-crew to practise loading under exactly the same conditions without injuring the breech of the gun itself. The device was adopted in our navy, with the result that gun-squads soon became so proficient in handling the eight-hundred-and-seventy-pound shell and the four powder-bags that go with it that they could load one of the big turret-guns in less than one-quarter of a minute.

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For another still more important device also we have to thank the brains of the British navy. This is the "Dotter," familiarly called the "Ping-pong." By means of this instrument a small target is made to pass across the area of the gun as if it were an enemy's ship. The gun-pointer follows this with his eye at the telescopic sight and his hand on the elevating-wheel. When the lines on his sight intersect on the dot representing the center of the target, he presses a firing-key. This discharges by electricity a little needle which pierces the target. The gun-pointer can then tell how the shot would have struck with relation to a distant target if the great gun itself had been fired. This invention is of immense value, because it means that gun-pointers can keep the gun on the target continuously, and carry on constant target practice without wearing out the gun or spending a cent of the nation's money for powder and shot.

A third device, just mentioned, the invention of an American naval officer, is the telescopic sight, an incalculable improvement on the old inaccurate method of sighting a gun. It is estimated that without the telescopic sight ships would have to approach a target at a fourth or fifth of the present range in order to make the same number of hits.

Another means of improving American gunnery has been the awarding of prizes and trophies. For many years the navy had offered prizes and medals for small-arms shooting, but it was not till after the Spanish War that rewards were offered for proficiency with the great guns. Twice a year, spring and fall, target practice is held on the southern drill-grounds off the Chesapeake capes or off Guantanamo. The spring target practice, which follows the winter's drills at Guantanamo, is the "elementary" target practice. This is to test the individual gun-pointers on the different ships. In this practice a target is towed on a given course at a given rate of speed, and the ships in turn steam past it at a known distance and rate of speed.

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Thus all the elements in the problem are known except the gun-pointers' skill. Only one gun is fired at a time, and each pointer is given a particular target to shoot at. In this trial process there is competition between the various gun-crews of the same ship as well as between the various ships of the fleet. Target practice for the secondary battery is held at night, because these smaller guns are designed to repel attacks by torpedo-boats, which would only attack a fleet under cover of darkness.

The fall target work is held on the southern drill-grounds after the summer manœuvres, and is known as "battle practice." In this conditions are made to resemble as nearly as possible those of actual battle. Away off below the horizon a target is towed on an unknown course and unknown rate of speed. The ships approach and open fire whenever they like, except that they must not come within a minimum range, and after firing a few "ranging" shots the great guns open in "salvos"—that is, the entire broadside. At this work a ship has about four minutes after the opening shot to make her score. After individual ship practice comes "divisional practice," in which the five battle-ships of a division make their attack as a unit, following the signals of the flag-ship so closely that all the guns are fired at the exact instant in one tremendous salvo. This is typical battle practice, but details vary from year to year.

In order to make a hit in a seaway at a range of eleven thousand yards, methods of ascertaining the distance must be scientific. We have already noted the telescopic sight in aiming; the other elements are the man at the range-finder, the spotter, and the fire-control group, with a fire-control officer in the steel conning-tower in command. An ingenious instrument, the range-finder placed in turrets and tops, enables the operator to get the range. As soon as he sees the number of yards marked on the scale he telephones it to the fire-control officer, who sends the figure to the fire-control group, who sit in a little sound-

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proof chamber away below decks. These men take reports of the enemy's distance, bearing, speed, etc., from different parts of the ship, make rapid calculations, and transmit the information to the battery. Meanwhile, high up on the platform at the top of each mast sits the spotter. The spotter must be a man of quick and strong eye, intense concentration, and rapid judgment. He watches the splash made by the falling shell near the target and telephones to the fire-control room to alter the aim by so many yards up, down, right, or left. Acting on his report, the fire-control operators transmit the information to the turret-crews to modify their aim accordingly.

Of course, the competition between ships at target practice is of the keenest because the gunnery trophy is the greatest prize a ship can win. And it adds to our satisfaction in reading of the astonishingly high percentage of hits to realize that the canvas target represents about one-tenth of the area that would be exposed by an enemy's battle-ship.

Besides gaining the finest distinction in the fleet, the gun-crews who make the best record are awarded substantial sums of money. For the following year they wear an "E" on their uniforms—meaning "Excellent"—and during manœuvres they display a huge E painted on the winning turret and a red pennant at the fore. (An "E" on the smoke-stack means that a ship has won the engineering competition.) In one year Congress appropriates forty-two thousand dollars in medals, trophies, and money prizes for skill in gunnery, and, judged by the results, no item in the naval appropriation is better invested.

No small part of the improvement in gunnery may be credited to "the man behind the gun." An important change in our navy is in the type of our enlisted man. Long after the War of 1812 the "common sailor," as he was called, was as a rule a rough brute of a man who would do anything for a glass of rum and was kept in order only by a cat-o'-nine tails. Whenever a crew was

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given shore liberty large numbers deserted outright, no matter where the port was, and all were sure to get dead drunk. In those days nobody thought of enlisting before the mast unless he was desperately hard up or an officer of the law was after him.

In these days fewer desert than ever before, and more re-enlist. The modern jacky ashore in a foreign port is, as a rule, intent on seeing the sights. He arms himself with a guide-book and explores museums, galleries, and ruins, and comes aboard ship again full of nothing worse than a jumble of facts and impressions. While the thousands of American bluejackets were ashore in Vera Cruz in the spring of 1914 not one was reported drunk; and a few months later, after arduous service in and around Vera Cruz, when a battle-ship crew of about eight hundred men were given their first shore liberty in a home port, every man returned to his ship as sober as when he left it.

The difference is probably due chiefly to the difference between the life of the old-time and the modern sailor. A sailor of the *Hartford* in 1864 sat cross-legged on the deck, with a piece of oil-cloth for a table, and made a dinner of hard "salt horse" and sea-biscuit. The sailor of to-day gets a better dinner than he would expect at home and better than was served to Admiral Farragut on the *Hartford* in 1864. Even in 1914 the pay of the seaman remains low compared with wages he might make ashore; but nearly all of it is clear saving. In order to attract the right sort of men the government offers them liberal comforts aboard ship and chances for fun besides. Almost every fine evening there is a moving-picture show on the quarter-deck, and frequently the men get up minstrel performances for the amusement of the ship.

The great joy of the modern sailor is athletics. In the days of sailing-frigates a bluejacket got all the athletics he needed in swinging the yards and making or furling sail; but on a modern battle-ship there is little room for

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exercise in the ship routine. In 1900 the Navy Department made a beginning by ordering captains to encourage athletics among the men, and the movement has gone ahead ever since. Now the Department provides athletic outfits for every ship, and there is not only an "athletics" officer for every ship, but one also on the staff of the commander-in-chief. While the fleet is at its winter drill in Guantanamo there is plenty of sport to offset the plenty of work, and at the end of the season in March the fleet takes a whole week off for games and races. The wide reach of the bay is ideal for boat-races, which are very popular, and there are seventeen baseball diamonds ashore. A regular "league" schedule is laid out to decide the baseball championship of the fleet. On these ball-teams officers and men play together; but the captain is always an enlisted man. Of course, boxing is a favorite sport at all times. The bouts are carefully supervised and limited to seven rounds; but to the American sailor the championship belt of the North Atlantic Fleet stands only a little below the world trophy.

All these privileges for the enlisted man would make a "taut" captain of the old frigate days turn over in his grave. Foreigners like to sneer at the way we treat our enlisted men; they say we have no "discipline." Their idea of discipline is illustrated by the spectacle often seen by our officers when visiting Russian ships in the East, when an angry or drunken officer would amuse himself by beating an unoffending sailor in the face. We prefer to ship men who would not stand being beaten in the face by anybody; at the same time we know that no enlisted man in the world is more loyal to his officers than the American sailor or marine.

In short, our enlisted men are of a much higher type than the navy has ever boasted before, and the policy today is to attract still more the clean, athletic, and ambitious young men of the country. Uncle Sam is rather particular about the kind of lad he puts into a sailor's

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uniform, for out of all the men who apply to enlist only about one in four is accepted.

A great advantage to the sailor of to-day, and one not realized by Americans generally, is that our modern navy is performing a great service in times of peace as a huge industrial school. Thousands of lads enter the navy who could not afford to continue at school, especially as their lessons in high school seemed too impractical to help them to "get a job." They get in the navy an all-around education of body, mind, and hand of the utmost practical value. Besides the athletics just mentioned there are daily setting-up drills and the constant supervision of medical officers to keep a man in the best physical trim. If a man is ambitious to study he can go as far as he likes in the classes conducted by officers aboard ship, and in 1914 there were about eight hundred who found time to follow courses in correspondence schools. For many years there have been apprentice seamen who have passed the examinations for the Naval Academy and won commissions in the navy, and in 1914 Congress authorized fifteen extra appointments for the enlisted men alone.

The greatest benefit to the greatest number comes in the learning of useful trades. The particular trade depends largely on a man's particular bent; but every year the navy trains hundreds of electricians, engineers, plumbers, carpenters, painters, pharmacists, bookkeepers, stenographers, wireless-telegraphers—and so on through a long list of occupations. For training the specialists needed aboard the modern battle-ship the navy has several technical schools. For instance, at Mare Island (California) and at New York the navy maintains two electrical schools. This department is of the greatest importance, because everything mechanical aboard ship is done by electricity. In addition there are special radio schools for those who want to learn wireless. Those who have served one enlistment and have shown proficiency in gunnery are admitted to gunnery schools at Newport and Washington. In these

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classes the men learn all about the manufacture of cannon and torpedoes and the details about the care and use of those weapons. For practical work the men go into the naval-gun factory in Washington and the torpedo station at Newport. Other naval schools at Charleston, Norfolk, Newport, and San Francisco train the apprentices for the numerous every-day trades needed aboard ship.

Finally, the navy teaches men a very important lesson, something that they learn in no other school in the country—namely, to obey orders and to do a piece of work thoroughly. In short, the thousands of young men who yearly leave at the end of their enlistment and go back to civil life have been equipped to earn a living and are in all other respects much more valuable citizens than when they entered the recruiting office. The American navy is a great democratic university, with an enrolment of about fifty thousand men for a course of at least four years.

No reference to the enlisted man would be complete without mention of the marines, who have fought, shoulder to shoulder, with the bluejackets in every naval battle in our history—the soldier-sailors of our navy. Aboard ship the marines of the present day act chiefly as sentinels; in action or target practice they man certain guns of the secondary battery; but their chief duty is to be ready at any instant to land at any spot in the world where trouble is brewing for Uncle Sam and put it down. They are the advance-guard of the nation, and usually they leave little for anybody else to do. They see more active service than any other corps under the flag. Between 1900 and 1914 there was only one year in which the marines were not engaged somewhere on the firing-line. In Tientsin and Peking the marines covered themselves with glory during the Boxer rebellion, and they were no less conspicuous for gallantry in the taking of Vera Cruz in 1914. They came in for special commendation in Admiral Fletcher's report of that affair. The marines have an enviable record.

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There are only ten thousand of them, but they are the only corps in which there is not a single vacancy.

For the officers as well as the enlisted men the period since the Spanish War has meant a decided advance. A comparatively few years ago young lieutenants off duty aboard ship would hunt for diversion as a matter of course. To-day one is more likely to see them intent on a war game. The War College at Newport distributes problems of naval warfare to fleet and naval stations. Solutions are demanded and passed upon by the experts at the college. War games are often played on board ship, with two sides in separate rooms and a messenger going back and forth with the moves. Such work as this calls for the sort of mind that makes a successful chess-player, and is the best possible school of tactics.

The War College itself has gained great importance and influence since the Spanish War. Officers, especially of commanding rank, study there the finer problems of naval sciences, strategy, and international law. War games are played, discussed, and the results put on file for future reference.

At the same time, as the modern battle-ship has become such an intricate machine, involving the sciences of steam, electrical engineering, ordnance, ship construction, etc., no course of four years at the Naval Academy could equip a man completely. Accordingly, there is now a post-graduate school at Annapolis to give the young officers more technical training, especially those who wish to specialize in some branch of their profession. For those who want to make torpedo warfare their specialty there is the torpedo school at Newport, and for those ambitious to become aeroplane experts there is the aviation school at Pensacola. The ordnance specialists naturally seek duty in the naval gun-factory at Washington, and so on. The officer of to-day is made to feel not only the necessity of being thoroughly equipped in his profession, but also of adding something himself to the progress of his service

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and keeping abreast of what is done in foreign navies. The navy has a magazine, the *Naval Institute*, in which the officers discuss every conceivable problem affecting the navy, and in which important works of foreign officers are reviewed or their articles published in translation. In short, there never was a time in the history of the navy when officers, young and old, were so keenly alert for new ideas and set so high a standard of efficiency for themselves as to-day.

We come now to the final word. We have seen the early struggles of the navy, how it triumphed over the general opposition to a navy by its victories in the War of 1812; what damage was done by the politicians in the years that followed; how the navy pulled itself together in the Civil War and largely decided the issue by its blockade of the South; how the navy fell into neglect again after the war, but revived in time to make the Spanish War a matter of less than four months' duration; and, finally, we have seen how since that war the navy has progressed in every department. The objection that the navy was an instrument of tyranny is heard no longer, but opposition is still heard on the ground of expense, even although the cost to the American people of our navy is less per capita to-day than it was for the thirteen frigates and sloops a hundred years ago. But the difficulties with Mexico in April, 1914, and the tremendous conflict that broke out in Europe in July of the same year show that the day of wars is not yet past in spite of Hague conferences and peace societies. If war should fall upon us, we must turn to our navy as our first and strongest line of defense or offense. The navy has shown that it is true to the best traditions of the past; it needs only the interest and hearty support of the entire nation.

A NAVAL CHRONOLOGY

IN this history of the American navy it has been obviously desirable to emphasize the essentials, and it has been necessary to pass over many minor features. In the following chronology, however, practically everything of consequence is included, and certain important military battles, treaties, and proclamations are noted also in order to give bearing to the events that are more strictly naval.

- 1775, April 19. Battle of Lexington and Concord.
- 1775, October 13. Congress establishes a Marine Committee for naval affairs.
- 1775, November 10. Marine corps organized.
- 1775, December 3. First fleet of the United States put in commission.
- 1776, February 17-April 17. Naval expedition against New Providence, Bahamas, Com. Hopkins.
- 1776, July 4. Declaration of Independence.
- 1776, October 11-13. Gunboat action, Lake Champlain; American force under Benedict Arnold defeated after desperate resistance.
- 1777, September 18. U. S. sloop *Lexington*, Capt. Johnston, captured by British sloop *Alert*.
- 1777, October 17. Surrender of Burgoyne.
- 1778, February 6. Louis XVI. acknowledges independence of American colonies and signs treaty of alliance and commerce.
- 1778, March 7. Action between U. S. 32-gun frigate *Randolph*, Capt. Biddle, and British 64-gun ship *Yarmouth*. At end of fifteen minutes *Randolph* blew up; only four saved.
- 1778, April 24. U. S. sloop *Ranger*, Capt. Jones, captures British sloop *Drake* off Carrickfergus, Ireland.

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- 1779, September 23. U. S. frigate *Bonhomme Richard*, Capt. Jones, captures British frigate *Serapis* off English coast.
- 1781, May 29. U. S. frigate *Alliance*, Capt. Barry, engages two British sloops-of-war at the same time and captures both.
- 1781, September 1-7. French fleet, Adml. DeGrasse, prevents British fleet, Adml. Graves, from entering Chesapeake Bay and relieving Cornwallis.
- 1781, October 19. Surrender of Cornwallis.
- 1782, April 8. Penn. state sloop *Hyder Ali*, Lieut. Barney, captures in Delaware Bay British sloop *Gen. Monk*, of superior force. One of the most brilliant actions of the war.
- 1783, September 3. Treaty of peace signed by British and American representatives.
- 1794, March 27. Construction of six frigates authorized.
- 1795, September 5. Treaty ratified with Algiers for ransom of prisoners and annual tribute.
- 1796, March 1. Proclamation of the Jay treaty with Great Britain.
- 1796, April 20. The President authorized to continue construction and equipment of two frigates of 44 guns and one of 36.
- 1796, November 4. Treaty of peace concluded with Tripoli.
- 1797, July 10. Launching of 44-gun frigate *United States*.
- 1797, September 7. Launching of 36-gun frigate *Constellation*.
- 1797, October 21. Launching of 44-gun frigate *Constitution*.
- 1798, April 27. Congress authorizes purchase of twelve vessels for war purposes.
- 1798, April 30. Navy Department organized.
- 1798, July 6. All French treaties declared void.
- 1798, July 11. Marine corps established.
- 1798, November 16. Five men impressed from U. S. sloop *Baltimore* by commodore of British squadron.
- 1799, February 9. *Constellation*, Capt. Truxtun, captures French frigate *Insurgente* off Nevis, W. I.
- 1800, February 1. *Constellation*, Capt. Truxtun, defeats French frigate *Vengeance* off Guadaloupe, W. I.
- 1800, September. U. S. frigate *George Washington*, Capt. Bainbridge, carries tribute to Algiers and is required to convey the Bey's ambassador to Constantinople.
- 1800, October 12. U. S. frigate *Boston*, Capt. Little, captures French sloop *Berceau*.
- 1800, December 14. U. S. schooner *Enterprise*, Lieut. Shaw, defeats French sloop *Flambeau* in a brilliant action.

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- 1801, March 3. Navy reduced to thirteen vessels.
- 1801, May 20. Three frigates and one sloop sent to Barbary coast to protect American commerce.
- 1801, August 1. The *Enterprise*, Lieut Sterett, captures the *Tripoli*.
- 1802, February 6. Congress recognizes war with Tripoli.
- 1802, July 22. The *Constellation*, Capt. Murray, defeats squadron of nine Tripolitan gunboats.
- 1803, June 22. U. S. frigate *John Adams*, Capt. Rodgers, destroys Tripolitan ship of war.
- 1803, October 31. U. S. frigate *Philadelphia* strikes reef near Tripoli and is captured.
- 1804, February 16. Lieut. Decatur, with ketch *Intrepid*, burns the *Philadelphia* in the harbor of Tripoli.
- 1804, August 3, 7, 24, 28, September 3. Combined bombardments on Tripolitan forts and attacks on Tripolitan gunboats by American squadron.
- 1804, September 4. *Intrepid*, M. Comdt. Somers, blown up in harbor of Tripoli.
- 1805, April 27. Three sloops assist in Eaton's capture of Derne.
- 1805, June 4. Treaty of peace concluded with Tripoli.
- 1805, June 12. U. S. gunboat, Lieut. Lawrence, boarded by boat from British fleet, Adml. Collingwood, and three men impressed.
- 1806, April 25. British frigate *Leander* fires upon American coasting-vessel and impresses several of her crew.
- 1806, May 16. Great Britain issues an "Order in Council" declaring coast of Europe from Elbe to Brest under blockade.
- 1806, November 21. Napoleon issues Berlin Decree, prohibiting commerce with Great Britain.
- 1807, June 22. British frigate *Leopard* fires into U. S. frigate *Chesapeake*, Capt. Barron, and impresses four seamen.
- 1807, November 11. British Order in Council forbids neutral nations to trade with France or her allies except under tribute to Great Britain.
- 1807, December 17. Napoleon's Milan Decree forbids trade with England or her colonies and confiscates any vessel paying tribute or submitting to British search.
- 1807, December 18. Congress authorizes building of 188 gunboats, bringing total in the navy to 257.
- 1807, December 22. Embargo laid prohibiting all foreign commerce. In force till March, 1809.

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- 1809, March 1. Non-intercourse act forbids all commerce with Great Britain, France, or their colonies.
- 1810, January 2. Napoleon instructs Murat, King of Naples, to seize all American vessels and their cargoes.
- 1810, May 1. British and French armed vessels excluded from American waters.
- 1810, May. Napoleon's Rambouillet Decree confiscates American vessels and their cargoes in French ports.
- 1810, June 24. U. S. brig *Vixen*, Lieut. Trippe, fired into by British man-of-war.
- 1811, May 16. U. S. frigate *President*, Capt. Rodgers, fights British sloop *Little Belt*, action of fifteen minutes. Each commander accused the other of firing first.
- 1812, April 4. Embargo laid on all vessels in United States for ninety days.
- 1812, June 17. Orders in Council revoked by Great Britain.
- 1812, June 18. United States declares war against Great Britain.
- 1812, June 23. U. S. squadron, Com. Rodgers, engages in unsuccessful pursuit of British frigate *Belvidera*.
- 1812, July 17-21. *Constitution*, Capt. Hull, escapes capture after long pursuit by British squadron.
- 1812, July 19. U. S. brig *Oneida*, Lieut. Woolsey, successfully resists attempt of British squadron to capture her on Lake Ontario.
- 1812, August 13. U. S. frigate *Essex*, Capt. Porter, captures British sloop *Alert*.
- 1812, August 19. *Constitution*, Capt. Hull, captures British frigate *Guerrière*.
- 1812, October 8. Lieut. Elliott makes successful boat attack against British brigs *Detroit* and *Caledonia*, Lake Erie.
- 1812, October 18. U. S. sloop *Wasp*, Capt. Jones, captures British sloop *Frolic*. Both taken the same day by British ship of the line.
- 1812, October 25. U. S. frigate *United States*, Capt. Decatur, captures British frigate *Macedonian*.
- 1812, December 29. *Constitution*, Capt. Bainbridge, captures British frigate *Java* off Bahia, Brazil.
- 1813, February 24. U. S. sloop *Hornet*, M. Comdt. Lawrence, sinks British sloop *Peacock*.
- 1813, June 1. *Chesapeake*, Capt. Lawrence, captured by British frigate *Shannon* off Boston.

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- 1813, August 2. U. S. brig *Argus*, Lieut. Allen, captured by British brig *Pelican* in Irish Sea.
- 1813, September 5. *Enterprise*, Lieut. Burrows, captures British brig *Boxer* off Monhegan, Me.
- 1813, September 10. U. S. squadron, M. Comdt. Perry, defeats British squadron on Lake Erie.
- 1814, March 28. *Essex*, Capt. Porter, captured by British ships *Phoebe* and *Cherub* in harbor of Valparaiso.
- 1814, April 23. British blockade extended to entire coast of United States.
- 1814, April 29. U. S. sloop *Peacock*, M. Comdt. Warrington, captures British brig *Epervier* off Florida coast.
- 1814, June 28. U. S. sloop *Wasp* (2d), M. Comdt. Blakely, captures British sloop *Reindeer* in English Channel.
- 1814, September 1. *Wasp*, M. Comdt. Blakely, sinks British sloop *Avon* off English Channel.
- 1814, September 11. U. S. squadron, M. Comdt. Macdonough, defeats British squadron on Lake Champlain.
- 1814, September 11–October 1. U. S. expedition, two schooners and six gunboats, M. Comdt. Patterson, destroys pirate stronghold at Baratavia, La.
- 1815, January 15. *President*, Capt. Decatur, captured by British squadron off Long Island.
- 1815, February 17. Treaty of peace with Great Britain ratified.
- 1815, February 20. *Constitution*, Capt. Stewart, engages and captures at the same time two British sloops.
- 1815, March 3. U. S. declares war against Algiers.
- 1815, March 23. *Hornet*, M. Comdt. Biddle, captures British sloop *Penguin*.
- 1815, May 19. Com. Decatur sails from New York to Algiers with squadron.
- 1815, June 17. U. S. squadron, Com. Decatur, captures Algerian flag-ship.
- 1815, June 30. *Peacock*, M. Comdt. Warrington, captures British brig *Nautilus*. (Prize released next day when Warrington hears of peace.)
- 1815, June 30. Com. Decatur concludes treaty of peace with Bey of Algiers.
- 1815, July 31. Decatur concludes treaty with Bey of Tunis.
- 1815, August 9. Decatur concludes treaty with Bey of Tripoli.

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- 1819, March 3. Congress provides for war on piratical craft of Spanish-American colonies.
- 1821, November 5. U. S. schooner *Alligator*, Lieut. Stockton, fired upon by Portuguese war-vessel of same armament. After action of one hour and twenty minutes latter surrenders and is sent to Boston as a prize.
- 1822, December 20. Congress authorizes squadron to suppress piracy in the Caribbean.
- 1822, July 21-22. Landing party, Lieut. Farragut, destroys pirate stronghold in Cuba.
- 1824, November 14. Landing party, Capt. Porter, exacts reparation at Foxardo for insult to United States. (For this act Porter was recalled, court-martialed, and sentenced to suspension for six months. He resigned and entered the Mexican navy.)
- 1832, February 6. U. S. frigate *Potomac*, Capt. Downes, destroys pirate villages at Qualla Battoo, Sumatra.
- 1838, August 19. Exploring expedition, Lieut. Wilkes, sails for antarctic regions and the Pacific.
- 1840, January 19. Lieut. Wilkes discovers the antarctic continent.
- 1842, December 1. Execution of Midn. Spencer and two seamen at sea for attempted mutiny on brig *Somers*, Capt. Mackenzie.
- 1844, February 28. Bursting of the gun "Peacemaker," U.S.S. *Princeton*. (Secretary of the Navy among the killed.)
- 1845, October 10. Founding of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md.
- 1846, May 12. United States declares war against Mexico.
- 1846, May 14. Blockade of eastern coast of Mexico proclaimed.
- 1846, July 6. U. S. squadron, Com. Sloat, takes possession of Monterey, Cal.
- 1846, July 6. U. S. frigate *Portsmouth*, Capt. Montgomery, takes possession of San Francisco.
- 1847, March 9-29. Naval operations at Vera Cruz: landing of troops, investment and bombardment, resulting in surrender of the city.
- 1848, February 2. Treaty of peace concluded with Mexico.
- 1850, May 26-October, 1851. United States expedition, Lieut. De Haven, to arctic in search of Sir John Franklin.
- 1852-1854. United States expedition to Japan, Com. Perry,

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established commercial relations between United States and Japan.

- 1853, July 2. Capt. Ingraham, U. S. sloop *St. Louis*, threatens to open fire on Austrian brig *Hussar* unless Martin Koszta, a Hungarian refugee to the United States and at that time a prisoner on the *Hussar*, is surrendered. Koszta is eventually given up.
- 1856, November 20-22. Capture of forts at Canton, China, by United States naval force, Capt. Foote, in retaliation for attack by the forts on sloop *Portsmouth*.
- 1858, October 17-February, 1859. U. S. squadron, Flag-Officer Shubrick, proceeds to Asuncion, Paraguay, to demand retribution for attack on the U.S.S. *Water-Witch*. Friendly relations restored without recourse to arms.
- 1860, December 20. South Carolina passes ordinance of secession.
- 1861, April 13. Surrender of Fort Sumter to Confederates.
- 1861, April 20. Abandonment of Norfolk Navy Yard, Com. McCauley, and unsuccessful attempt to destroy naval and military stores. The following ships of the navy burned and scuttled: ships of the line *Pennsylvania*, *Columbus*, *Delaware*; frigates *Raritan*, *Columbia*, *Merrimac*; sloops *Dolphin*, *Germantown*, *Plymouth*.
- 1861, April 27. Blockade of Virginia and North Carolina ports proclaimed. Subsequently extended to entire coast during following month.
- 1861, May 5. Transfer of Naval Academy to Newport, R. I.
- 1861, August 3. Construction of *Monitor* authorized.
- 1861, August 7. Contract awarded for seven armored gunboats for river service.
- 1861, August 28-29. Capture of Hatteras Inlet, North Carolina, by U. S. squadron, Com. Stringham.
- 1861, October 12. *St. Louis* launched, first ironclad in American navy.
- 1861, November 7. U. S. gunboats *Tyler* and *Lexington* cover retreat of Grant's army at Belmont, saving it from rout.
- 1861, November 7. U. S. squadron, Flag-Officer DuPont, captures Confederate defenses at Port Royal, South Carolina.
- 1861, November 8. U. S. frigate *San Jacinto*, Capt. Wilkes, removes Confederate commissioners from steamer *Trent*.

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- 1861, November 23. Escape of C.S.S. *Sumter*, Capt. Semmes, from U.S.S. *Iroquois*.
- 1862, January 30. *Monitor* launched.
- 1862, February 6. U. S. gunboats, Com. Foote, capture Fort Henry.
- 1862, February 7-8. U. S. squadron, Flag-Officer Goldsborough, captures fortifications defending Roanoke Sound.
- 1862, February 14. U. S. gunboats, Com. Foote, make unsuccessful attack on Fort Donelson.
- 1862, March 1-2. Evacuation of Columbus, Ky., by Confederates.
- 1862, March 8. Destruction of U. S. sloop *Cumberland* and frigate *Congress* by Confederate ram *Merrimac* (*Virginia*), Capt. Buchanan.
- 1862, March 9. Action between *Monitor* and *Merrimac*.
- 1862, March 9. Confederates abandon batteries on Potomac.
- 1862, March 13-14. U. S. squadron, Com. Rowan, captures New Berne, N. C.
- 1862, March 15-April 7. River squadron, Com. Foote, bombards Confederate defenses at Island No. 10.
- 1862, April 4. U. S. gunboat *Carondelet*, Comdr. Walke, runs past batteries defending Island No. 10.
- 1862, April 6. U. S. gunboats *Tyler* and *Lexington* prevent defeat of Union army at Pittsburg Landing (Shiloh).
- 1862, April 6-7. U. S. gunboat *Pittsburg*, Lieut. Thomson, runs past Island No. 10. Island surrenders, batteries on peninsula evacuated by Confederates.
- 1862, April 20. U.S.S. *Itasca* and *Pinola*, Capt. Bell, demolish ship obstructions, under fire, in river below Forts Jackson and St. Philip.
- 1862, April 23-24. U. S. fleet, Flag-Officer Farragut, passes Forts Jackson and St. Philip, and disperses Confederate flotilla.
- 1862, April 28. Forts Jackson and St. Philip surrender.
- 1862, April 29. New Orleans surrenders to Farragut.
- 1862, May 8. Baton Rouge surrenders.
- 1862, May 10. Pensacola evacuated by Confederates.
- 1862, May 10. Action between Union and Confederate gunboats near Fort Pillow; U. S. gunboat *Cincinnati* rammed and sunk.
- 1862, May 11. Destruction of *Merrimac* by Confederates to prevent its capture by Union forces.

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- 1862, May 13. Union naval forces occupy Natchez, Miss.
- 1862, May 15. Unsuccessful bombardment of Confederate fort on Drewry's Bluff by Union squadron.
- 1862, May 25. Recapture of Norfolk Navy Yard by United States marines.
- 1862, June 4. Fort Pillow evacuated by Confederates.
- 1862, June 6. Squadron of U. S. gunboats, Flag-Officer Davis, engage and destroy Confederate gunboats at Memphis.
- 1862, June 26-July 22. Continued naval bombardment on Vicksburg.
- 1862, June 28. Union squadron, Flag-Officer Farragut, runs past batteries at Vicksburg.
- 1862, July 15. Confederate ram *Arkansas*, Lieut. Brown, runs through Union fleet to Vicksburg.
- 1862, July 16. Congress creates grade of Rear-Admiral for flag-officers.
- 1862, July 22. Union gunboats make unsuccessful attempt to destroy the *Arkansas*.
- 1862, August 6. U. S. gunboat *Essex*, Comdr. W. D. Porter, attacks the *Arkansas* at Baton Rouge. Latter is run aground and fired by her crew to prevent capture.
- 1862, September 16-17. Battle of Antietam.
- 1863, January 10-11. U. S. gunboat squadron, Act. Rear-Adml. Porter, attacks and captures Confederate fort at Arkansas Post.
- 1863, January 31. Confederate rams *Palmetto State* and *Chicora* make successful surprise attack on Union blockading squadron, Charleston. Two Union vessels disabled.
- 1863, February 28. U. S. monitor *Montauk*, Comdr. Worden, destroys Confederate cruiser *Nashville* near Savannah.
- 1863, March 14. Attack by U. S. fleet, Rear-Adml. Farragut, on Port Hudson. U. S. frigate *Mississippi* runs aground and is fired.
- 1863, April 7. Union fleet, Rear-Adml. DuPont, bombards forts at Charleston without success. U. S. monitor *Keokuk* riddled by Confederate fire and sinks the following day.
- 1863, April 16. Naval bombardment of Vicksburg.
- 1863, April 20. U. S. gunboat squadron, Rear-Adml. Porter, attacks and captures Grand Gulf, Miss.
- 1863, May 2-4. Battle of Chancellorsville.

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- 1863, June 17. U. S. ironclad *Weehawken* attacks and captures Confederate ram *Atlanta* in Warsaw Sound, Ga.
- 1863, June 27. Boat party from C.S.S. *Archer*, Lieut. Read, cuts out revenue-cutter *Caleb Cushing* at Portland, Me.
- 1863, July 1-3. Battle of Gettysburg.
- 1863, July 4. Surrender of Vicksburg.
- 1863, July 9. Surrender of Port Hudson.
- 1863, July 16. U.S.S. *Wyoming*, Capt. McDougal, attacks and silences Japanese ships and batteries at Shimonoseki.
- 1863, September 19-20. Battle of Chickamauga.
- 1863, October 5. Confederate *David* torpedoes Union ship *Iron-sides* off Charleston, but fails to sink her.
- 1864, February 17. Confederate *David* torpedoes and sinks U.S.S. *Housatonic* off Charleston.
- 1864, April 19. Confederate ram *Albemarle* makes successful attack on Union gunboats; sinks the U. S. gunboat *Southfield* in Roanoke River.
- 1864, March 14. Two hundred thousand men drafted for Union navy.
- 1864, May 5. U. S. gunboat squadron engages the *Albemarle*. Latter retreats up Roanoke River.
- 1864, June 19. U.S.S. *Kearsarge*, Capt. Winslow, sinks Confederate cruiser *Alabama*, Capt. Semmes, off Cherbourg, France.
- 1864, August 5. Union fleet, Rear-Adml. Farragut, engages Fort Morgan and Confederate flotilla, and enters Mobile Bay.
- 1864, October 7. U.S.S. *Wachusett*, Comdr. Collins, captures the C. S. cruiser *Florida* in harbor of Bahia, Brazil.
- 1864, October 27-28. Lieut. Cushing with torpedo-launch blows up Confederate ram *Albemarle* in Roanoke River.
- 1864, October 28-31. Union gunboats attack and capture Plymouth, N. C.
- 1864, December 24. Unsuccessful attack by Union fleet, Rear-Adml. Porter, on Fort Fisher.
- 1865, January 13-15. Second attack on Fort Fisher. Fort surrenders to the army.
- 1865, January 15. U. S. monitor *Patapsco* sunk off Charleston by Confederate torpedo.
- 1865, February 18. Evacuation of Charleston by Confederates.
- 1865, April 2. Evacuation of Richmond by Confederates.
- 1865, April 9. Surrender of Lee at Appomattox.

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- 1865, April 12. Surrender of Mobile to Union forces.
- 1865, June 2. Surrender of Galveston to Union forces.
- 1865, August 29. Conclusion of the blockade of the South.
- 1865, September. Removal of the United States Naval Academy to Annapolis, Md.
- 1865, November 6. Surrender of the Confederate cruiser *Shenandoah* to British authorities.
- 1866, July 25. Grade of Admiral created and conferred on Farragut.
- 1867, June 13. Naval brigade from the *Hartford* and the *Wyoming* attack and destroy a village in Formosa in retaliation for massacre of crew of an American ship.
- 1870, May 16–June 11. U. S. squadron, Rear-Adml. Rodgers, attacks Corean forts. Latter stormed by landing party, Comdr. Kimberley.
- 1870, June 17. Six boats from U.S.S. *Mohican*, Lieut. Brownson, capture and destroy pirate ship at mouth of Teacapan River, Mexico.
1870. November 18–December 20. Cruise of the gig of the U.S.S. *Saginaw* from Ocean Island to Hawaiian Islands to find rescue for shipwrecked officers and crew of the *Saginaw*.
- 1871, July 3–May, 1873. North Polar Expedition, U.S.S. *Polaris*, Capt. Hall.
- 1877, November 24. U. S. sloop *Huron*, Comdr. Ryan, wrecked in gale off North Carolina coast. Over one hundred lives lost.
- 1879–1881. The *Jeannette* Expedition, Comdr. DeLong, to arctic.
- 1880, March 3. U.S.S. *Constellation* leaves New York with cargo of food for famine sufferers in Ireland.
- 1882, August 5. Congress authorizes construction of three steel war-vessels and one armed despatch-boat. Under this law were built the *Boston*, *Atlanta*, *Chicago*, and *Dolphin*—the beginning of the “new” navy.
- 1884, June 22. Lieut. Greely, U.S.A., and six of his exploring party rescued by U.S.S. *Thetis* and *Bear*, Comdr. Schley.
- 1889, March 15–16. Hurricane at Apia, Samoa. Loss of U.S.S. *Trenton*, *Vandalia*, and *Nipsic*.
- 1891, October 16. Boatswain, mate, and six sailors of the U. S. cruiser *Charleston* injured by mob in Valparaiso, Chile. Two of the injured died, and the incident nearly brought on war between the United States and Chile.

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- 1898, February 15. U.S.S. *Maine*, Capt. Sigsbee, blown up by mine in Havana harbor.
- 1898, April 22. President proclaims blockade of Cuban ports.
- 1898, April 25. Congress declares that a state of war has existed between Spain and the United States since April 21.
- 1898, May 1. U. S. squadron, Com. Dewey, destroys Spanish squadron, Manila Bay.
- 1898, June 3. Attempt by Naval Constructor Hobson to close harbor of Santiago by sinking the collier *Merrimac* at the entrance.
- 1898, June 28. President proclaims blockade of southern coast of Cuba and port of San Juan, Porto Rico.
- 1898, July 3. U. S. fleet, Rear-Adml. Sampson, destroys Spanish fleet as the latter attempts a sortie from harbor of Santiago.
- 1898, July 17. Santiago surrenders to United States army and navy.
- 1898, August 12. Terms for cessation of hostilities agreed upon by Spain and the United States.
- 1898, December 10. Treaty of peace concluded between Spain and the United States.
- 1899, March 1. Grade of Admiral revived and conferred on Rear-Admiral Dewey.
- 1900, May 29–August 14. United States marine guard besieged at United States legation, Peking, by Boxers. Siege marked by incessant fighting and gallant conduct of marines.
- 1900, July 9–14. Assaults by force of two thousand American, Japanese, and British forces upon Tientsin, resulting in capture of the city.
- 1900, August 14. Allies enter Peking and end Boxer rebellion.
- 1905, December 28–July 9, 1906. Voyage of U. S. dry-dock "Dewey" from Solomon's Island, Chesapeake Bay, to Olangapo, P. I., *via* Suez Canal.
- 1907, December 16–February 22, 1909. Cruise of forty-six thousand miles round the world made by U. S. battleship fleet, Rear-Adms. Evans and Sperry.
- 1909, April 6. Civil Engineer Peary, U.S.N., discovers north pole.
- 1914, April 21. U. S. fleet lands sailors and marines at Vera Cruz and takes possession of city.



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