CLASSICS FOR CHILDREN

LIFE OF NELSON

BLAISDELL

GINN & COMPANY.

THE DEATH OF NELSON.

ENGRAVED FROM THE PAINTING BY ERNEST SLINGENEYER.

SOUTHEY'S

LIFE OF NELSON

EDITED

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

ALBERT F. BLAISDELL

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INTRODUCTION.

SOUTHEY'S "Life of Nelson," one of the most popular and readable biographies ever written, is an enlargement of an article which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* of London eighty-five years ago.[1] This brief sketch was afterwards enlarged at the request of the eminent publisher, Mr. Murray, and was first published by him in the *Family Library* some three years after, in 1813.

Mr. Southey, in speaking of its publication, says:

"The 'Life of Nelson' was completed this morning (Feb. 1, 1813). This is a subject which I should never have dreamt of touching, if it had not been thrust upon me. I have walked among sea-terms as carefully as a cat does among crockery; but if I have succeeded in making the narrative continuous and clear, — the very reverse of what it is in the lives before me, — the materials are in themselves so full of character, so picturesque, and so sublime, that it cannot fail of being a good book."

The following extract from the original preface briefly explains the motive which stimulated the author to write the life of Lord Nelson:

[1] "This, which was perhaps, upon the whole, the most popular of any of my father's works, originated in an article in the fifth number of the *Quarterly Review* (February, 1810), which was enlarged at Murray's request. My father received altogether £300 for it, — £100 for the *Review*; £100 when the 'Life' was enlarged; and £100 when it was published in the *Family Library*." — *Southey's Life and Correspondence*, chap. xviii.

"Many lives of Nelson have been written; one is yet wanting clear and concise enough to become a manual for the young sailor, which he may carry about with him till he has treasured up the example in his memory and in his heart. In attempting such a work I shall write the eulogy of our great naval hero; for the best eulogy of Nelson is the faithful history of his actions; the best history that which shall relate them most perspicuously."

Mr. Southey's little book rose at once into universal favor, and has ever since been regarded as one of our popular and standard biographies. What is the secret of its popularity? Why has this little book been read and reread for more than eighty years? Why has it been an old-time favorite all these years with young people? The explanation is not difficult. In the first place, Southey was a writer of exceptional ability, and an unwearied and skillful editor. He was master of a style which has always commanded admiration for its clearness and simplicity. His literary, and also personal, fortunes were intimately associated with those of Coleridge and Wordsworth. He was not equal to either of them in genius, but he had abilities of a high order. For many years he made himself a magnate in the world of letters, doing his duty, says Thackeray, "for fifty noble years of labor; day by day storing up learning; day by day working for scant wages; charitable out of his small means; bravely faithful to the calling he had chosen, refusing to turn from his path for popular praise or prince's power. I hope his life will not be forgotten for it is sublime in its simplicity, its energy, its honor, its affection."

Mr. Southey wrote many long and now forgotten poems, and scores of volumes, and articles for the quarterlies and other periodicals, which required great accuracy and vast research. Except the "Life of Wesley" and the "Life of Nelson," and a few short poems, the vast literary productions of this

unwearied author are rarely read. "Southey's 'Life of Nelson,'" says Macaulay, "is, beyond all doubt, the most perfect and delightful of his works. No writer, perhaps, ever lived whose talents so precisely qualified him to write the history of the great naval warrior. There were no fine riddles of the human heart to read; no theories to propound; no hidden causes to develop; no consequences to predict. The character of the hero lay on the surface; the exploits were brilliant and picturesque. It would not be easy to find in all literary history an incident of a more exact hit between wind and water."[1]

It is to be remembered that Southey wrote his first sketch for the *Quarterly Review* only four years after the death of Nelson. The full biography, as it now stands, was written less than eight years after Trafalgar, and only two years before the downfall of Napoleon at Waterloo.

England's favorite admiral had almost annihilated the naval power of her great enemy, but on land Napoleon still threatened the liberty of Europe. Fresh in the memory of every Englishman were the daring exploits and matchless victories of the frail little man who, before he was forty years of age, had "actually been engaged against the enemy upwards of 120 times, in which service he had lost his right eye and his right arm, and had been severely wounded and bruised in his body."

Written during such momentous and stirring times in the history of his country, it is not strange that Southey was able, by his masterly pen, to give his narrative a dramatic vividness and depth of interest found in few works of fiction.

While Southey was master of a clear, vigorous English, he was none the less at times, in his controversial writings, prone to be influenced by strong prejudice and violent political partiality, and a somewhat haughty tone of arrogant self-confidence. Blemishes of this kind naturally would be expected, and do occur, in his "Life of Nelson." For instance, he hated

[1] Macaulay's *Miscellaneous Works*, Harper's edition, vol. i. p. 394.

the French, and hence some of his statements are based more on a bitter prejudice against the national enemy than a calm estimate of facts.

The search-light of history long ago revealed the fact that in the long and bitter European wars that followed the French Revolution, it was not the French alone who were "distinguished for boastfulness, perfidy, and unscrupulous audacity."

Again, Southey lived too near Nelson's time to form a calm and philosophical estimate of the character of his hero. He overlooks the weak points in Nelson's character, and condemns where it is not deserved. On the whole, however, it is generally conceded that Southey's pen-picture of the great admiral is lifelike, vigorous, and for the most part accurate. He depended, for the most of his facts, upon Clarke and M'Arthur's "Life of Nelson." With his usual literary skill he rearranged the material of these two bulky volumes, but did not take the pains to eliminate errors or to furnish much additional information.

Judged from a strictly historical point of view, Southey's little masterpiece has no great value. It is well to remember, however, that it was never intended by its author for an elaborate biography, but was written to furnish young sailors with a simple narrative of the exploits of England's favorite naval warrior. As such, perhaps, it has never been equaled for the charm and the perfection of its style. The student is referred to such passages as the description of the blowing up of the *Orient*, of the advance of the English fleet into Aboukir Bay, and the noble peroration of the book, as signal illustrations of what a skillful writer can do in writing clear, graphic, and beautiful English.

Southey was fortunate in the subject of his little biography. He was to write the life of a man whose remarkable exploits in the naval service of his country were unparalleled in their brilliancy and success. Information connected with the per-

sonal and professional career of this idol of the English navy has always been a subject of lively interest and proud exultation.

Nelson was a man of remarkable genius. He possessed exactly those strong and those weak points of character which made him a popular hero while living, and have endeared his memory to mankind for nearly a century.

Because his people were poor and the boy was sickly, his uncle, a captain in the navy, took compassion on the twelve-year-old stripling and took him to sea, "in the hope that a cannon-ball would knock off his head." A rifle bullet did put an untimely end to his life thirty-five years afterwards, but not until he had become England's greatest admiral, and had performed deeds in the service of his country with which all the world is familiar. With a fragile body, harassed by almost continual ill-health, or suffering most of his life from wounds, he showed what it is possible for a man of a fearless, intrepid, and ambitious spirit to accomplish. He early obtained by the most untiring energy and perseverance a mastery over the most minute details of his chosen profession. He always had the gift to inspire all under his command with an enthusiasm and determination to carry out his wishes. And as he was absolutely devoid of fear and a born fighter in those times when long and fierce combats both on land and on sea were the rule, and times of peace were rare, it may be well inferred that his men had their fill of hardship and glory. Nelson was an extraordinary man inspired to do great deeds from an unbounded ambition and an exalted idea of duty.

The personal life of a man who has played a commanding part in the history of his country is always of paramount interest to his fellow-men. We are never tired of noting and hearing of comparatively trivial deeds and sayings of such men. Hence, we like to read in Southey's "Life" that after the "great-little man," as Nelson was sometimes called, had become respected and feared in the West Indies by his enemies, that a certain official

of high rank, in seeking a personal interview, at last found the dreaded captain under a dining-table in a frolic with a pretty three-year-old boy, and that this same boy afterwards became a naval officer, and saved his benefactor's life the night Nelson had his right arm shot off.

Again, we like to learn, that the great admiral was cheerful and pleasant, and rarely appeared to have any weight on his mind; that he did not use salt, as he believed it to be the "sole cause of scurvy"; that he liked to eat his breakfast with several of his midshipmen. "He entered into their boyish jokes, and could be merry with the youngest." Not alone as a great naval warrior, able by his genius and fearlessness to carry out with wisdom and clear insight plans which led to victory, was Nelson preëminent, but equally wise and considerate was he in attending to those details of the daily life of his men which ensured their health and comfort. It does not disturb a people's admiration of their hero that Nelson "not infrequently displayed the unblushing and self-asserting vanity of a child, and with all a child's love of praise and a woman's love of flattery." He continues to be regarded as one of the great heroic figures of the world, in spite of the fact that his weaknesses were as remarkable as were his natural gifts and his sterling qualities.

If we would have faithful likenesses of those about us we must have them painted, as Cromwell wanted to be painted, "warts and all." In biography, as in portraiture, we must have light and shade. A common artist, whether he works with brush or pen, sees merely the outward form, and copies it. A man of genius looks deeper, and portrays the soul of the man as revealed by his features or actions. In the one we have a piece of neat waxwork; in the other, the living man. Hence, our library shelves are crowded with the lives of the world's great and little men, but biographies truly great may be counted on the fingers.

Southey's "Nelson" is an entertaining and stimulating biography for young people to read. It cannot, of course, be compared with the more stately biographies, written for more mature minds, like Boswell's "Life of Dr. Johnson," or Lockhart's "Life of Sir Walter Scott."

It belongs rather to the class of biographies represented by Wirt's "Life of Patrick Henry." Such biographies serve a most useful purpose in shaping the lives of young men.

It is a most wholesome thing for young students to learn that throughout Nelson's career a high sense of duty was always uppermost in his mind and directed all the public acts of his life. This dominant idea culminated and was exemplified in the famous signal to the fleet before going into action at Trafalgar, — "England expects every man will do his duty"; as well as in the last words of the dying hero, — "I have done my duty and I praise God for it." The old Saxon idea of a resolute devotion to duty, whether in the great or little acts of life, never had a more striking exemplar than in the story of Nelson's life. To this abiding sense of duty, which was the very crown of Nelson's character, were added other sterling traits admirably set forth by Mr. Southey, — such as inflexibility of purpose, courage of convictions and fearlessness of personal danger, which enabled him to dare and to do great things in the face of apparently insurmountable obstacles.

Some one has said that the great lesson of biography is to teach what man can be and can do at his best. This lesson has been most emphatically impressed upon the minds of hundreds of young readers by the simple and charming style of Southey's brief biography of Lord Nelson.

The chief authorities for Nelson's professional life are Nicolas's "Dispatches and Letters," above 3500 in all (7 vols., 1846), and James's "Naval History" from 1793 (6 vols.), the standard authority for all the naval actions of that time. For his private life the best authority is the "Hamilton-

Nelson Papers" (2 vols., 1894), privately printed from Mr. Alfred Morrison's collection of original manuscripts. Mr. J. C. Jeaffreson had access to these manuscripts in his "Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson" (2 vols., 1888), and "The Queen of Naples and Lord Nelson" (2 vols., 1889). Clarke and M'Arthur's "Life of Nelson" (2 vols., 1808) was long the basis of later lives of the great admiral, but it is to be read with great caution in the light of quite recent researches. Harrison's "Life" (2 vols., 1806) was written to the order of Lady Hamilton, in order to sustain her claims for help from the British government. "It is not too much to say," says Mr. Laughton in his recent "Life," "that Harrison's book is 'a pack of lies,' and that no one statement in it can be accepted unless it is independently confirmed from other sources." Dr. Pettigrew's "Memoirs of the Life" (2 vols., 1849) is considered a strong and well-written book on Nelson's career. There are several other biographies of Nelson which are not worthy of mention even by name.

For a most readable biography of Nelson the young student is advised to read "Horatio Nelson and the Naval Supremacy of England," by W. Clark Russell, the well-known writer of sea stories, and published in 1890 in the "Heroes of Nations Series"; and "Nelson," a brief but charming biography by J. K. Laughton, published in 1895 in the "English Men of Action Series."

In this edition of Southey's "Nelson," which is more especially intended for school and home use, certain sections here and there have been omitted. These consist of passages giving full details of events which have lost their interest for the readers of to-day, or of those which do not concern Nelson's public life. No alterations have been made in the wording, and the succeeding text stands as originally written with the exceptions just mentioned.

A. F. Blaisdell.

SOUTHEY'S LIFE OF NELSON.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST YEARS AT SEA.

HORATIO, son of Edmund and Catherine Nelson, was born September 29, 1758, in the parsonage house of Burnham Thorpe, a village in the county of Norfolk, of which his father was rector. The maiden name of his mother was Suckling: her grandmother was an elder sister of Sir Robert Walpole,[1] and this child was named after his godfather, the first Lord Walpole.[2] Mrs. Nelson died in 1767, leaving eight out of eleven children. Her brother, Captain Maurice Suckling, of the navy, visited the widower upon this event, and promised to take care of one of the boys. Three years afterwards, when Horatio was only twelve years of age, being at home during the Christmas holidays, he read in the county newspaper that his uncle was appointed to the *Raisonnable*, of sixty-four guns. "Do, William," said he to a brother who was a year and a half older than himself, "write to my father, and tell him that I should like to go to sea with uncle Maurice." Mr. Nelson was then at Bath, whither he had gone for the

[1] **Sir Robert Walpole (1676–1745).** — The celebrated Whig statesman who flourished in the reigns of George I. and George II. He was the subject of one of Macaulay's essays.

[2] **The First Lord Walpole.** — Died in 1757. Probably Southey refers to Horatio, the second Lord Walpole.

recovery of his health; his circumstances were straitened, and he had no prospect of ever seeing them bettered; he knew that it was the wish of providing for himself by which Horatio was chiefly actuated; and did not oppose his resolution; he understood also the boy's character, and had always said, that in whatever station he might be placed, he would climb, if possible, to the very top of the tree. Accordingly, Captain Suckling was written to. "What," said he in his answer, "has poor Horatio done, who is so weak, that he above all the rest should be sent to rough it out at sea? But let him come, and the first time we go into action, a cannon-ball may knock off his head, and provide for him at once."

It is manifest from these words that Horatio was not the boy whom his uncle would have chosen to bring up in his own profession. He was never of a strong body, and the ague, which at that time was one of the most common diseases in England, had greatly reduced his strength; yet he had already given proofs of that resolute heart and nobleness of mind, which, during his whole career of labor and of glory, so eminently distinguished him. When a mere child he strayed a-bird's-nesting from his grandmother's house in company with a cow-boy: the dinner hour elapsed; he was absent, and could not be found; and the alarm of the family became very great, for they apprehended that he might have been carried off by gypsies. At length, after search had been made for him in various directions, he was discovered, alone, sitting composedly by the side of a brook which he could not get over. "I wonder, child," said the old lady when she saw him, "that hunger and fear did not drive you home." "Fear! grandmamma," replied the future hero, "I never saw fear: what is it?"[1] Once, after the winter holidays, when he and his brother William had set off on horseback to return to school, they came

[1] According to Clarke and M'Arthur's *Life*, Nelson's reply was, "Fear never came near me, grandmamma."

back because there had been a fall of snow; and William, who did not much like the journey, said it was too deep for them to venture on. "If that be the case," said the father, "you certainly shall not go; but make another attempt, and I will leave it to your honor. If the road is dangerous, you may return; but remember, boys, I leave it to your honor." The snow was deep enough to have afforded them a reasonable excuse; but Horatio was not to be prevailed upon to turn back. "We must go on," said he: "remember, brother, it was left to our honor!" There were some fine pears growing in the schoolmaster's garden, which the boys regarded as lawful booty, and in the highest degree tempting; but the boldest among them were afraid to venture for the prize. Horatio volunteered upon this service: he was lowered down at night from the bedroom window by some sheets, plundered the tree, was drawn up with the pears, and then distributed them among his schoolfellows without reserving any for himself. He only took them, he said, "because every other boy was afraid."

Early on a cold and dark spring morning Mr. Nelson's servant arrived at this school, at North Walsham, with the expected summons for Horatio to join his ship. The parting from his brother William, who had been for so many years his playmate and bedfellow, was a painful effort, and was the beginning of those privations which are the sailor's lot through life. He accompanied his father to London. The *Raisonnable* was lying in the Medway. He was put into the Chatham stage, and on its arrival was set down with the rest of the passengers, and left to find his way on board as he could. After wandering about in the cold without being able to reach the ship, an officer observed the forlorn appearance of the boy, questioned him, and happening to be acquainted with his uncle, took him home and gave him some refreshments. When he got on board, Captain Suckling was not in the ship, nor

had any person been apprised of the boy's coming. He paced the deck the whole remainder of the day without being noticed by any one; and it was not till the second day that somebody, as he expressed it, "took compassion on him."

The pain which is felt when we are first transplanted from our native soil, when the living branch is cut from the parent tree, is one of the most poignant which we have to endure through life. There are after griefs which wound more deeply, which leave behind them scars never to be effaced, which bruise the spirit and sometimes break the heart; but never do we feel so keenly the want of love, the necessity of being loved, and the sense of utter desertion, as when we first leave the haven of home, and are, as it were, pushed off upon the stream of life. Added to these feelings, the sea-boy has to endure physical hardships, and the privation of every comfort, even of sleep. Nelson had a feeble body and an affectionate heart, and he remembered through life his first days of wretchedness in the service.

The *Raisonnable* having been commissioned on account of the dispute respecting the Falkland Islands,[1] was paid off as soon as the difference with the Court of Spain was accommodated, and Captain Suckling was removed to the *Triumph*, seventy-four, then stationed as a guardship in the Thames. This was considered as too inactive a life for a boy, and Nelson was therefore sent a voyage to the West Indies in a merchant ship commanded by Mr. John Rathbone, an excellent seaman, who had served as master's mate under Captain Suckling in the *Dreadnought*. He returned a practical seaman, but with a hatred of the King's service, and a saying then common among the sailors, "Aft the most honor; forward the better man." Rathbone had probably been disappointed

[1] **Falkland Islands.** — Two dreary, inhospitable islands situated in the Southern Atlantic ocean, a dispute about which, at this time, had nearly aroused England to declare war against Spain.

and disgusted in the navy; and, with no unfriendly intentions, warned Nelson against a profession which he himself had found hopeless. His uncle received him on board the *Triumph* on his return, and discovering his dislike to the navy, took the best means of reconciling him to it. He held it out as a reward, that if he attended well to his navigation, he should go in the cutter and decked long-boat, which was attached to the commanding officer's ship at Chatham. Thus he became a good pilot for vessels of that description from Chatham to the Tower, and down the Swin Channel[1] to the North Foreland, and acquired a confidence among rocks and sands of which he often felt the value.

Nelson had not been many months on board the *Triumph* when his love of enterprise was excited by hearing that two ships were fitting out for a voyage of discovery towards the North Pole. In consequence of the difficulties which were expected on such a service, these vessels were to take out effective men instead of the usual number of boys. This, however, did not deter him from soliciting to be received, and by his uncle's interest he was admitted as coxswain under Captain Lutwidge, second in command. The voyage was undertaken in compliance with an application from the Royal Society.[2] The Hon. Captain Constantine John Phipps, eldest son of Lord Mulgrave, volunteered his services. The *Racehorse* and *Carcass* bombs were selected, as the strongest ships, and therefore best adapted for such a voyage; and they were taken into dock and strengthened, to render them as secure as

[1] **Swin Channel.** — An important channel at the mouth of the river Thames. " Nelson's own words were: "Thus by degrees I became a good pilot, for vessels of that description, from Chatham to the Tower of London, down the Swin, and to the North Foreland, and confident of myself amongst rocks and sands, which has many times since been of the greatest comfort to me." — *Sketch of my Life.*

[2] **Royal Society.** — The famous society incorporated by King Charles the Second. One of the most renowned learned societies in the world.

possible against the ice. Two masters of Greenlandmen were employed as pilots for each ship.

No expedition was ever more carefully fitted out; and the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Sandwich, with a laudable solicitude, went on board himself before their departure to see that everything had been completed to the wish of the officers. The ships were provided with a simple and excellent apparatus for distilling fresh from salt water, the invention of Dr. Irving, who accompanied the expedition. It consisted merely of fitting a tube to the ship's kettle, and applying a wet mop to the surface, as the vapor was passing. By these means, from thirty-four to forty gallons were produced every day.

They sailed from the Nore on the 4th of June; on the 6th of the following month they were in latitude 79° 56′ 39″, longitude 9° 43′ 30″ E. The next day, about the place where most of the old discoverers had been stopped, the *Racehorse* was beset with ice; but they hove her through with ice-anchors. Captain Phipps continued ranging along the ice, northward and westward, till the 24th; he then tried to the eastward. On the 30th he was in latitude 80° 13′, longitude 18° 48′ E., among the islands and in the ice, with no appearance of an opening for the ships. The weather was exceedingly fine, mild, and unusually clear. Here they were becalmed in a large bay, with three apparent openings between the islands which formed it; but everywhere, as far as they could see, surrounded with ice. There was not a breath of air, the water was perfectly smooth, the ice covered with snow, low and even, except a few broken pieces near the edge; and the pools of water in the middle of the ice-fields just crusted over with young ice. On the next day the ice closed upon them, and no opening was to be seen anywhere, except a hole or lake, as it might be called, of about a mile and a half in circumference, where the ships lay fast to the ice with their ice-anchors. They filled their casks with water from these ice-fields, which

was very pure and soft. The men were playing on the ice all day; but the Greenland pilots, who were farther than they had ever been before, and considered that the season was far advancing, were alarmed at being thus beset.

The next day there was not the smallest opening; the ships were within less than two lengths of each other, separated by ice, and neither having room to turn. The ice, which the day before had been flat and almost level with the water's edge, was now in many places forced higher than the mainyard, by the pieces squeezing together. A day of thick fog followed; it was succeeded by clear weather, but the passage by which the ships had entered from the westward was closed, and no open water was in sight, either in that or any other quarter. By the pilots' advice the men were set to cut a passage, and warp through the small openings to the westward. They sawed through pieces of ice twelve feet thick; and this labor continued the whole day, during which their utmost efforts did not move the ships above three hundred yards; while they were driven, together with the ice, far to the N. E. and E. by the current. Sometimes a field of several acres square would be lifted up between two larger islands, and incorporated with them; and thus these larger pieces continued to grow by aggregation. Another day passed, and there seemed no probability of getting the ships out without a strong E. or N. E. wind. The season was far advanced, and every hour lessened the chance of extricating themselves.

Young as he was, Nelson was appointed to command one of the boats which were sent out to explore a passage into the open water. It was the means of saving a boat belonging to the *Racehorse* from a singular but imminent danger. Some of the officers had fired at and wounded a walrus. As no other animal has so human-like an expression in its countenance, so also is there none that seems to possess more of the passions of humanity. The wounded animal dived immediately, and

brought up a number of its companions, and they all joined in an attack upon the boat. They wrested an oar from one of the men; and it was with the utmost difficulty that the crew could prevent them from staving or upsetting her, till the *Carcass's* boat came up; and the walruses, finding their enemies thus reinforced, dispersed.

Young Nelson exposed himself in a more daring manner. One night, during the mid-watch, he stole from the ship with one of his comrades, taking advantage of a rising fog, and set out over the ice in pursuit of a bear. It was not long before they were missed. The fog thickened, and Captain Lutwidge and his officers became exceedingly alarmed for their safety. Between three and four in the morning the weather cleared, and the two adventurers were seen, at a considerable distance from the ship, attacking a huge bear. The signal for them to return was immediately made: Nelson's comrade called upon him to obey it, but in vain; his musket had flashed in the pan; their ammunition was expended; and a chasm in the ice, which divided him from the bear, probably preserved his life. "Never mind," he cried; "do but let me get a blow at him with the butt-end of my musket, and we shall have him." Captain Lutwidge, however, seeing his danger, fired a gun, which had the desired effect of frightening the beast; and the boy then returned, somewhat afraid of the consequences of his trespass. The captain reprimanded him sternly for conduct so unworthy of the office which he filled, and desired to know what motive he could have for hunting a bear. "Sir," said he, pouting his lip, as he was wont to do when agitated, "I wished to kill the bear that I might carry the skin to my father."

A party were now sent to an island, about twelve miles off (named Walden's Island in the chart, from the midshipman who was intrusted with this service), to see where the open water lay. They came back with information that the ice, though close all about them, was open to the westward, round

the point by which they came in. They said also, that upon the island they had had a fresh east wind. This intelligence considerably abated the hopes of the crew; for where they lay it had been almost calm, and their main dependence had been upon the effect of an easterly wind in clearing the bay. There was but one alternative, either to wait the event of the weather upon the ships, or to betake themselves to the boats. The likelihood that it might be necessary to sacrifice the ships had been foreseen; the boats, accordingly, were adapted, both in number and size, to transport, in case of emergency, the whole crew; and there were Dutch whalers upon the coast, in which they could all be conveyed to Europe. As for wintering where they were, that dreadful experiment had been already tried too often. No time was to be lost; the ships had driven into shoal water, having but 14 fathoms. Should they, or the ice to which they were fast, take the ground, they must inevitably be lost; and at this time they were driving fast towards some rocks on the N. E. Captain Phipps had sent for the officers of both ships, and told them his intention of preparing the boats for going away. They were immediately hoisted out, and the fitting began. Canvas bread-bags were made, in case it should be necessary suddenly to desert the vessels; and men were sent with the lead and line to the northward and eastward, to sound wherever they found cracks in the ice, that they might have notice before the ice took the ground, for in that case the ships must have instantly been crushed or overset.

On the 7th of August they began to haul the boats over the ice, Nelson having command of the four-oared cutter. The men behaved excellently well, like true British seamen; they seemed reconciled to the thought of leaving the ships, and had full confidence in their officers. About noon, the ice appeared rather more open near the vessels; and as the wind was easterly, though there was but little of it, the sails were set, and they got about a mile to the westward. They moved very slowly,

and they were not now nearly so far to the westward as when they were first beset. However, all sail was kept upon them, to force them through whenever the ice slacked the least. Whatever exertions were made, it could not be possible to get the boats to the water's edge before the 14th; and if the situation of the ships should not alter by that time, it would not be justifiable to stay longer by them. The commander therefore resolved to carry on both attempts together, moving the boats constantly, and taking every opportunity of getting the ships through. A party was sent out next day to the westward, to examine the state of the ice: they returned with tidings that it was very heavy and close, consisting chiefly of large fields. The ships, however, moved something, and the ice itself was drifting westward. There was a thick fog, so that it was impossible to ascertain what advantage had been gained. It continued on the 9th, but the ships were moved a little through some very small openings: the mist cleared off in the afternoon, and it was then perceived that they had driven much more than could have been expected to the westward, and that the ice itself had driven still farther. In the course of the day they got past the boats, and took them on board again. On the morrow the wind sprang up to the N. N. E. All sail was set, and the ships forced their way through a great deal of very heavy ice. They frequently struck, and with such force that one stroke broke the shank of the *Racehorse's* best bower anchor; but the vessels made way, and by noon they had cleared the ice and were out at sea. The next day they anchored in Smeerenberg harbor, close to that island of which the westernmost point is called Hakluyt's[1] Headland, in honor of the great promoter and compiler of our English voyages of discovery.

[1] **Richard Hakluyt** (1553–1616). — Famous for his contribution to the literature of travels and voyages commonly known as "Hakluyt's Voyages." This quaint work contains much valuable matter pertaining to the early settlement of North America.

Here they remained for a few days, that the men might rest after their fatigue. No insect was to be seen in this dreary country, nor any species of reptile, not even the common earth-worm. Large bodies of ice, called icebergs, filled up the valleys between high mountains — so dark as, when contrasted with the snow, to appear black. The color of the ice was a lively light green. Opposite to the place where they had fixed their observatory was one of these icebergs, above three hundred feet high: its side towards the sea was nearly perpendicular, and a stream of water issued from it. Large pieces frequently broke off, and rolled down into the sea. There was no thunder nor lightning during the whole time they were in these latitudes. The sky was generally loaded with hard white clouds, from which it was never entirely free, even in the clearest weather. They always knew when they were approaching the ice long before they saw it, by a bright appearance near the horizon, which the Greenlandmen called the blink of the ice. The season was now so far advanced that nothing more could have been attempted, if indeed anything had been left untried; but the summer had been unusually favorable, and they had carefully surveyed the wall of ice extending for more than twenty degrees between the latitudes of 80° and 81°, without the smallest appearance of any opening.

The ships were paid off shortly after their return to England; and Nelson was then placed by his uncle with Captain Farmer, in the *Seahorse*, of twenty guns, then going out to the East Indies in the squadron under Sir Edward Hughes. He was stationed in the foretop at watch and watch. His good conduct attracted the attention of the master (afterwards Captain Surridge), in whose watch he was, and upon his recommendation the captain rated him as midshipman. At this time his countenance was florid, and his appearance rather stout and athletic; but when he had been about eighteen months in India he felt the effects of that climate, so perilous

to European constitutions. The disease baffled all power of medicine; he was reduced almost to a skeleton; the use of his limbs was for some time entirely lost; and the only hope that remained was from a voyage home. Accordingly he was brought home by Captain Pigot, in the *Dolphin*, and had it not been for the attentive and careful kindness of that officer on the way, Nelson would never have lived to reach his native shores. Long afterwards, when the name of Nelson was known as widely as that of England itself, he spoke of the feelings which he at this time endured. "I felt impressed," said he, "with a feeling that I should never rise in my profession. My mind was staggered with a view of the difficulties I had to surmount, and the little interest I possessed. I could discover no means of reaching the object of my ambition. After a long and gloomy reverie, in which I almost wished myself overboard, a sudden glow of patriotism was kindled within me, and presented my King and country as my patron. 'Well, then,' I exclaimed, 'I will be a hero, and, confiding in Providence, brave every danger!'"

Long afterwards Nelson loved to speak of the feeling of that moment; and from that time, he often said, a radiant orb was suspended in his mind's eye, which urged him onward to renown. The state of mind in which these feelings began is what the mystics mean by their season of darkness and desertion. If the animal spirits fail, they represent it as an actual temptation. The enthusiasm of Nelson's nature had taken a different direction, but its essence was the same. He knew to what the previous state of dejection was to be attributed; that an enfeebled body and a mind depressed had cast this shade over his soul; but he always seemed willing to believe that the sunshine which succeeded bore with it a prophetic glory, and that the light which led him on was "light from heaven."[1]

[1] "This resolution to *do*, begotten in a moment of wretchedness, became the noble, animating, enduring impulse of his glorious mind. It never

His interest, however, was far better than he imagined. During his absence Captain Suckling had been made Comptroller of the Navy; his health had materially improved upon the voyage; and as soon as the *Dolphin* was paid off he was appointed acting-lieutenant in the *Worcester*, sixty-four, Captain Mark Robinson, then going out with convoy to Gibraltar. Soon after his return, on the 8th of April, 1777, he passed his examination for a lieutenancy. Captain Suckling sat at the head of the board, and when the examination had ended, in a manner highly honorable to Nelson, rose from his seat, and introduced him to the examining captains as his nephew. They expressed their wonder that he had not informed them of this relationship before; he replied that he did not wish the younker to be favored; he knew his nephew would pass a good examination, and he had not been deceived. The next day Nelson received his commission as second lieutenant of the *Lowestoffe* frigate, Captain William Locker, then fitting out for Jamaica.

About this time he lost his uncle. Captain Locker, however, who had perceived the excellent qualities of Nelson, and formed a friendship for him, which continued during his life, recommended him warmly to Sir Peter Parker, then commander-in-chief upon that station. In consequence of this recommendation he was removed into the *Bristol* flag-ship, and Lieutenant Cuthbert Collingwood succeeded him in the *Lowestoffe*. He soon became first lieutenant; and on the 8th of December, 1778, was appointed commander of the *Badger* brig, Collingwood again succeeding him in the *Bristol*. While the *Badger* was lying in Montego Bay, Jamaica, the *Glasgow*, of twenty guns, came in and anchored there, and in two hours

failed him. It was an ever-growing passion. Nay, to his fervid imagination it seemed a thing embodied, indeed; for he would often declare to his friend Hardy, that from that hour there was suspended before his mind's eye a radiant orb that courted him onward to renown."

was in flames, the steward having set fire to her while stealing rum out of the after-hold. Her crew were leaping into the water, when Nelson came up in his boats, made them throw their powder overboard and point their guns upward, and by his presence of mind and personal exertions prevented the loss of life which would otherwise have ensued. On the 11th of June, 1779, he was made post [1] into the *Hinchinbrook*, of twenty-eight guns, an enemy's merchantman, sheathed with wood, which had been taken into the service.

A short time after he left the *Lowestoffe*, that ship, with a small squadron, stormed the fort of St. Fernando de Omoa, on the south side of the Bay of Honduras, and captured some register ships which were lying under its guns. Two hundred and fifty quintals [2] of quicksilver and three millions of piastres [3] were the reward of this enterprise; and it is characteristic of Nelson that the chance by which he missed a share in such a prize is never mentioned in any of his letters, nor is it likely that it ever excited even a momentary feeling of vexation.

Nelson was fortunate in possessing good interest at the time when it could be most serviceable to him: his promotion had been almost as rapid as it could be, and before he had attained the age of twenty-one he had gained that rank which brought all the honors of the service within his reach. No opportunity, indeed, had yet been given him of distinguishing himself; but he was thoroughly master of his profession, and his zeal and ability were acknowledged wherever he was known. Count d'Estaing, with a fleet of one hundred and twenty-five sail, men-of-war and transports, and a reputed force of five-and-twenty thousand men, threatened Jamaica from St. Domingo. Nelson offered his services to the Admiral and to Governor-

[1] **Made post.** — That is, a post-captain, — a full captain. Commanders were often called captains by courtesy.

[2] **Quintal.** — A hundredweight.

[3] **Piastre.** — A Spanish coin worth about a dollar.

General Dalling, and was appointed to command the batteries of Fort Charles at Port Royal. Not more than seven thousand men could be mustered for the defense of the island — a number wholly inadequate to resist the force which threatened them. Of this Nelson was so well aware, that when he wrote to his friends in England he told them they must not be surprised to hear of his learning to speak French. D'Estaing, however, was either not aware of his own superiority, or not equal to the command with which he was intrusted: he attempted nothing with this formidable armament, and General Dalling was thus left to execute a project which he had formed against the Spanish colonies.

This project was to take Fort San Juan, on the river of that name, which flows from Lake Nicaragua into the Atlantic; make himself master of the lake itself and of the cities of Grenada and Leon, and thus cut off the communication of the Spaniards between their northern and southern possessions in America. Here it is that a canal [1] between the two seas may most easily be formed — a work more important in its consequences than any which has ever yet been effected by human power. Lord George Germaine, at that time Secretary of State for the American Department, approved the plan; and as discontents at that time were known to prevail in the Nuevo Reyno, in Popayan, and in Peru, the more sanguine part of the English began to dream of acquiring an empire in one part of America more extensive than that which they were on the point of losing in another. General Dalling's plans were well formed, but the history and the nature of the country had not been studied as accurately as its geography: the difficulties which occurred in fitting out the expedition delayed it till the

[1] **A Canal.** — In the light of what is here written by Southey, the student will be pleased to recall what has been done in recent years towards carrying out this old-time and favorite scheme for connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

season was too far advanced, and the men were thus sent to adventure themselves, not so much against an enemy, whom they would have beaten, as against a climate, which would do the enemy's work.

Early in the year 1780 five hundred men, destined for this service, were convoyed by Nelson from Port Royal to Cape Gracias a Dios, in Honduras. Not a native was to be seen when they landed: they had been taught that the English came with no other intent than that of enslaving them, and sending them to Jamaica. After awhile, however, one of them ventured down, confiding in his knowledge of one of the party; and by his means the neighboring tribes were conciliated with presents and brought in. The troops were encamped on a swampy and unwholesome plain, where they were joined by a party of the 79th regiment from Black River, who were already in a deplorable state of sickness. Having remained here a month, they proceeded, anchoring frequently, along the Mosquito shore, to collect their Indian allies, who were to furnish proper boats for the river, and to accompany them. They reached the River San Juan March 24, and here, according to his orders, Nelson's services were to terminate; but not a man in the expedition had ever been up the river or knew the distance of any fortification from its mouth, and he, not being one who would turn back when so much was to be done, resolved to carry the soldiers up. About two hundred, therefore, were embarked in the Mosquito shore craft and in two of the *Hinchinbrook's* boats, and they began their voyage. It was the latter end of the dry season, the worst time for such an expedition; the river was consequently low. Indians were sent forward through narrow channels between shoals and banks, and the men were frequently obliged to quit the boats, and exert their utmost strength to drag or thrust them along. This labor continued for several days, when they came into deeper water; they had then currents and rapids to contend with,

which would have been insurmountable but for the skill of the Indians in such difficulties. The brunt of the labor was borne by them and by the sailors — men never accustomed to stand aloof when any exertion of strength or hardihood is required. The soldiers, less accustomed to rely upon themselves, were of little use. But all equally endured the violent heat of the sun, rendered more intense by being reflected from the white shoals, while the high woods on both sides of the river were frequently so close as to prevent all refreshing circulation of air; and during the night all were equally exposed to the heavy and unwholesome dews.

On the 9th of April they reached an island in the river called San Bartolomeo, which the Spaniards had fortified as an outpost with a small semicircular battery, mounting nine or ten swivels and manned with sixteen or eighteen men. It commanded the river in a rapid and difficult part of the navigation. Nelson, at the head of a few of his seamen, leaped upon the beach. The ground upon which he sprang was so muddy that he had some difficulty in extricating himself, and lost his shoes; barefooted, however, he advanced, and in his own phrase, boarded the battery. In this resolute attempt he was bravely supported by the well-known Despard,[1] at that time a captain in the army. The castle of San Juan is situated about sixteen miles higher up; the stores and ammunition, however, were landed a few miles below the castle, and the men had to march through woods almost impassable.

One of the men was bitten under the eye by a snake, which darted upon him from the bough of a tree. He was unable to

[1] **Despard.** — In the year 1803 this brave but ill-fated man conspired with a party of soldiers, at a house in Oakley Street, Lambeth, to assassinate King George III. on his way to open Parliament. Being arrested and brought to trial, he was executed at Horsemonger Lane jail. Several Honduras merchants, to whom Despard was personally known, since his untimely death have positively asserted that his insanity was indisputable. — CLARKE AND M'ARTHUR'S *Life of Nelson*.

proceed from the violence of the pain, and when, after a short while, some of his comrades were sent back to assist him, he was dead, and the body already putrid. Nelson himself narrowly escaped a similar fate. He had ordered his hammock to be slung under some trees, being excessively fatigued, and was sleeping, when a monitory lizard passed across his face. The Indians happily observed the reptile, and knowing what it indicated, awoke him. He started up, and found one of the deadliest serpents of the country coiled up at his feet. He suffered from poison of another kind; for, drinking at a spring in which some boughs of the manchineel[1] had been thrown, the effects were so severe as, in the opinion of some of his friends, to inflict a lasting injury upon his constitution.

The castle of San Juan is thirty-two miles below the Lake of Nicaragua, from which the river issues, and sixty-nine from its mouth. Boats reach the sea from thence in a day and a half; but their navigation back, even when unladen, is the labor of nine days. The English appeared before it on the 11th, two days after they had taken San Bartolomeo. Nelson's advice was, that it should instantly be carried by assault: but Nelson was not the commander, and it was thought proper to observe all the formalities of a siege. Ten days were wasted before this could be commenced: it was a work more of fatigue than of danger, but fatigue was more to be dreaded than the enemy. The rains set in, and could the garrison have held out a little longer, disease would have rid them of their invaders. Even the Indians sunk under it, the victims of unusual exertion and of their own excesses. The place surrendered on the 24th; but victory procured to the conquerors none of that relief

[1] **Manchineel.** — A West Indian tree and regarded as the most poisonous of all known vegetable productions. The whole plant abounds in a milky juice of a venomous nature; dropped on the skin it produces a sensation of severe burning, followed by a blister, and the fruit when bitten causes dangerous inflammation of the mouth.

which had been expected. The castle was worse than a prison, and it contained nothing which could contribute to the recovery of the sick or the preservation of those who were yet unaffected. The huts, which served for hospitals, were surrounded with filth and with the putrefying hides of slaughtered cattle — almost sufficient of themselves to have engendered pestilence; and when at last orders were given to erect a convenient hospital, the contagion had become so general that there were none who could work at it; for, besides the few who were able to perform garrison duty, there were not orderly men enough to assist the sick. Added to these evils there was the want of all needful remedies, for though the expedition had been amply provided with hospital stores, river craft enough had not been procured for transporting the requisite baggage; and when much was to be left behind, provision for sickness was that which of all things men in health would be most ready to leave. Now, when these medicines were required, the river was swollen, and so turbulent that its upward navigation was almost impracticable. At length even the task of burying the dead was more than the living could perform, and the bodies were tossed into the stream, or left for beasts of prey, and for the gallinazos, those dreadful carrion-birds[1] which do not always wait for death before they begin their work. Five months the English persisted in what may be called this war against nature; they then left a few men, who seemed proof against the climate, to retain the castle till the Spaniards should choose to retake it and make them prisoners. The rest abandoned their baleful conquest. Eighteen hundred men were sent to different posts upon this wretched expedition: not more than three hundred and eighty ever returned. The *Hinchinbrook's* complement consisted of two hundred men; eighty-seven took to their beds in one night, and of the whole crew not more than ten survived.

[1] **Carrion-birds.** — The South American vultures, known as the *gallinazos*.

Nelson himself was saved by a timely removal. In a few days after the commencement of the siege he was seized with the prevailing dysentery; meantime Captain Glover died, and Nelson was appointed to succeed him in the *Janus*, of forty-four guns. He returned to the harbor the day before San Juan surrendered, and immediately sailed for Jamaica in the sloop which brought the news of his appointment. He was, however, so greatly reduced by the disorder, that when they reached Port Royal he was carried ashore in his cot; and finding himself, after a partial amendment, unable to retain the command of his new ship, he was compelled to ask leave to return to England, as the only means of recovery. Captain (afterwards Admiral) Cornwallis took him home in the *Lion;* and to his care and kindness Nelson believed himself indebted for his life. He went immediately to Bath, in a miserable state; so helpless, that he was carried to and from his bed, and the act of moving him produced the most violent pain. In three months he recovered, and immediately hastened to London and applied for employment. After an interval of about four months he was appointed to the *Albemarle*, of twenty-eight guns, a French merchantman which had been purchased from the captors for the King's service.

His health was not yet thoroughly re-established, and while he was employed in getting his ship ready he again became so ill as hardly to be able to keep out of bed. Yet in this state, still suffering from the fatal effect of a West Indian climate, as if — it might almost be supposed, he said — to try his constitution, he was sent to the North Seas, and kept there the whole winter. The asperity with which he mentioned this so many years after, evinces how deeply he resented a mode of conduct equally cruel to the individual and detrimental to the service. It was during the armed neutrality;[1] and when they anchored

[1] **Armed Neutrality.** — A confederacy of the Northern powers, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, established to defend the principle that no mer-

off Elsinore, the Danish admiral sent on board, desiring to be informed what ships had arrived, and to have their force written down. "The *Albemarle*," said Nelson to the messenger, "is one of his Britannic Majesty's ships; you are at liberty, sir, to count the guns as you go down the side, and you may assure the Danish admiral that, if necessary, they shall all be well served." During this voyage he gained a considerable knowledge of the Danish coast and its soundings, greatly to the advantage of his country in after times. The *Albemarle* was not a good ship, and was several times nearly overset, in consequence of the masts having been made much too long for her. On her return to England they were shortened, and some other improvements made, at Nelson's suggestion. Still he always insisted that her first owners, the French, had taught her to run away, as she was never a good sailer except when going directly before the wind.

On their return to the Downs, while he was ashore visiting the senior officer, there came on so heavy a gale that almost all the vessels drove, and a store-ship came athwart-hawse of the *Albemarle*. Nelson feared she would drive on the Goodwin Sands;[1] he ran to the beach, but even the Deal boatmen thought it impossible to get on board, such was the violence of the storm. At length some of the most intrepid offered to make the attempt for fifteen guineas, and, to the astonishment and fear of the beholders, Nelson embarked during the height of the tempest. With great difficulty and imminent danger he succeeded in reaching her. She lost her bowsprit and foremast, but escaped further injury. He was now ordered to Quebec, where, his surgeon told him, he would certainly be

chandise in neutral ships should be liable to capture by vessels belonging to nations at war with each other.

[1] **Goodwin Sands.** — A series of dangerous sandbars along the coast of Kent. The student will recall the reference to them in "The Merchant of Venice."

laid up by the climate. Many of his friends urged him to represent this to Admiral Keppel; but having received his orders from Lord Sandwich, there appeared to him an indelicacy in applying to his successor to have them altered.

Accordingly he sailed for Canada. During her first cruise on that station the *Albemarle* captured a fishing schooner, which contained in her cargo nearly all the property that her master possessed, and the poor fellow had a large family at home anxiously expecting him. Nelson employed him as a pilot in Boston Bay, then restored him the schooner and cargo, and gave him a certificate to secure him against being captured by any other vessel. The man came off afterwards to the *Albemarle*, at the hazard of his life, with a present of sheep, poultry, and fresh provisions. A most valuable supply it proved, for the scurvy was raging on board: this was in the middle of August, and the ship's company had not had a fresh meal since the beginning of April. The certificate was preserved at Boston in memory of an act of unusual generosity; and now that the fame of Nelson has given interest to everything connected with his name, it is regarded as a relic.

The *Albemarle* was under orders to convey a fleet of transports to New York. "A very pretty job," said her captain, "at this late season of the year" (October was far advanced), "for our sails are at this moment frozen to the yards." On his arrival at Sandy Hook he waited on the commander-in-chief, Admiral Digby, who told him he was come on a fine station for making prize-money. "Yes, sir," Nelson made answer; "but the West Indies is the station for honor." Lord Hood, with a detachment of Rodney's victorious fleet, was at that time in Sandy Hook: he had been intimate with Captain Suckling, and Nelson, who was desirous of nothing but honor, requested him to ask for the *Albemarle*, that he might go to that station where it was most likely to be obtained. Admiral Digby reluctantly parted with him.

His professional merit was already well known; and Lord Hood, on introducing him to Prince William Henry,[1] as the Duke of Clarence was then called, told the Prince, if he wished to ask any questions respecting naval tactics, Captain Nelson could give him as much information as any officer in the fleet. The Duke, who, to his own honor, became from that time the firm friend of Nelson, describes him as appearing the merest boy of a captain he had ever seen, dressed in a full lace uniform, an old-fashioned waistcoat with long flaps, and his lank unpowdered hair tied in a stiff Hessian tail[2] of extraordinary length; making altogether so remarkable a figure, "that," says the Duke, "I had never seen anything like it before, nor could I imagine who he was, nor what he came about. But his address and conversation were irresistibly pleasing; and when he spoke on professional subjects it was with an enthusiasm that showed he was no common being."

Tidings soon arrived that the preliminaries of peace had been signed; and the *Albemarle* returned to England, and was paid off. Nelson's first business, after he got to London, even before he went to see his relations, was to attempt to get the wages due to his men for the various ships in which they had served during the war. "The disgust of seamen to the navy," he said, "was all owing to the iniquitous plan of turning them over from ship to ship, so that men could not be attached to the officers, nor the officers care the least about the men." Yet

[1] **Prince William Henry.** — Third son of George III., afterwards King William IV.

[2] **Hessian Tail.** — The king of Prussia was the first to adopt the pigtail as a modification of the wig. He introduced it into his army, and not only did the other European armies follow his example, but it became a fashionable part of dress. This lasted until the beginning of the present century, when it gradually disappeared. It was, however, longest retained in the Hessian army. As the Hessian soldiers, often hired by the English government as mercenaries, were thus familiar to Englishmen, the explanation of the "*Hessian* tail" may be due to this fact.

he himself was so beloved by his men that his whole ship's company offered, if he could get a ship, to enter for her immediately. He was now, for the first time, presented at Court. After going through this ceremony he dined with his friend Davison at Lincoln's Inn. As soon as he entered the chambers he threw off what he called his iron-bound coat, and putting himself at ease in a dressing-gown, passed the remainder of the day in talking over all that had befallen them since they parted on the shore of the River St. Lawrence.

CHAPTER II.

IN THE WEST INDIES.

"I HAVE closed the war," said Nelson in one of his letters, "without a fortune; but there is not a speck on my character. True honor, I hope, predominates in my mind far above riches." In March he was appointed to the *Boreas*, twenty-eight guns, going to the Leeward Islands as a cruiser, on the peace establishment. Lady Hughes and her family went out with him to Admiral Sir Richard Hughes, who commanded on that station. His ship was full of young midshipmen, of whom there were not less than thirty on board; and happy were they whose lot it was to be placed with such a captain.[1] If he perceived that a boy was afraid at first going aloft, he would say to him in a friendly manner: "Well, sir, I am going a race to the masthead, and beg that I may meet you there." The poor little fellow instantly began to climb, and got up how he could; Nelson never noticed in what manner, but when they met in the top, spoke cheerfully to him, and would say how much any person was to be pitied who fancied that

[1] A gallant officer thus describes his commander's personal habits at this time: "He rose every morning between four and five o'clock, breakfasted at six, sometimes much earlier, and was in bed by ten. The breakfast party always included one or two midshipmen; and he would often, during the middle watch — that is, between twelve and four o'clock — send the little fellows an invitation to breakfast after they should come off duty at four o'clock. A treat indeed for the lads to look forward to! At table he would joke with the merriest of them and be the most youthful of the party. At dinner every officer of the ship was his guest in turn, and Nelson performed his part as a host in an eminent degree polished and hospitable. The whole business of the fleet was invariably dispatched before eight o'clock. No man ever more keenly appreciated the value of time."

getting up was either dangerous or difficult. Every day he went into the school-room, to see that they were pursuing their nautical studies; and at noon he was always the first on deck with his quadrant. Whenever he paid a visit of ceremony some of these youths accompanied him; and when he went to dine with the governor of Barbadoes he took one of them in his hand and presented him, saying: "Your Excellency must excuse me for bringing one of my midshipmen. I make it a rule to introduce them to all the good company I can, as they have few to look up to besides myself during the time they are at sea."

The Americans were at this time trading with our islands, taking advantage of the register of their ships, which had been issued while they were British subjects. Nelson knew that by the Navigation Act[1] no foreigners, directly or indirectly, are permitted to carry on any trade with these possessions; he knew also that the Americans had made themselves foreigners with regard to England; they had broken the ties of blood and language, and had acquired the independence which they had been provoked to claim, unhappily for themselves, before they were fit for it; and he was resolved that they should derive no profit from those ties now. Foreigners they had made themselves, and as foreigners they were to be treated. "If once," said he, "they are admitted to any kind of intercourse with our islands, the views of the loyalists in settling at Nova Scotia are entirely done away, and when we are again embroiled in a French war the Americans will first become the carriers of these

[1] **Navigation Act.** — In the middle of the seventeenth century the Dutch had got the carrying trade of Europe into their hands. In 1651 the English Parliament passed the Navigation Act to stop this monopoly. Only English vessels were allowed to import goods into England. Exception was made in the case of vessels belonging to the country in which the goods they carried were produced. The Act was reënacted in 1660. In 1849 the Act was repealed, and foreign shipping admitted to compete with English.

colonies, and then have possession of them. Here they come, sell their cargoes for ready money, go to Martinico, buy molasses, and so round and round. The loyalist cannot do this, and consequently must sell a little dearer. The residents here are Americans by connection and by interest, and are inimical to Great Britain. They are as great rebels as ever were in America had they the power to show it."

In November, when the squadron, having arrived at Barbadoes, was to separate, with no other orders than those for examining anchorages, and the usual inquiries concerning wood and water, Nelson asked his friend Collingwood, then Captain of the *Mediator*, whose opinions he knew upon the subject, to accompany him to the commander-in-chief, whom he then respectfully asked whether they were not to attend to the commerce of the country and see that the Navigation Act was respected — that appearing to him to be the intent of keeping men-of-war upon this station in time of peace. Sir Richard Hughes replied he had no particular orders, neither had the Admiralty sent him any acts of parliament. But Nelson made answer that the Navigation Act was included in the statutes of the Admiralty, with which every captain was furnished, and that act was directed to admirals, captains, etc., to see it carried into execution. Sir Richard said he had never seen the book. Upon this Nelson produced the statutes, read the words of the act, and apparently convinced the commander-in-chief that men-of-war, as he said, "were sent abroad for some other purpose than to be made a show of." Accordingly orders were given to enforce the Navigation Act.

Collingwood, in the *Mediator*, and his brother, Wilfred Collingwood, in the *Rattler*, actively coöperated with Nelson. The custom houses were informed that after a certain day all foreign vessels found in the ports would be seized; and many were in consequence seized, and condemned in the Admiralty Court. When the *Boreas* arrived at Nevis she found four American

vessels, deeply laden, and with what are called the island colors flying — white with a red cross. They were ordered to hoist their proper flag, and depart within eight-and-forty hours; but they refused to obey, denying that they were Americans. Some of their crews were then examined in Nelson's cabin, where the judge of the Admiralty happened to be present. The case was plain; they confessed that they were Americans, and that the ships, hull and cargo, were wholly American property; upon which he seized them. This raised a storm: the planters, the custom house, and the governor were all against him. Subscriptions were opened, and presently filled, for the purpose of carrying on the cause in behalf of the American captains; and the admiral, whose flag was at that time in the roads, stood neutral.

But the Americans and their abettors were not content with defensive law. The marines whom he had sent to secure the ships had prevented some of the masters from going ashore, and those persons, from whose depositions it appeared that the vessels and cargoes were American property, declared that they had given their testimony under bodily fear, for that a man with a drawn sword in his hand had stood over them the whole of the time. A rascally lawyer, whom the party employed, suggested this story; and as the sentry at the cabin door was a man with a drawn sword, the Americans made no scruple of swearing to this ridiculous falsehood, and commencing prosecutions against him accordingly. They laid their damages at the enormous sum of £40,000, and Nelson was obliged to keep close on board his own ship lest he should be arrested for a sum for which it would have been impossible to find bail. The marshal frequently came on board to arrest him, but was always prevented by the address of the first lieutenant, Mr. Wallace. Had he been taken, such was the temper of the people that it was certain he would have been cast for the whole sum.

One of his officers, one day, in speaking of the restraint which he was thus compelled to suffer, happened to use the word *pity*. "Pity!" exclaimed Nelson, "Pity, did you say? I shall live, sir, to be envied; and to that point I shall always direct my course."

Eight weeks he remained under this state of duress. During that time the trial respecting these detained ships came on in the Court of Admiralty. He went on shore under a protection for the day from the judge; but notwithstanding this, the marshal was called upon to take that opportunity of arresting him, and the merchants promised to indemnify him for so doing. The judge, however, did his duty, and threatened to send the marshal to prison if he attempted to violate the protection of the court. Mr. Herbert, the president of Nevis, behaved with singular generosity upon this occasion. Though no man was a greater sufferer by the measures which Nelson had pursued, he offered in court to become his bail for £10,000 if he chose to suffer the arrest. The lawyer whom he had chosen proved to be an able as well as an honest man, and notwithstanding the opinions and pleadings of most of the counsel of the different islands, who maintained that ships of war were not justified in seizing American vessels without a deputation from the Customs, the law was so explicit, the case so clear, and Nelson pleaded his own cause so well, that the four ships were condemned.

During the progress of this business he sent a memorial home to the King, in consequence of which orders were issued that he should be defended at the expense of the Crown; and upon the representations which he made at the same time to the Secretary of State, and the suggestions with which he accompanied them, the Register Act[1] was framed. The

[1] **Register Act.** — Under this Act, passed 1786, all vessels authorized to sail under the British flag were required to be registered, — "an act for the further increase and encouragement of shipping and navigation."

sanction of Government, and the approbation of his conduct which it implied, were highly gratifying to him; but he was offended, and not without just cause, that the Treasury should have transmitted thanks to the commander-in-chief for his activity and zeal in protecting the commerce of Great Britain. "Had they known all,[1]" said he, "I do not think they would have bestowed thanks in that quarter, and neglected me. I feel much hurt, that, after the loss of health and risk of fortune, another should be thanked for what I did against his orders. I either deserved to be sent out of the service, or at least to have had some little notice taken of what I had done. They have thought it worthy of notice, and yet have neglected me. If this is a reward for a faithful discharge of my duty, I shall be careful, and never stand forward again. But I have done my duty, and have nothing to accuse myself of."

The anxiety he had suffered from the harassing uncertainties of law is apparent from these expressions. He had, however, something to console him, for he was at this time wooing the niece of his friend the president, then in her eighteenth year, the widow of Dr. Nisbet, a physician. She had one child, a son, by name Josiah, who was three years old. One day, Mr. Herbert, who had hastened, half-dressed, to receive Nelson, exclaimed, on returning to his dressing-room, "If I did not find that great little man, of whom everybody is so afraid, playing in the next room, under the dining-table, with Mrs. Nisbet's child!" A few days afterwards Mrs. Nisbet herself was first introduced to him, and thanked him for the partiality which he had shown her little boy. Her manners were mild and winning; and the captain, whose heart was easily susceptible of attachment, found no such imperious necessity for

[1] **Had they known, etc.** — The attentive student may find other similar complaints in this book. Like many other great public men Nelson was not diffident in overrating his own services to his country. The matter of praise and promotion was always a tender point with him.

subduing his inclinations as had twice before withheld him from marrying. They were married on March 11, 1787; Prince William Henry, who had come out to the West Indies the preceding winter, being present, by his own desire, to give away the bride. Mr. Herbert, her uncle, was at this time so much displeased with his only daughter that he had resolved to disinherit her, and leave his whole fortune, which was very great, to his niece. But Nelson, whose nature was too noble to let him profit by an act of injustice, interfered, and succeeded in reconciling the president to his child.

"Yesterday," said one of his naval friends the day after the wedding, "the navy lost one of its greatest ornaments by Nelson's marriage. It is a national loss that such an officer should marry; had it not been for this, Nelson would have become the greatest man in the service." The man was rightly estimated; but he who delivered this opinion did not understand the effect of domestic love and duty upon a mind of the true heroic stamp.

During his stay upon this station he had ample opportunity of observing the scandalous practices of the contractors, prize-agents, and other persons in the West Indies connected with the naval service. When he was first left with the command, and bills were brought him to sign for money which was owing for goods purchased for the navy, he required the original voucher, that he might examine whether those goods had been really purchased at the market price; but to produce vouchers would not have been convenient, and therefore was not the custom. Upon this Nelson wrote to Sir Charles Middleton, Comptroller of the Navy, representing the abuses which were likely to be practiced in this manner. The answer which he received seemed to imply that the old forms were thought sufficient; and thus, having no alternative, he was compelled, with his eyes open, to submit to a practice originating in fraudulent intentions.

Soon afterwards, two Antigua merchants informed him that they were privy to great frauds which had been committed upon Government in various departments: at Antigua to the amount of nearly £500,000; at Lucie, £300,000; at Barbadoes, £250,000; at Jamaica, upwards of a million. The informers were both shrewd, sensible men of business; they did not affect to be actuated by a sense of justice, but required a percentage upon so much as Government should actually recover through their means. Nelson examined the books and papers which they produced, and was convinced that Government had been most infamously plundered. Vouchers, he found, in that country, were no check whatever: the principle was "that a thing was always worth what it would bring"; and the merchants were in the habit of signing vouchers for each other without even the appearance of looking at the articles. These accounts he sent home to the different departments which had been defrauded; but the peculators were too powerful, and they succeeded not merely in impeding inquiry, but even in raising prejudices againt Nelson at the Board of Admiralty, which it was many years before he could subdue.[1]

Owing probably to these prejudices, and the influence of the peculators, he was treated on his return to England in a manner which had nearly driven him from the service. During the three years that the *Boreas* had remained upon a station which is usually so fatal, not a single officer or man of her whole complement had died. This almost unexampled instance of good health, though mostly, no doubt, imputable to healthy seasons, must in some measure also be ascribed to the wise conduct of the captain. He never suffered the ships to remain more than three or four at a time at any of the islands; and when the hurricane months confined him to English Harbor, he encouraged all kinds of useful amusements — music, dancing,

[1] The highest authorities claim that there is no truth in this statement as given by Mr. Southey.

and cudgelling among the men, theatricals among the officers; anything which could employ their attention and keep their spirits cheerful. The *Boreas* arrived in England in June.

Nelson, who had many times been supposed to be consumptive when in the West Indies, and perhaps was saved from consumption by that climate, was still in a precarious state of health; and the raw wet weather of one of our ungenial summers brought on cold and sore throat and fever; yet his vessel was kept at the Nore from the end of June till the end of November, serving as a slop and receiving ship. This unworthy treatment, which more probably proceeded from intention than from neglect, excited in Nelson the strongest indignation. During the whole five months he seldom or never quitted the ship, but carried on the duty with strict and sullen attention. On the morning when orders were received to prepare the *Boreas* for being paid off, he expressed his joy to the senior officer in the Medway, saying: "It will release me forever from an ungrateful service, for it is my firm and unalterable determination never again to set my foot on board a King's ship. Immediately after my arrival in town I shall wait upon the First Lord of the Admiralty and resign my commission."

The officer to whom he thus communicated his intentions behaved in the wisest and most friendly manner; for finding it vain to dissuade him in his present state of feeling, he secretly interfered with the First Lord to save him from a step so injurious to himself, little foreseeing how deeply the welfare and honor of England were at that moment at stake. This interference produced a letter from Lord Howe, the day before the ship was paid off, intimating a wish to see Captain Nelson as soon as he arrived in town; when, being pleased with his conversation and perfectly convinced by what was then explained to him of the propriety of his conduct, he desired that he might present him to the King on the first levee day; and the gra-

cious manner in which Nelson was then received effectually removed his resentment.

Prejudices had been, in like manner, excited against his friend, Prince William Henry. "Nothing is wanting, sir," said Nelson in one of his letters, "to make you the darling of the English nation, but truth. Sorry I am to say, much to the contrary has been dispersed." This was not flattery, for Nelson was no flatterer. The letter in which this passage occurs shows in how wise and noble a manner he dealt with the Prince. One of his Royal Highness's officers had applied for a court-martial upon a point in which he was unquestionably wrong. His Royal Highness, however, while he supported his own character and authority, prevented the trial, which must have been injurious to a brave and deserving man. "Now that you are parted," said Nelson, "pardon me, my Prince, when I presume to recommend that he may stand in your royal favor as if he had never sailed with you, and that at some future day you will serve him. There only wants this to place your conduct in the highest point of view. None of us are without failings; his was being rather too hasty; but that, put into competition with his being a good officer, will not, I am bold to say, be taken in the scale against him. More able friends than myself your Royal Highness may easily find, and of more consequence in the State; but one more attached and affectionate is not so easily met with. Princes seldom, very seldom, find a disinterested person to communicate their thoughts to. I do not pretend to be that person; but of this be assured by a man who, I trust, never did a dishonorable act, that I am interested only that your Royal Highness should be the greatest and best man this country ever produced."

Encouraged by the conduct of Lord Howe and by his reception at Court, Nelson renewed his attack upon the peculators with fresh spirit. He had interviews with Mr. Rose, Mr. Pitt,

and Sir Charles Middleton, to all of whom he satisfactorily proved his charges. In consequence, it is said, these very extensive public frauds were at length put in a proper train to be provided against in future; his representations were attended to, and every step which he recommended was adopted; the investigation was put into a proper course, which ended in the detection and punishment of some of the culprits; an immense saving was made to Government; and thus its attention was directed to similar peculations in other parts of the colonies.

Nelson took his wife to his father's parsonage, meaning only to pay him a visit before they went to France; a project which he had formed for the sake of acquiring a competent knowledge of the French language. But his father could not bear to lose him thus unnecessarily. Mr. Nelson had long been an invalid, suffering under paralytic and asthmatic affections, which for several hours after he rose in the morning scarcely permitted him to speak. He had been given over by his physicians for this complaint nearly forty years before his death, and was for many of his last years obliged to spend all his winters at Bath. The sight of his son, he declared, had given him new life. "But, Horatio," said he, "it would have been better that I had not been thus cheered if I am so soon to be bereaved of you again. Let me, my good son, see you whilst I can. My age and infirmities increase, and I shall not last long." To such an appeal there could be no reply. Nelson took up his abode at the parsonage, and amused himself with the sports and occupations of the country. Sometimes he busied himself with farming the glebe; sometimes spent the greater part of the day in the garden, where he would dig as if for the mere pleasure of wearying himself; sometimes he went a-bird's-nesting, like a boy; and in these expeditions Mrs. Nelson always, by his express desire, accompanied him. Coursing was his favorite amusement. Shooting, as he practiced it, was far too dangerous for his companions, for he carried his gun upon the full

cock, as if he were going to board an enemy, and the moment a bird rose he would let fly, without ever putting the fowling-piece to his shoulder. It is not, therefore, extraordinary that his having once shot a partridge should be remembered by his family among the remarkable events of his life.

But his time did not pass away thus without some vexatious cares to ruffle it. The affair of the American ships was not yet over, and he was again pestered with threats of prosecution. "I have written them word," said he, "that I will have nothing to do with them, and they must act as they think proper. Government, I suppose, will do what is right, and not leave me in the lurch. We have heard enough lately of the consequences of the Navigation Act to this country. They may take my person; but if sixpence would save me from a prosecution, I would not give it." It was his great ambition at this time to possess a pony, and having resolved to purchase one, he went to a fair for that purpose. During his absence two men abruptly entered the parsonage and inquired for him; they then asked for Mrs. Nelson, and after they had made her repeatedly declare that she was really and truly the captain's wife, presented her with a writ, or notification, on the part of the American captains, who now laid their damages at £20,000, and they charged her to give it to her husband on his return. Nelson having bought his pony, came home with it in high spirits. He called out his wife to admire the purchase, and listen to all its excellences; nor was it till his glee had in some measure subsided that the paper could be presented to him. His indignation was excessive, and, in the apprehension that he should be exposed to the anxieties of the suit and the ruinous consequences which might ensue, he exclaimed, "This affront I did not deserve! But I'll be trifled with no longer. I will write immediately to the Treasury, and if Government will not support me, I am resolved to leave the country." Accordingly, he informed the Treasury that if a satisfactory answer were not

sent him by return of post, he should take refuge in France. To this he expected he should be driven, and for this he arranged everything with his characteristic rapidity of decision. It was settled that he should depart immediately, and Mrs. Nelson follow, under the care of his elder brother Maurice, ten days after him. But the answer which he received from Government quieted his fears: it stated that Captain Nelson was a very good officer, and needed to be under no apprehension, for he would assuredly be supported.

Here his disquietude upon this subject seems to have ended. Still he was not at ease; he wanted employment, and was mortified that his applications for it produced no effect. "Not being a man of fortune," he said, "was a crime which he was unable to get over, and therefore none of the great cared about him." Repeatedly he requested the Admiralty that they would not leave him to rust in indolence. During the armament which was made upon occasion of the dispute concerning Nootka Sound[1] he renewed his application; and his steady friend, Prince William, who had then been created Duke of Clarence, recommended him to Lord Chatham.[2] The failure of this recommendation wounded him so keenly that he again thought of retiring from the service in disgust: a resolution from which nothing but the urgent remonstrances of Lord Hood induced him to desist. Hearing that the *Raisonnable*, in which he had commenced his career, was to be commissioned, he asked for her. This also was in vain, and a coolness ensued on his part towards Lord Hood, because that excellent officer did not use his influence with Lord Chatham on this occasion. Lord Hood, however, had certainly sufficient reason for not interfering, for he ever continued his steady friend. In

[1] **Nootka Sound.** — On the west side of Vancouver Island. An English settlement on this sound had been seized by Spain in 1789, which event nearly led to war.

[2] Eldest son of the great Lord Chatham, brother of William Pitt.

the winter of 1792, when we were on the eve of the revolutionary war, Nelson once more offered his services, earnestly requested a ship, and added that if their lordships should be pleased to appoint him to a cockle-boat, he should feel satisfied. He was answered in the usual official form: "Sir, — I have received your letter of the 5th instant, expressing your readiness to serve, and have read the same to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty." On the 12th of December he received this dry acknowledgment. This fresh mortification did not, however, affect him long, for by the joint interest of the Duke and Lord Hood he was appointed, on the 30th of January following, to the *Agamemnon*, of sixty-four guns.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST SERVICE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

"THERE are three things, young gentleman," said Nelson to one of his midshipmen, "which you are constantly to bear in mind: first, you must always implicitly obey orders, without attempting to form any opinion of your own respecting their propriety; secondly, you must consider every man your enemy who speaks ill of your King; and thirdly, you must hate a Frenchman." With these feelings he engaged in the war. Josiah, his stepson, went with him as midshipman.

The *Agamemnon* was ordered to the Mediterranean, under Lord Hood. The fleet arrived in those seas at a time when the South of France would willingly have formed itself into a separate republic under the protection of England; but good principles had been at that time perilously abused by ignorant and profligate men, and, in its fear and hatred of democracy the English government abhorred whatever was republican. Lord Hood could not take advantage of the fair occasion which presented itself, and which, if it had been seized with vigor, might have ended in dividing France; but he negotiated with the people of Toulon to take possession provisionally of their port and city, which, fatally for themselves, was done. Before the British fleet entered, Nelson was sent with dispatches to Sir William Hamilton, our envoy at the Court of Naples. Sir William, after his first interview with him, told Lady Hamilton he was about to introduce a little man to her, who could not boast of being very handsome, but such a man as, he believed, would one day astonish the world.

Having accomplished this mission, Nelson received orders to join Commodore Linzee at Tunis, where he had been sent

to expostulate with the Dey upon the impolicy of his supporting the revolutionary government of France. Nelson represented to him the atrocity of that government. Such arguments were of little avail in Barbary; and when the Dey was told that the French had put their sovereign to death, he dryly replied, that "nothing could be more heinous; and yet, if historians told the truth, the English had once done the same." This answer had doubtless been suggested by the French about him; they had completely gained the ascendency, and all negotiation on our part proved fruitless. Shortly afterwards Nelson was detached with a small squadron to coöperate with General Paoli and the anti-Gallican party in Corsica.

Some thirty years before this time the heroic patriotism of the Corsicans, and of their leader Paoli, had been the admiration of England. The history of these brave people is but a melancholy tale. The island which they inhabit has been abundantly blessed by nature; it has many excellent harbors; and though the *malaria*, or pestilential atmosphere, which is so deadly in many parts of Italy and of the Italian islands, prevails on the eastern coast, the greater part of the country is mountainous and healthy. It is about 150 miles long and from 40 to 50 broad, in circumference some 3200 — a country large enough, and sufficiently distant from the nearest shores, to have subsisted as an independent state if the welfare and happiness of the human race had ever been considered as the end and aim of policy. The Moors, the Pisans, the kings of Aragon, and the Genoese, successively attempted and each for a time effected its conquest. The yoke of the Genoese continued longest, and was the heaviest. These petty tyrants ruled with an iron rod; and when at any time a patriot rose to resist their oppressions, if they failed to subdue him by force, they resorted to assassination. At the commencement of the last century they quelled one revolt by the aid of German auxiliaries whom the Emperor Charles VI. sent against a

people who had never offended him, and who were fighting for whatever is most dear to man. In 1734 the war was renewed, and Theodore, a Westphalian baron, then appeared upon the stage. In that age men were not accustomed to see adventurers play for kingdoms, and Theodore became the common talk of Europe. He had served in the French armies, and having afterwards been noticed both by Ripperda[1] and Alberoni,[2] their example perhaps inflamed a spirit as ambitious and as unprincipled as their own. He employed the whole of his means in raising money and procuring arms; then wrote to the leaders of the Corsican patriots to offer them considerable assistance if they would erect Corsica into an independent kingdom and elect him king. When he landed among them they were struck with his stately person, his dignified manners, and imposing talents: they believed the magnificent promises of foreign assistance which he held out, and elected him king accordingly. Had his means been as he represented them, they could not have acted more wisely than in thus at once fixing the government of their country, and putting an end to those rivalries among the leading families which had so often proved pernicious to the public weal. He struck money, conferred titles, blocked up the fortified towns which were held by the Genoese, and amused the people with promises of assistance for about eight months; then perceiving that they cooled in their affections toward him in proportion as their expectations were disappointed, he left the island under the plea of expediting himself the succors which he had so long awaited. Such was his address that he prevailed upon several rich merchants

[1] **Ripperda.** — A Dutch adventurer who became virtually prime minister of Spain for a time. After his downfall he commanded the army of the King of Morocco. He died in 1737.

[2] **Alberoni (1664–1752).** — An Italian adventurer of low birth who became prime minister of Spain and a cardinal. He was most unscrupulous, but did much to revive the ancient glory of Spain.

in Holland, particularly the Jews, to trust him with cannon and warlike stores to a great amount. They shipped these under the charge of a supercargo. Theodore returned with this supercargo to Corsica, and put him to death on his arrival, as the shortest way of settling the account. The remainder of his life was a series of deserved afflictions. He threw in the stores which he had thus fraudulently obtained; but he did not dare to land, for Genoa had now called in the French to their assistance, and a price had been set upon his head. His dreams of royalty were now at an end; he took refuge in London, contracted debts, and was thrown into the King's Bench.[1] After lingering there many years he was released under an act of insolvency, in consequence of which he made over the kingdom of Corsica for the use of his creditors, and died shortly after his deliverance.

The French, who have never acted a generous part in the history of the world, readily entered into the views of the Genoese, which accorded with their own policy; for such was their ascendency at Genoa, that in subduing Corsica for these allies, they were in fact subduing it for themselves. They entered into the contest, therefore, with their usual vigor and their usual cruelty. It was in vain that the Corsicans addressed a most affecting memorial to the Court of Versailles; that remorseless government persisted in its flagitious project. They poured in troops; dressed a part of them like the people of the country, by which means they deceived and destroyed many of the patriots; cut down the standing corn, the vines, and the olives; set fire to the villages, and hung all the most able and active men who fell into their hands. A war of this kind may be carried on with success against a country so small and so thinly peopled as Corsica. Having reduced the island to perfect servitude, which they called peace, the French withdrew their forces. As soon as they were gone, men, women, and

[1] **King's Bench.** — A prison in which debtors were confined.

boys rose at once against their oppressors. The circumstances of the times were now favorable to them, and some British ships, acting as allies of Sardinia, bombarded Bastia and St. Fiorenzo, and delivered them into the hands of the patriots. This service was long remembered with gratitude ; the impression made upon our own countrymen was less favorable. They had witnessed the heartburning of rival chiefs and the dissensions among the patriots, and perceiving the state of barbarism to which continual oppression and habits of lawless turbulence had reduced the nation, did not recollect that the vices of the people were owing to their unhappy circumstances, but that the virtues which they displayed arose from their own nature. This feeling perhaps influenced the British Court when in 1746 Corsica offered to put herself under the protection of Great Britain. An answer was returned, expressing satisfaction at such a communication, hoping that the Corsicans would preserve the same sentiments, but signifying also that the present was not the time for such a measure.

The brave islanders then formed a government for themselves under two leaders, Gaffori and Matra, who had the title of Protectors. The latter is represented as a partisan of Genoa, favoring the views of the oppressors of his country by the most treasonable means. Gaffori was a hero worthy of old times. His eloquence was long remembered with admiration. A band of assassins was once advancing against him ; he heard of their approach, and went out to meet them, and, with a serene dignity which overawed them, requested them to hear him. He then spake to them so forcibly of the distresses of their country, her intolerable wrongs, and the hopes and views of their brethren-in-arms, that the very men who had been hired to murder him fell at his feet, implored his forgiveness, and joined his banner. While he was besieging the Genoese in Corte, a part of the garrison, perceiving the nurse with his eldest son, then an infant in arms, straying at a little distance

from the camp, suddenly sallied out and seized them. The use they made of their persons was in conformity with their usual execrable conduct. When Gaffori advanced to batter the walls, they held up the child directly over that part of the wall at which the guns were pointed. The Corsicans stopped, but Gaffori stood at their head, and ordered them to continue the fire. Providentially the child escaped, and lived to relate, with becoming feeling, a fact so honorable to his father. That father conducted the affairs of the island till 1753, when he was assassinated by some wretches, set on, it is believed, by Genoa, but certainly pensioned by that abominable government after the deed. He left the country in such a state that it was enabled to continue the war two years after his death without a leader, when they found one worthy of their cause in Pasquale de Paoli.[1]

Paoli's father was one of the patriots who effected their escape from Corsica when the French reduced it to obedience. He retired to Naples, and brought up this his youngest son in the Neapolitan service. The Corsicans heard of young Paoli's abilities, and solicited him to come over to his native country, and take the command. He did not hesitate long: his father, who was too far advanced in years to take an active part himself, encouraged him to go; and when they separated the old man fell on his neck and kissed him, and gave him his blessing. "My son," said he, "perhaps I may never see you more; but in my mind I shall ever be present with you. Your design is great and noble, and I doubt not but God will bless you in it. I shall devote to your cause the little remainder of my life in offering up my prayers for your success." When Paoli assumed the command he found all things in confusion: he formed a

[1] **Paoli.** — The reader may find many references to this Paoli in Boswell's Life of Johnson. In fact, Boswell wrote a life of Paoli and was nicknamed "Paoli" by friends who ridiculed his admiration of the Corsican hero.

democratical government, of which he was chosen chief, restored the authority of the laws, established a university, and took such measures, both for repressing abuses and molding the rising generation, that if France had not interfered, upon its wicked and detestable principle of usurpation, Corsica might at this day have been as free and flourishing and happy a commonwealth as any of the Grecian States in the days of their prosperity. The Genoese were at this time driven out of their fortified towns, and must in a short time have been expelled. France was indebted some millions of livres to Genoa; it was not convenient to pay this money; so the French Minister proposed to the Genoese that she should discharge the debt by sending six battalions to serve in Corsica for four years. The indignation which this conduct excited in all generous hearts was forcibly expressed by Rousseau, who, with all his errors, was seldom deficient in feeling for the wrongs of humanity. "You Frenchmen," said he, writing to one of that people, "are a thoroughly servile nation, thoroughly sold to tyranny, thoroughly cruel, and relentless in persecuting the unhappy. If they knew of a freeman at the other end of the world, I believe they would go thither for the mere pleasure of extirpating him."

The immediate object of the French happened to be purely mercenary, — they wanted to clear off their debt to Genoa; and as the presence of their troops in the island effected this, they aimed at doing the people no farther mischief. Would that the conduct of England had been at this time free from reproach; but a proclamation was issued by the English government, after the peace of Paris,[1] prohibiting any intercourse with the rebels of Corsica. Paoli said, he did not expect this from Great Britain. This great man was deservedly proud of his country. "I defy Rome, Sparta, or Thebes," he would say,

[1] **Peace of Paris.** — Concluded in 1783 between France, England, Spain, and Portugal.

"to show me thirty years of such patriotism as Corsica can boast!" Availing himself of the respite which the inactivity of the French and the weakness of the Genoese allowed, he prosecuted his plans of civilizing the people. He used to say that, though he had an unspeakable pride in the prospect of the fame to which he aspired, yet, if he could but render his countrymen happy, he would be content to be forgotten. His own importance he never affected to undervalue. "We are now to our country," said he, "like the prophet Elisha[1] stretched over the dead body of the Shunamite — eye to eye, nose to nose, mouth to mouth. It begins to recover warmth and to revive: I hope it will yet regain full health and vigor."

But when the four years were expired France purchased the sovereignty of Corsica from the Genoese for forty millions of livres, as if the Genoese had been entitled to sell it, — as if any bargain or sale could justify one country in taking possession of another against the will of the inhabitants, and butchering all who oppose the usurpation. Among the enormities which France has committed, this action seems but as a speck; yet the foulest murderer that ever suffered by the hands of the executioner has infinitely less guilt upon his soul than the statesman who concluded this treaty, and the monarch who sanctioned and confirmed it. A desperate and glorious resistance was made, but it was in vain; no power interposed in behalf of these injured islanders, and the French poured in as many troops as were required. They offered to confirm Paoli in the supreme authority, only on condition that he would hold it under their government. His answer was, "that the rocks which surrounded him should melt away before he would betray a cause which he held in common with the poorest Corsican." This people then set a price upon his head. During two campaigns he kept them at bay; they overpowered him at length; he was driven to the shore, and having escaped

[1] **Prophet Elisha.** — See 2 Kings iv. 34.

on shipboard, took refuge in England. It is said that Lord Shelburne resigned his seat in the cabinet because the ministry looked on without attempting to prevent France from succeeding in this abominable and important act of aggrandizement. In one respect, however, our country acted as became her. Paoli was welcomed with the honors which he deserved; a pension of £1200 per annum was immediately granted him, and provision was liberally made for his elder brother and his nephew.

Above twenty years Paoli remained in England, enjoying the friendship of the wise and the admiration of the good. But when the French Revolution began it seemed as if the restoration of Corsica was at hand. The whole country, as if animated by one spirit, rose and demanded liberty; and the National Assembly passed a decree recognizing the island as a Department of France, and therefore entitled to all the privileges of the new French constitution. This satisfied the Corsicans, which it ought not to have done; and Paoli, in whom the ardor of youth was passed, seeing that his countrymen were contented, and believing that they were about to enjoy a state of freedom, naturally wished to return to his native country. He resigned his pension in the year 1790, and appeared at the bar of the Assembly with the Corsican deputies when they took the oath of fidelity to France. But the course of events in France soon dispelled those hopes of a new and better order of things which Paoli, in common with so many of the friends of humankind, had indulged; and perceiving, after the execution of the king, that a civil war was about to ensue, of which no man could foresee the issue, he prepared to break the connection between Corsica and the French Republic. The Convention, suspecting such a design, and perhaps occasioning it by their suspicions, ordered him to their bar. That way, he well knew, led to the guillotine; and, returning a respectful answer, he declared that he would never be found wanting in his duty, but pleaded age and infirmity as a reason for disobey-

ing the summons. Their second order was more summary, and the French troops who were in Corsica, aided by those of the natives who were either influenced by hereditary party feelings or who were sincere in Jacobinism,[1] took the field against him. But the people were with him. He repaired to Corte, the capital of the island, and was again invested with the authority which he had held in the noonday of his fame. The Convention upon this denounced him as a rebel, and set a price upon his head. It was not the first time that France had proscribed Paoli.

Paoli now opened a correspondence with Lord Hood, promising, if the English would make an attack upon St. Fiorenzo from the sea, he would at the same time attack it by land. This promise he was unable to perform, and Commodore Linzee, who, in reliance upon it, was sent upon this service, was repulsed with some loss. Lord Hood, who had now been compelled to evacuate Toulon, suspected Paoli of intentionally deceiving him. This was an injurious suspicion. Shortly afterwards he dispatched Lieutenant-Colonel (afterwards Sir John) Moore[2] and Major Koehler to confer with him upon a plan of operations. Sir Gilbert Elliott accompanied them; and it was agreed upon that, in consideration of the succors, both military and naval, which his Britannic Majesty should afford for the purpose of expelling the French, the island of Corsica should be delivered into the immediate possession of his Majesty, and bind itself to acquiesce in any settlement he might approve of concerning its government and its future relation with Great

[1] **Jacobinism.** — The extreme democratic or revolutionary principles as exemplified by Mirabeau, Danton, and their followers. This "club" used to meet in an old convent of the Jacobins, or Dominicans. Hence the name Jacobin.

[2] **Sir John Moore.** — The reader will recall the familiar lines, "Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note," etc., written in commemoration of this hero's death in 1809.

Britain. While this negotiation was going on Nelson cruised off the island with a small squadron, to prevent the enemy from throwing in supplies. Close to St. Fiorenzo the French had a storehouse of flour, near their only mill: he watched an opportunity, and landed 120 men, who threw the flour into the sea, burnt the mill, and reëmbarked before 1000 men who were sent against him could occasion him the loss of a single man.

While he exerted himself thus, keeping out all supplies, intercepting dispatches, attacking their outposts and forts, and cutting out vessels from the bay, — a species of warfare which depresses the spirits of an enemy even more than it injures them, because of the sense of individual superiority which it indicates in the assailants, — troops were landed, and St. Fiorenzo was besieged. The French finding themselves unable to maintain that post, sunk one of their frigates, burnt another, and retreated to Bastia. Lord Hood submitted to General Dundas, who commanded the land forces, a plan for the reduction of this place: the general declined coöperating, thinking the attempt impracticable without a reinforcement of 2000 men which he expected from Gibraltar. Upon this Lord Hood determined to reduce it with the naval force under his command, and leaving part of his fleet off Toulon, he came with the rest to Bastia.

He showed a proper sense of respect for Nelson's services, and of confidence in his talents, by taking care not to bring with him any older captain. A few days before their arrival Nelson had what he called a brush with the enemy. "If I had with me five hundred troops," he said, "to a certainty I should have stormed the town, and I believe it might have been carried. Armies go so slow that seamen think they never mean to get forward; but I daresay they act on a surer principle, although we seldom fail." During this partial action our army appeared upon the heights, and having reconnoitred the place, returned to St. Fiorenzo. "What the general could have seen to make

a retreat necessary," said Nelson, "I cannot comprehend. A thousand men would certainly take Bastia; with five hundred and *Agamemnon* I would attempt it. My seamen are now what British seamen ought to be — almost invincible. They really mind shot no more than peas."

General Dundas had not the same confidence. "After mature consideration," said he in a letter to Lord Hood, "and a personal inspection for several days of all circumstances, local as well as others, I consider the siege of Bastia, with our present means and force, to be a most visionary and rash attempt, such as no officer would be justified in undertaking." Lord Hood replied, that nothing would be more gratifying to his feelings than to have the whole responsibility upon himself, and that he was ready and willing to undertake the reduction of the place at his own risk, with the force and means at present there. General d'Aubant, who succeeded at this time to the command of the army, coincided in opinion with his predecessor, and did not think it right to furnish his lordship with a single soldier, cannon, or any stores. Lord Hood could only obtain a few artillerymen, and ordering on board that part of the troops who, having been embarked as marines, were borne on the ship's books as part of their respective complements, he began the siege with 1183 soldiers, artillerymen, and marines, and 250 sailors. "We are but few," said Nelson, "but of the right sort; our general at St. Fiorenzo not giving us one of the five regiments he has there lying idle."

These men were landed on the 4th of April under Lieutenant-colonel Villettes and Nelson, who had now acquired from the army the title of brigadier. Guns were dragged by the sailors up heights where it appeared almost impossible to convey them, — a work of the greatest difficulty, and which Nelson said could never, in his opinion, have been accomplished by any but British seamen. The soldiers, though less dexterous in such service, because not accustomed like sailors to habitual

dexterity, behaved with equal spirit. "Their zeal," said the brigadier, "is almost unexampled. There is not a man but considers himself as personally interested in the event, and deserted by the general. It has, I am persuaded, made them equal to double their numbers." This is one proof of many that for our soldiers to equal our seamen it is only necessary for them to be equally well commanded. They have the same heart and soul, as well as the same flesh and blood. Too much may indeed be exacted from them in a retreat; but set their face toward a foe, and there is nothing within the reach of human achievement which they cannot perform.

The French had improved the leisure which our military commander had allowed them, and before Lord Hood commenced his operations, he had the mortification of seeing that the enemy were every day erecting new works, strengthening old ones, and rendering the attempt more difficult. La Combe St. Michel, the commissioner from the National Convention, who was in the city, replied in these terms to the summons of the British admiral: "I have hot shot for your ships and bayonets for your troops. When two-thirds of our men are killed, I will then trust to the generosity of the English." The siege, however, was not sustained with the firmness which such a reply seemed to augur. On the 19th of May a treaty of capitulation was begun; that same evening the troops from St. Fiorenzo made their appearance on the hills; and on the following morning General d'Aubant arrived with the whole army to take possession of Bastia.

The event of the siege justified the confidence of the sailors, but they themselves excused the opinion of the generals when they saw what they had done. "I am all astonishment," said Nelson, "when I reflect upon what we have achieved: 1000 regulars, 1500 National Guards, and a large party of Corsican troops — 4000 in all — laying down their arms to 1200 soldiers, marines, and seamen!"

The *Agamemnon* was now dispatched to coöperate at the siege of Calvi with General Sir Charles Stuart, an officer who, unfortunately for his country, never had an adequate field allotted him for the display of those eminent talents which were, to all who knew him, so conspicuous. Nelson had less responsibility here than at Bastia, and was acting with a man after his own heart, who was never sparing of himself, and slept every night in the advanced battery. But the service was not less hard than that of the former siege. "We will fag ourselves to death," said he to Lord Hood, "before any blame shall lie at our doors. I trust it will not be forgotten that twenty-five pieces of heavy ordnance have been dragged to the different batteries, mounted, and all but three fought by seamen, except one artilleryman to point the guns." The climate proved more destructive than the service, for this was during the period of the "lion sun," as they there call our season of "dog days." Of 2000 men, above half were sick, and the rest like so many phantoms. Nelson described himself as the reed among the oaks, bowing before the storm when they were laid low by it. "All the prevailing disorders have attacked me," said he, "but I have not strength enough for them to fasten on." The loss from the enemy was not great, but Nelson received a serious injury: a shot struck the ground near him, and drove the sand and small gravel into one of his eyes.[1] He

[1] **One of his eyes.** — "It is well known that the great Lord Nelson lost the sight of one eye at the siege of Calvi, and never having seen an accurate account of the particulars, I have taken pains to ascertain them. In a letter to his wife (August 18, 1794) Nelson states: 'A shot having hit our battery, the splinters and stones from it struck me with great violence on the face and breast. Although the blow was so severe as to occasion a great flow of blood from my head, yet I most fortunately escaped, having only my right eye nearly deprived of sight. It was cut down, but is so far recovered as for me to be able to distinguish light from darkness. As to all purposes of use it is gone. However, the blemish is nothing, — not to be perceived unless told. The pupil is nearly the size of the blue part; I don't

spoke of it slightly at the time: writing the same day to Lord Hood, he only said that he got a little hurt that morning, not much; and the next day he said he should be able to attend his duty in the evening. In fact, he suffered it to confine him only one day; but the sight was lost.

After the fall of Calvi, his services were, by a strange omission, altogether overlooked, and his name was not even mentioned in the list of wounded. This was noways imputable to the admiral, for he sent home to Government Nelson's journal of the siege, that they might fully understand the nature of his indefatigable and unequaled exertions. If those exertions were not rewarded in the conspicuous manner which they deserved, the fault was in the Administration of the day, not in Lord Hood. Nelson felt himself neglected.

The affairs of the Mediterranean wore at this time a gloomy aspect. The arts as well as the arms of the enemy were gaining the ascendency there. Tuscany concluded peace, relying upon the faith of France, which was, in fact, placing itself at her mercy. Corsica was in danger.

We had taken that island for ourselves, annexed it formally to the crown of Great Britain, and given it a constitution as free as our own. This was done with the consent of the majority of the inhabitants, and no transaction between two countries was ever more fairly or legitimately conducted; yet our conduct was unwise. The island is large enough to form an independent state, and such we should have made it, under our protection as long as protection might be needed. The Corsicans would then have felt as a nation, but when one party had given up the country to England, the natural consequence was that the other looked to France. The question proposed to the people was, to which would they belong? Our language

know the name.' The immediate effect of the injury was only to confine Nelson from duty one day, but he appears to have suffered a good deal subsequently." — COOPER'S *Wounds and Injuries of the Eye.*

was against us; our unaccommodating manners, it is to be feared, still more so. The French were better politicians. In intrigue they have ever been unrivaled; and it now became apparent that, in spite of all wrongs, which ought never to have been forgotten or forgiven, their partisans were daily acquiring strength. It is part of the policy of France — and a wise policy it is — to impress upon other Powers the opinion of its strength by lofty language, and by threatening before it strikes, — a system which, while it keeps up the spirit of its allies, and perpetually stimulates their hopes, tends also to dismay its enemies. Corsica was now loudly threatened. The French, who had not yet been taught to feel their own inferiority upon the seas, braved us in contempt upon that element. They had a superior fleet in the Mediterranean, and they sent it out with express orders to seek the English and engage them. Accordingly, the Toulon fleet, consisting of seventeen ships of the line and five smaller vessels, put to sea. Admiral Hotham received this information at Leghorn, and sailed immediately in search of them. He had with him fourteen sail of the line and one Neapolitan seventy-four, but his ships were only half manned, containing but 7,650 men, whereas the enemy had 16,900. He soon came in sight of them; a general action was expected; and Nelson, as was his custom on such occasions, wrote a hasty letter to his wife, as that which might possibly contain his last farewell. "The lives of all," said he, "are in the hands of Him who knows best whether to preserve mine or not; my character and good name are in my own keeping."

But however confident the French government might be of their naval superiority, the officers had no such feeling; and after manœuvring for a day in sight of the English fleet, they suffered themselves to be chased. One of their ships, the *Ça Ira*, of eighty-four guns, carried away her main and fore-top-masts. The *Inconstant*, frigate, fired at a disabled ship, but received so many shot that she was obliged to leave her.

Soon afterwards a French frigate took the *Ça Ira* in tow; and the *Sans-Culottes*, one hundred and twenty, and the *Jean Barras*, seventy-four, kept about gunshot distance on her weather bow. The *Agamemnon* stood towards her, having no ship of the line to support her within several miles. As she drew near, the *Ça Ira* fired her stern guns so truly that not a shot missed some part of the ship, and latterly the masts were struck by every shot. It had been Nelson's intention not to fire before he touched her stern; but seeing how impossible it was he should be supported, and how certainly the *Agamemnon* must be severely cut up if her masts were disabled, he altered his plan according to the occasion. As soon, therefore, as he was within a hundred yards of her stern, he ordered the helm to be put a-starboard, and the driver and after-sails to be brailed up and shivered; and as the ship fell off, gave the enemy her whole broadside. They instantly braced up the after-yards, put the helm a-port, and stood after her again. This manœuvre he practiced for two hours and a quarter, never allowing the *Ça Ira* to get a single gun from either side to bear on him; and when the French fired their after-guns now, it was no longer with coolness and precision, for every shot went far ahead. By this time her sails were hanging in tatters, her mizzen-topmast, mizzen-topsail, and cross-jackyards shot away. But the frigate which had her in tow hove in stays, and got her round. Both these French ships now brought their guns to bear, and opened their fire. The *Agamemnon* passed them within half pistol-shot; almost every shot passed over her, for the French had elevated their guns for the rigging and for distant firing, and did not think of altering the elevation. As soon as the *Agamemnon's* after-guns ceased to bear, she hove in stays, keeping a constant fire as she came round, and being worked, said Nelson, with as much exactness as if she had been turning into Spithead. On getting round he saw that the *Sans-Culottes*, which had wore with many of the enemy's

ships, was under his lee bow, and standing to leeward. The admiral at the same time made the signal for the van ships to join him. Upon this Nelson bore away and prepared to set all sail, and the enemy, having saved their ship, hauled close to the wind, and opened upon him a distant and ineffectual fire. Only seven of the *Agamemnon's* men were hurt — a thing which Nelson himself remarked as wonderful; her sails and rigging were very much cut, and she had many shots in her hull, and some between wind and water. The *Ça Ira* lost 110 men that day, and was so cut up that she could not get a topmast aloft during the night.

At daylight on the following morning the English ships were taken aback with a fine breeze at N.W., while the enemy's fleet kept the southerly wind. The body of their fleet was about five miles distant; the *Ça Ira* and the *Censeur*, seventy-four, which had her in tow, about three and a half. All sail was made to cut these ships off, and as the French attempted to save them, a partial action was brought on. The *Agamemnon* was again engaged with her yesterday's antagonist, but she had to fight on both sides the ship at the same time. The *Ça Ira* and the *Censeur* fought most gallantly: the first lost nearly 300 men in addition to her former loss; the last, 350. Both at last struck, and Lieutenant Andrews, of the *Agamemnon*, — brother to a lady to whom Nelson had become attached in France, and, in Nelson's own words, "as gallant an officer as ever stepped a quarter-deck," — hoisted English colors on board them both.

The rest of the enemy's ships behaved very ill. As soon as these vessels had struck, Nelson went to Admiral Hotham, and proposed that the two prizes should be left with the *Illustrious* and *Courageux*, which had been crippled in the action, and with four frigates, and that the rest of the fleet should pursue the enemy, and follow up the advantage to the utmost. But his reply was: "We must be contented; we have done very well."

— "Now," said Nelson, "had we taken ten sail and allowed the eleventh to escape, when it had been possible to have got at her, I could never have called it well done. Goodall backed me: I got him to write to the admiral, but it would not do. We should have had such a day as, I believe, the annals of England never produced." In this letter the character of Nelson fully manifests itself. "I wish," said he "to be an admiral, and in the command of the English fleet: I should very soon either do much or be ruined: my disposition cannot bear tame and slow measures. Sure I am, had I commanded on the 14th, that either the whole French fleet would have graced my triumph, or I should have been in a confounded scrape." What the event would have been he knew from his prophetic feelings and his own consciousness of power; and we also know it now, for Aboukir and Trafalgar have told it us.

About this time Nelson was made colonel of marines, a mark of approbation which he had long wished for rather than expected. It came in good season, for his spirits were oppressed by the thought that his services had not been acknowledged as they deserved.

He now entered upon a new line of service. The Austrian and Sardinian armies, under General de Vins, required a British squadron to coöperate with them in driving the French from the Riviera di Genoa, and as Nelson had been so much in the habit of soldiering, it was immediately fixed that the brigadier should go. He sailed from St. Fiorenzo on this destination, but fell in, off Cape del Mele, with the enemy's fleet, who immediately gave his squadron chase. The chase lasted four-and-twenty hours, and owing to the fickleness of the wind the British ships were somewhat hard pressed, but the want of skill on the part of the French gave them many advantages. Nelson bent his way back to St. Fiorenzo, where the fleet, which was in the midst of watering and refitting, had, for seven hours the mortification of seeing him almost in pos-

session of the enemy before the wind would allow them to put out to his assistance. The French, however, at evening went off, not choosing to approach nearer the shore.

During the night, Admiral Hotham, by great exertions, got under way, and having sought the enemy four days, came in sight of them on the fifth. Baffling winds and vexatious calms, so common in the Mediterranean, rendered it impossible to close with them; only a partial action could be brought on, and then the firing made a perfect calm. The French being to windward, drew inshore; and the English fleet was becalmed six or seven miles to the westward. *L'Alcide*, of seventy-four guns, struck; but before she could be taken possession of, a box of combustibles in her fore-top took fire, and the unhappy crew experienced how far more perilous their inventions were to themselves than to their enemies. So rapid was the conflagration, that the French in their official account say the hull, the masts, and sails all seemed to take fire at the same moment, and though the English boats were put out to the assistance of the poor wretches on board, not more than 200 could be saved. The *Agamemnon*, and Captain Rowley in the *Cumberland*, were just getting into close action a second time when the admiral called them off, the wind now being directly into the Gulf of Frejus, where the enemy anchored after the evening closed.

Nelson now proceeded to his station with eight sail of frigates under his command. Arriving at Genoa, he had a conference with Mr. Drake, the British envoy to that State, the result of which was that the object of the British must be to put an entire stop to all trade between Genoa, France, and the places occupied by the French troops; for unless this trade was stopped, it would be scarcely possible for the allied armies to hold their situation, and impossible for them to make any progress in driving the enemy out of the Riviera di Genoa. Mr. Drake was of opinion that even Nice might fall for want

of supplies if the trade with Genoa were cut off. This sort of blockade Nelson could not carry on without great risk to himself. A captain in the navy, as he represented to the envoy, is liable to prosecution for detention and damages.

When Nelson first saw General de Vins he thought him an able man, who was willing to act with vigor. The general charged his inactivity upon the Piedmontese and Neapolitans, whom, he said, nothing could induce to act; and he concerted a plan with Nelson for embarking a part of the Austrian army, and landing it in the rear of the French. But the English commodore soon began to suspect that the Austrian general was little disposed to any active operations. In the hope of spurring him on, he wrote to him, telling him that he had surveyed the coast to the westward as far as Nice, and would undertake to embark four or five thousand men, with their arms and a few days' provisions, on board the squadron, and land them within two miles of St. Remo, with their field-pieces. Respecting farther provisions for the Austrian army, he would provide convoys, that they should arrive in safety, and if a reëmbarkation should be found necessary, he would cover it with the squadron. The possession of St. Remo, as headquarters for magazines of every kind, would enable the Austrian general to turn his army to the eastward or westward. The enemy at Oneglia would be cut off from provisions, and men could be landed to attack that place whenever it was judged necessary.

St. Remo was the only place between Vado and Ville Franche where the squadron could lie in safety, and anchor in almost all winds. The bay was not so good as Vado for large ships, but it had a mole, which Vado had not, where all small vessels could lie, and load and unload their cargoes. This bay being in possession of the allies, Nice could be completely blockaded by sea. General de Vins, affecting in his reply to consider that Nelson's proposal had no other end than that of obtaining

the bay of St. Remo as a station for the ships, told him, what he well knew and had expressed before, that Vado Bay was a better anchorage; nevertheless, if "Monsieur le Commandant Nelson" was well assured that part of the fleet could winter there, there was no risk to which he would not expose himself with pleasure for the sake of procuring a safe station for the vessels of his Britannic Majesty. Nelson soon assured the Austrian commander that this was not the object of his memorial. He now began to suspect that both the Austrian Court and their general had other ends in view than the cause of the allies.

"This army," said he, "is slow beyond all description, and I begin to think that the Emperor is anxious to touch another four millions of English money. As for the German generals, war is their trade, and peace is ruin to them; therefore we cannot expect that they should have any wish to finish the war. The politics of courts are so mean that private people would be ashamed to act in the same way: all is trick and finesse, to which the common cause is sacrificed. The general wants a loophole; it has for some time appeared to me that he means to go no farther than his present position, and to lay the miscarriage of the enterprise against Nice, which has always been held out as the great object of his army, to the non-coöperation of the British fleet and of the Sardinians."

To prevent this plea, Nelson again addressed De Vins, requesting only to know the time, and the number of troops ready to embark; then he would, he said, dispatch a ship to Admiral Hotham, requesting transports, having no doubt of obtaining them, and trusting that the plan would be successful to its fullest extent. Nelson thought at the time that if the whole fleet were offered him for transports he would find some other excuse, and Mr. Drake, who was now appointed to reside at the Austrian headquarters, entertained the same idea of the general's sincerity. It was not, however, put so clearly to the

proof as it ought to have been. He replied that as soon as Nelson could declare himself ready with the vessels necessary for conveying 10,000 men, with their artillery and baggage, he would put the army in motion. But Nelson was not enabled to do this. Admiral Hotham, who was highly meritorious in leaving such a man so much at his own discretion, pursued a cautious system, ill according with the bold and comprehensive views of Nelson, who continually regretted Lord Hood, saying that the nation had suffered much by his resignation of the Mediterranean command. The plan which had been concerted, he said, would astonish the French, and perhaps the English.

There was no unity in the views of the allied powers, no cordiality in their coöperation, no energy in their councils. The neutral powers assisted France more effectually than the allies assisted each other. The Genoese ports were at this time filled with French privateers, which swarmed out every night and covered the gulf; and French vessels were allowed to tow out of the port of Genoa itself, board vessels which were coming in, and then return into the mole. This was allowed without a remonstrance, while, though Nelson abstained most carefully from offering any offense to the Genoese territory or flag, complaints were so repeatedly made against his squadron, that, he says, it seemed a trial who should be tired first, they of complaining, or he of answering their complaints.

But the question of neutrality was soon at an end. An Austrian commissary was traveling from Genoa towards Vado; it was known that he was to sleep at Voltri, and that he had £10,000 with him — a booty which the French minister in that city, and a captain of a French frigate in that port, considered as far more important than the word of honor of the one, the duties of the other, and the laws of neutrality. The boats of the frigate went out with some privateers, landed, robbed the commissary, and brought back the money to Genoa. The next

day men were publicly enlisted in that city for the French army; 700 men were embarked, with 7000 stands of arms, on board the frigates and other vessels, who were to land between Voltri and Savona. There a detachment from the French army was to join them, and the Genoese peasantry were to be invited to insurrection — a measure for which everything had been prepared. The night of the 13th was fixed for the sailing of this expedition; the Austrians called loudly for Nelson to prevent it; and he, on the evening of the 13th, arrived at Genoa. His presence checked the plan: the frigate, knowing her deserts, got within the merchant ships in the inner mole, and the Genoese government did not now even demand of Nelson repect to the neutral port, knowing that they had allowed, if not connived at, a flagrant breach of neutrality, and expecting the answer which he was prepared to return, that it was useless and impossible for him to respect it longer.

But though this movement produced the immediate effect which was designed, it led to ill consequences which Nelson foresaw, but for want of sufficient force was unable to prevent. His squadron was too small for the service which it had to perform. He required two seventy-fours and eight or ten frigates and sloops; but when he demanded this reinforcement, Admiral Hotham had left the command. Sir Hyde Parker succeeded till the new commander should arrive, and he immediately reduced it almost to nothing, leaving him only one frigate and a brig. This was a fatal error. While the Austrian and Sardinian troops, whether from the imbecility or the treachery of their leaders, remained inactive, the French were preparing for the invasion of Italy. Not many days before Nelson was thus summoned to Genoa he chased a large convoy into Alassio. Twelve vessels he had formerly destroyed in that port, though 2000 French troops occupied the town: this former attack had made them take new measures of defense, and there were now above one hundred sail of

victualers, gunboats, and ships of war. Nelson represented to the admiral how important it was to destroy these vessels; and offered, with his squadron of frigates and the *Culloden* and *Courageux*, to lead himself in the *Agamemnon*, and take or destroy the whole. The attempt was not permitted, but it was Nelson's belief that if it had been made it would have prevented the attack upon the Austrian army, which took place almost immediately afterwards.

General de Vins demanded satisfaction of the Genoese government for the seizure of his commissary, and then, without waiting for their reply, took possession of some empty magazines of the French and pushed his sentinels to the very gates of Genoa. Had he done so at first he would have found the magazines full; but, timed as the measure was, and useless as it was to the cause of the allies, it was in character with the whole of the Austrian general's conduct; and it is no small proof of the dexterity with which he served the enemy, that in such circumstances he could so act with Genoa as to contrive to put himself in the wrong. Nelson was at this time, according to his own expression, placed in a cleft stick. Mr. Drake, the Austrian minister, and the Austrian general all joined in requiring him not to leave Genoa. If he left that port unguarded, they said, not only the imperial troops at St. Pier d'Arena and Voltri would be lost, but the French plan for taking post between Voltri and Savona would certainly succeed; if the Austrians should be worsted in the advanced posts, the retreat by the Bocchetta would be cut off, and if this happened, the loss of the army would be imputed to him for having left Genoa.

On the other hand, he knew that if he were not at Pietra the enemy's gunboats would harass the left flank of the Austrians, who, if they were defeated, as was to be expected from the spirit of all their operations, would very probably lay their defeat to the want of assistance from the *Agamemnon*. Had

the force for which Nelson applied been given him, he could have attended to both objects ; and had he been permitted to attack the convoy in Alassio he would have disconcerted the plans of the French in spite of the Austrian general. He had foreseen the danger and pointed out how it might be prevented, but the means of preventing it were withheld. The attack was made, as he foresaw, and the gunboats brought their fire to bear upon the Austrians. It so happened, however, that the left flank, which was exposed to them, was the only part of the army that behaved well. This division stood its ground till the center and the right wing fled, and then retreated in a soldier-like manner. General de Vins gave up the command in the middle of the battle, pleading ill health.

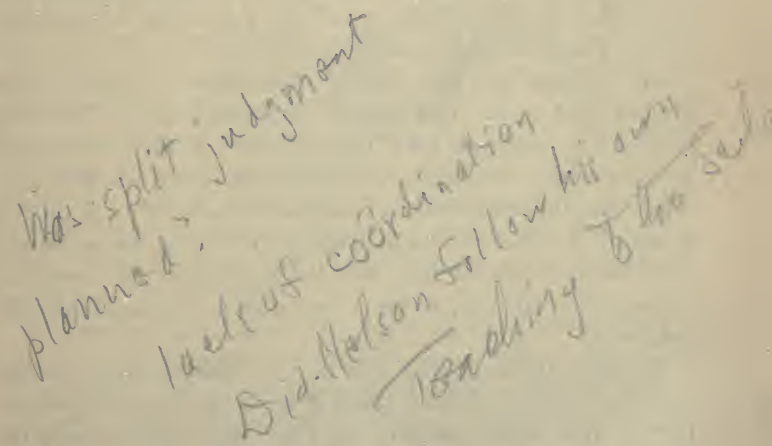
"From that moment," says Nelson, "not a soldier stayed at his post. Many thousands ran away who had never seen the enemy ; some of them thirty miles from the advanced posts. Had I not — though I own against my inclination — been kept at Genoa, from eight to ten thousand men would have been taken prisoners, and amongst the number General de Vins himself; but by this means the pass of Bocchetta was kept open. The purser of the ship, who was at Vado, ran with the Austrians eighteen miles without stopping: the men without arms, officers without soldiers, women without assistance. The oldest officers say they never heard of so complete a defeat, and certainly without any reason. Thus has ended my campaign. We have established the French Republic, which but for us, I verily believe, would never have been settled by such a volatile, changeable people."

The defeat of General de Vins gave the enemy possession of the Genoese coast from Savona to Voltri, and it deprived the Austrians of their direct communication with the English fleet. The *Agamemnon*, therefore, could no longer be useful on this station, and Nelson sailed for Leghorn to refit. When his ship went into dock there was not a mast, yard, sail, or any

part of the rigging but what stood in need of repair, having been cut to pieces with shot. The hull was so damaged that it had for some time been secured by cables, which were served or thrapped[1] round it.

[1] **Thrapped.** — Probably meant for "frapped." To frap a vessel is to bind cables tightly round it in order to strengthen it.

The subsequent history of this famous old naval vessel is interesting: "The *Agamemnon*, or, as she was humorously styled by the seamen, the 'Old Eggs-and-Bacon,' was wrecked when under the command of Captain Rose in Maldonado Bay, in the river Plate. This happened on the 20th of June, in the year 1809. Many of Nelson's hardy tars were still on board of her; and I well remember witnessing the distress pictured on many a furrowed countenance, as they were compelled to quit a ship so powerfully endeared to them by old associations. The address of Captain Rose, previously to their being distributed amongst the fleet (under Admiral Courcy), drew tears from many an eye that had looked undismayed at danger, even when death appeared inevitable." — *The Old Sailor*.



CHAPTER IV.

BATTLE OFF CAPE ST. VINCENT.

SIR JOHN JERVIS had now arrived to take the command of the Mediterranean fleet. The *Agamemnon* having, as her captain said, been made as fit for sea as a rotten ship could be, Nelson sailed from Leghorn, and joined the admiral in Fiorenzo Bay. "I found him," said he, "anxious to know many things, which I was a good deal surprised to find had not been communicated to him by others in the fleet; and it would appear that he was so well satisfied with my opinion of what is likely to happen, and the means of prevention to be taken, that he had no reserve with me respecting his information and ideas of what is likely to be done."

The manner in which Nelson was received is said to have excited some envy. One captain observed to him: "You did just as you pleased in Lord Hood's time, the same in Admiral Hotham's, and now again with Sir John Jervis: it makes no difference to you who is commander-in-chief." A higher compliment could not have been paid to any commander-in chief than to say of him that he understood the merits of Nelson, and left him, as far as possible, to act upon his own judgment.

Sir John Jervis offered him the *St. George*, ninety, or the *Zealous*, seventy-four, and asked if he should have any objection to serve under him with his flag. He replied, that if the *Agamemnon* were ordered home, and his flag were not arrived, he should on many accounts wish to return to England; still, if the war continued, he should be very proud of hoisting his flag under Sir John's command. "We cannot spare you," said

Sir John, "either as captain or admiral." Accordingly, he resumed his station in the Gulf of Genoa.

General Beaulieu, who had now superseded de Vins in the command of the allied Austrian and Sardinian army, sent his nephew and aide-de-camp to communicate with Nelson, and inquire whether he could anchor in any other place than Vado Bay. Nelson replied that Vado was the only place where the British fleet could lie in safety, but all places would suit his squadron, and wherever the general came down to the sea-coast there he should find it. The Austrian repeatedly asked if there was not a risk of losing the squadron, and was constantly answered that if these ships should be lost the admiral would find others. But all plans of coöperation with the Austrians were soon frustrated by the battle of Montenotte. Beaulieu ordered an attack to be made upon the post of Voltri; it was made twelve hours before the time which he had fixed, and before he arrived to direct it. In consequence, the French were enabled to effect their retreat, and fall back to Montenotte, thus giving the troops there a decisive superiority in number over the division which attacked them. This drew on the defeat of the Austrians. Bonaparte, with a celerity which had never before been witnessed in modern war, pursued his advantages, and in the course of a fortnight dictated to the Court of Turin terms of peace, or rather of submission, by which all the strongest places of Piedmont were put into his hands.

On one occasion, and only on one, Nelson was able to impede the progress of this new conqueror. Six vessels, laden with cannon and ordnance stores for the siege of Mantua, sailed from Toulon for St. Pier d'Arena. Assisted by Captain Cockburn in the *Meleager*, he drove them under a battery, pursued them, silenced the batteries, and captured the whole. Military books, plans, and maps of Italy, with the different points marked upon them where former battles had been

fought, sent by the Directory for Bonaparte's use, were found in the convoy. The loss of this artillery was one of the chief causes which compelled the French to raise the siege of Mantua; but there was too much treachery and too much imbecility, both in the councils and armies of the Allied Powers, for Austria to improve this momentary success.

Bonaparte perceived that the conquest of all Italy was within his reach; treaties and rights of neutral or friendly powers were as little regarded by him as by the government for which he acted. In open contempt of both, he entered Tuscany and took possession of Leghorn. In consequence of this movement Nelson blockaded that port, and landed a British force in the isle of Elba, to secure Porto Ferrajo. Soon afterwards he took the island of Capraja, which had formerly belonged to Corsica, being less than forty miles distant from it; a distance, however, short as it was, which enabled the Genoese to retain it, after their infamous sale of Corsica to France.

Genoa had now taken part with France; its government had long covertly assisted the French, and now willingly yielded to the first compulsory menace which required them to exclude the English from their ports. Capraja was seized in consequence, but this act of vigor was not followed up as it ought to have been. England at that time depended too much upon the feeble governments of the Continent and too little upon itself. It was determined by the British Cabinet to evacuate Corsica as soon as Spain should form an offensive alliance with France. This event, which, from the moment that Spain had been compelled to make peace, was clearly foreseen, had now taken place, and orders for the evacuation of the island were immediately sent out. It was impolitic to annex this island to the British dominions, but having done so, it was disgraceful thus to abandon it. The disgrace would have been spared, and every advantage which could have been derived from the possession of the island secured, if the people

had at first been left to form a government for themselves, and protected by us in the enjoyment of their independence.

The viceroy, Sir Gilbert Elliott, deeply felt the impolicy and ignominy of this evacuation. The fleet also was ordered to leave the Mediterranean. This resolution was so contrary to the last instructions which had been received that Nelson exclaimed, "Do his Majesty's ministers know their own minds? They at home," said he, "do not know what this fleet is capable of performing — anything and everything. Much as I shall rejoice to see England, I lament our present orders in sackcloth and ashes, so dishonorable to the dignity of England, whose fleets are equal to meet the world in arms; and of all the fleets I ever saw, I never beheld one in point of officers and men equal to Sir John Jervis's, who is a commander-in-chief able to lead them to glory."

Sir Gilbert Elliott believed that the great body of the Corsicans were perfectly satisfied, as they had good reason to be, with the British government, sensible of its advantages, and attached to it. However this may have been, when they found that the English intended to evacuate the island, they naturally and necessarily sent to make their peace with the French. The partisans of France found none to oppose them. A committee of thirty took upon them the government of Bastia, and sequestrated all the British property: armed Corsicans mounted guard at every place, and a plan was laid for seizing the viceroy. Nelson, who was appointed to superintend the evacuation, frustrated these projects. At a time when every one else despaired of saving stores, cannon, provisions, or property of any kind, and a privateer was moored across the mole-head to prevent all boats from passing, he sent word to the committee that if the slightest opposition were made to the embarkment and removal of British property he would batter the town down. The privateer pointed her guns at the officer who carried this message, and muskets were leveled against his boats from the mole-head.

Upon this, Captain Sutton, of the *Egmont*, pulling out his watch, gave them a quarter of an hour to deliberate upon their answer; in five minutes after the expiration of that time the ships, he said, would open their fire. Upon this the very sentinels scampered off, and every vessel came out of the mole.

A shipowner complained to the commodore that the municipality refused to let him take his goods out of the custom house. Nelson directed him to say that unless they were instantly delivered he would open his fire. The committee turned pale, and without answering a word gave him the keys. Their last attempt was to levy a duty upon the things that were reëmbarked. He sent them word that he would pay them a disagreeable visit if there were any more complaints. The committee then finding that they had to deal with a man who knew his own power and was determined to make the British name respected, desisted from the insolent conduct which they had assumed,; and it was acknowledged that Bastia never had been so quiet and orderly since the English were in possession of it. This was on the 14th of October: during the five following days the work of embarkation was carried on, the private property was saved, and public stores to the amount of £200,000.

The French, favored by the Spanish fleet, which was at that time within twelve leagues of Bastia, pushed over troops from Leghorn, who landed near Cape Corse on the 18th, and on the 20th, at one in the morning, entered the citadel, an hour only after the British had spiked the guns and evacuated it. Nelson embarked at daybreak, being the last person who left the shore,—having thus, as he said, seen the first and the last of Corsica.

Having thus ably effected this humiliating service Nelson was ordered to hoist his broad pendant on board the *Minerve* frigate, Captain George Cockburn, and with the *Blanche* under

his command proceed to Porto Ferrajo, and superintend the evacuation of that place also. On his way he fell in with two Spanish frigates, the *Sabina* and the *Ceres*. The *Minerve* engaged the former, which was commanded by Don Jacobo Stuart, a descendant of the Duke of Berwick. After an action of three hours, during which the Spaniards lost 164 men, the *Sabina* struck. The Spanish captain, who was the only surviving officer, had hardly been conveyed on board the *Minerve* when another enemy's frigate came up, compelled her to cast off the prize, and brought her a second time to action. After half an hour's trial of strength, this new antagonist wore and hauled off; but a Spanish squadron of two ships of the line and two frigates came in sight. The *Blanche*, from which the *Ceres* had got off, was far to windward, and the *Minerve* escaped only by the anxiety of the enemy to recover their own ship. As soon as Nelson reached Porto Ferrajo he sent his prisoner in a flag of truce to Carthagena, having returned him his sword. This he did in honor of the gallantry which Don Jacobo had displayed, and not without some feeling of respect for his ancestry. "I felt it," said he, "consonant to the dignity of my country, and I always act as I feel right, without regard to custom. He was reputed the best officer in Spain, and his men were worthy of such a commander." By the same flag of truce he sent back all the Spanish prisoners at Porto Ferrajo, in exchange for whom he received his own men who had been taken in the prize.

Nelson's mind had long been irritated and depressed by the fear that a general action would take place before he could join the fleet. At length he sailed from Porto Ferrajo with a convoy for Gibraltar, and having reached that place proceeded to the westward in search of the admiral. Off the mouth of the Straits he fell in with the Spanish fleet, and on the 13th of February, reaching the station off Cape St. Vincent, communicated this intelligence to Sir John Jervis. He was now

directed to shift his broad pendant on board the *Captain*, seventy-four, Captain R. W. Miller, and before sunset the signal was made to prepare for action, and to keep during the night in close order. At daybreak the enemy were in sight. The British force consisted of two ships of one hundred guns, two of ninety-eight, two of ninety, eight of seventy-four, and one of sixty-four — fifteen of the line in all, with four frigates, a sloop, and a cutter. The Spaniards had one four-decker of one hundred and thirty-six guns, six three-deckers of one hundred and twelve, two eighty-fours, eighteen seventy-fours — in all twenty-seven ships of the line, with ten frigates and a brig. Their admiral, Don Joseph de Cordova, had learnt from an American on the 5th that the English had only nine ships, which was indeed the case when his informer had seen them, for a reinforcement of five ships from England, under Admiral Parker, had not then joined, and the *Culloden* had parted company.

Upon this information, the Spanish commander, instead of going into Cadiz, as was his intention when he sailed from Carthagena, determined to seek an enemy so inferior in force, and relying with fatal confidence upon the American account, he suffered his ships to remain too far dispersed and in some disorder. When the morning of the 14th broke and discovered the English fleet, a fog for some time concealed their number. The lookout ship of the Spaniards, fancying that her signal was disregarded because so little notice seemed to be taken of it, made another signal that the English force consisted of forty sail of the line. The captain afterwards said he did this to rouse the admiral. It had the effect of perplexing him and alarming the whole fleet. The absurdity of such an act shows what was the state of the Spanish navy under that miserable government by which Spain was so long oppressed and degraded, and finally betrayed. In reality, the general incapacity of the naval officers was so well known, that in a

pasquinade,[1] which about this time appeared at Madrid, wherein the different orders of the State were advertised for sale, the greater part of the sea officers, with all their equipments, were offered as a gift, and it was added that any person who would please to take them should receive a handsome gratuity.

Before the enemy could form a regular order of battle, Sir John Jervis, by carrying a press of sail, came up with them, passed through their fleet, then tacked, and thus cut off nine of their ships from the main body. These ships attempted to form on the larboard tack, either with a design of passing through the British line, or to leeward of it, and thus rejoining their friends. Only one of them succeeded in this attempt, and that only because she was so covered with smoke that her intention was not discovered till she had reached the rear; the others were so warmly received that they put about, took to flight, and did not appear again in the action till its close. The admiral was now able to direct his attention to the enemy's main body, which was still superior in number to his whole fleet, and more so in weight of metal. He made signal to tack in succession. Nelson, whose station was in the rear of the British line, perceived that the Spaniards were bearing up before the wind, with an intention of forming their line, going large, and joining their separated ships, or else of getting off without an engagement. To prevent either of these schemes he disobeyed the signal without a moment's hesitation, and ordered his ship to be wore. This at once brought him into action with the *Santissima Trinidad*, one hundred and thirty-six, the *San Joseph*, one hundred and twelve, the *Salvador del Mundo*, one hundred and twelve, the *San Nicolas*, eighty, the *San Isidro*, seventy-four, another seventy-four, and another first-rate. Trowbridge, in the *Culloden*, immediately joined and most nobly supported him, and for nearly an hour did the

[1] **Pasquinade.** — A lampoon.

Culloden and *Captain* maintain what Nelson called "this apparently but not really unequal contest" — such was the advantage of skill and discipline, and the confidence which brave men derive from them.

The *Blenheim* then passing between them and the enemy, gave them a respite, and poured in her fire upon the Spaniards. The *Salvador del Mundo* and *San Isidro* dropped astern, and were fired into in a masterly style by the *Excellent*, Captain Collingwood. The *San Isidro* struck, and Nelson thought that the *Salvador* struck also. "But Collingwood," says he, "disdaining the parade of taking possession of beaten enemies, most gallantly pushed up, with every sail set, to save his old friend and messmate, who was to every appearance in a critical situation," for the *Captain* was at this time actually fired upon by three first-rates, by the *San Nicolas*, and by a seventy-four, within about pistol-shot of that vessel. The *Blenheim* was ahead, the *Culloden* crippled and astern. Collingwood ranged up, and hauling up his mainsail just astern, passed within ten feet of the *San Nicolas*, giving her a most tremendous fire, then passed on for the *Santissima Trinidad*. The *San Nicolas* luffing up, the *San Joseph* fell on board of her, and Nelson resumed his station abreast of them, and close alongside. The *Captain* was now incapable of farther service either in the line or in chase; she had lost her foretopmast; not a sail, shroud, or rope was left, and her wheel was shot away. Nelson therefore directed Captain Miller to put the helm a-starboard, and calling for the boarders, ordered them to board.

Captain Berry, who had lately been Nelson's first lieutenant, was the first man who leaped into the enemy's mizzen-chains. Miller, when in the very act of going, was ordered by Nelson to remain.[1] Berry was supported from the spritsail-yard,

[1] **Ordered to remain.** — "While Captain Miller was leading his men to the *San Nicolas*, Commodore Nelson said, 'No, Miller; I must have that honor'; and on going into the cabin, after the contest, Nelson said, 'Miller,

which locked in the *San Nicolas's* main rigging. A soldier of the 69th broke the upper quarter-gallery window and jumped in, followed by the commodore himself, and by others as fast as possible. The cabin doors were fastened, and the Spanish officers fired their pistols at them through the window; the doors were soon forced, and the Spanish brigadier fell while retreating to the quarter-deck. Nelson pushed on, and found Berry in possession of the poop, and the Spanish ensign hauling down. He passed on to the forecastle, where he met two or three Spanish officers, and received their swords. The English were now in full possession of every part of the ship, and a fire of pistols and musketry opened upon them from the admiral's stern gallery of the *San Joseph*.

Nelson having placed sentinels at the different ladders, and ordered Captain Miller to send more men into the prize, gave orders for boarding that ship from the *San Nicolas*. It was done in an instant, he himself leading the way, and exclaiming, "Westminster Abbey,[1] or victory!" Berry assisted him into the main-chains, and at that very moment a Spanish officer looked over the quarter-deck rail and said they surrendered. It was not long before he was on the quarter-deck, where the Spanish captain presented to him his sword, and told him the admiral was below, dying of his wounds. There, on the quarter-deck of an enemy's first-rate, he received the swords of the officers, giving them as they were delivered, one by one, to William Fearney, one of his old "*Agamemnons*," who with the utmost coolness put them under his arm. One of his sailors

I am under the greatest obligation to you,' and presented him with the Spanish captain's sword; and then, as if he could not sufficiently show his sense of his captain's services, he again expressed his obligation, and drawing a ring from his finger, placed it on Captain Miller's." — NELSON'S *Dispatches*.

[1] **Westminster Abbey.** — The burial-place of England's great men. Hence, to conquer or die. That Nelson made use of these words on this occasion is very doubtful.

came up, and with an Englishman's feeling took him by the hand, saying he might not soon have such another place to do it in, and he was heartily glad to see him there. Twenty-four of the *Captain's* men were killed and fifty-six wounded, a fourth part of the loss sustained by the whole squadron falling upon this ship. Nelson received only a few bruises.

The Spaniards had still eighteen or nineteen ships which had suffered little or no injury; that part of the fleet which had been separated from the main body in the morning was now coming up, and Sir John Jervis made signal to bring-to. His ships could not have formed without abandoning those which they had captured, and running to leeward; the *Captain* was lying a perfect wreck on board her two prizes, and many of the other vessels were so shattered in their masts and rigging as to be wholly unmanageable. The Spanish admiral meantime, according to his official account, being altogether undecided in his own opinion respecting the state of the fleet, inquired of his captains whether it was proper to renew the action; nine of them answered explicitly that it was not, others replied that it was expedient to delay the business. The *Pelayo* and the *Principe Conquistador* were the only ships that were for fighting.

As soon as the action was discontinued Nelson went on board the admiral's ship. Sir John Jervis received him on the quarter-deck, took him in his arms, and said he could not sufficiently thank him. For this victory the commander-in-chief was rewarded with the title Earl St. Vincent.[1] Nelson, who,

[1] In the official letter of Sir John Jervis, Nelson was not mentioned. It is said that the admiral had seen an instance of the ill consequence of such selections after Lord Howe's victory, and therefore would not name any individual, thinking it proper to speak to the public only in terms of general approbation. His private letter to the First Lord of the Admiralty, was, with his consent, published, for the first time, in a "Life of Nelson" by Mr. Harrison. Here it is said that "Commodore Nelson, who was in

before the action was known in England, had been advanced to the rank of rear-admiral, had the Order of the Bath[1] given him. The sword of the Spanish rear-admiral, which Sir John Jervis insisted upon his keeping, he presented to the mayor and corporation of Norwich, saying that he knew no place where it could give him or his family more pleasure to have it kept than in the capital city of the county where he

the rear on the starboard tack, took the lead on the larboard, and contributed very much to the fortune of the day." It is also said that he boarded the two Spanish ships successively; but the fact that Nelson wore without orders, and thus planned as well as accomplished the victory, is not explicitly stated. Perhaps it was thought proper to pass over this part of his conduct in silence as a splendid fault; but such an example is not dangerous. The author of the work in which this letter was first made public protests against those over-zealous friends "who would make the action rather appear as Nelson's battle than that of the illustrious commander-in-chief who derives from it so deservedly his title. 'No man,' he says, "ever less needed, or less desired, to strip a single leaf from the honored wreath of any other hero, with the vain hope of augmenting his own, than the immortal Nelson; no man ever more merited the whole of that which a generous nation unanimously presented to Sir J. Jervis than the Earl St. Vincent." Certainly Earl St. Vincent well deserved the reward which he received; but it is not detracting from his merit to say that Nelson is as fully entitled to as much fame from this action as the commander-in-chief, not because the brunt of the action fell upon him, not because he was engaged with all the four ships which were taken, and took two of them, it may also be said, with his own hand; but because the decisive movement which enabled him to perform all this, and by which the action became a victory, was executed in neglect of orders, and upon his own judgment and at his peril. Earl St. Vincent deserved his earldom; but it is not to the honor of those by whom titles were distributed in those days that Nelson never obtained the rank of earl for either of those victories which he lived to enjoy, though the one was the most complete and glorious in the annals of naval history, and the other the most important in its consequences of any which was achieved during the whole war.

[1] **Order of the Bath.** — Made a knight of the Order of the Bath. At an inauguration of a knight in olden times the candidate took a bath, as a part of the ceremony.

was born. The freedom of that city was voted him on this occasion. But of all the numerous congratulations which he received none could have affected him more deeply than that which came from his venerable father. "I thank my God," said that excellent man, "with all the power of a grateful soul, for the mercies he has most graciously bestowed on me in preserving you. Not only my few acquaintance here, but the people in general, met me at every corner with such handsome words that I was obliged to retire from the public eye. The height of glory to which your professional judgment, united with a proper degree of bravery, guarded by Providence, has raised you, few sons, my dear child, attain to, and fewer fathers live to see. Tears of joy have involuntarily trickled down my furrowed cheeks. Who could stand the force of such general congratulation? The name and services of Nelson have sounded throughout this city of Bath, from the common ballad-singer to the public theatre." The good old man concluded by telling him that the field of glory, in which he had been so long conspicuous, was still open, and by giving him his blessing.

Sir Horatio, who had now hoisted his flag as rear-admiral of the blue, was sent to bring away the troops from Porto Ferrajo; having performed this, he shifted his flag to the *Theseus*. That ship had taken part in the mutiny[1] in England, and being just arrived from home, some danger was apprehended from the temper of the men. This was one reason why Nelson was removed to her. He had not been on board many weeks before a paper, signed in the name of all the ship's company, was dropped on the quarter-deck, containing these words: "Success attend Admiral Nelson! God bless Captain Miller! We thank them for the officers they have placed over us. We are happy and comfortable, and will shed every drop of blood in our veins

[1] **Mutiny.** — Reference is made to the mutiny at Spithead in 1797.

to support them; and the name of the *Theseus* shall be immortalized as high as her captain's." [1]

Wherever Nelson commanded the men soon became attached to him: in ten days' time he would have restored the most mutinous ship in the navy to order. Whenever an officer fails to win the affections of those who are under his command, he may be assured that the fault is chiefly in himself.[2]

While Sir Horatio was in the *Theseus* he was employed in the command of the inner squadron at the blockade of Cadiz. During this service the most perilous action occurred in which he was ever engaged. Making a night attack upon the Spanish gunboats, his barge was attacked by an armed launch, under their commander, Don Miguel Tregoyen, carrying twenty-six men. Nelson had with him only his ten bargemen, Captain Freemantle, and his coxswain, John Sykes, an old and faithful follower, who twice saved the life of his admiral by parrying the blows aimed at him, and at last actually interposed his own head to receive the blow of a Spanish sabre, which he could not by any other means avert; thus dearly was Nelson beloved. This was a desperate service — hand to hand with swords; and

[1] **Her Captain's.** — According to the Nelson Dispatches the text should read "the *Captain*," the name of Nelson's former ship.

[2] A thorough sailor himself, nursed in the lap of hardship, Nelson knew how to adapt his behavior to the men he commanded, and never did an officer possess their affections to a higher degree. To this love and veneration he was not only indebted for his early successes, but even for his life, as there was scarcely one of his crew who would not have sacrificed himself to save his commander. A striking instance of how much he was adored by his men occurred during the battle of Trafalgar. A seaman of the *Victory* was under the hands of the surgeon, suffering the amputation of an arm. "Well," said he, "this, by some, would be considered a misfortune, but I shall be proud of it, as I shall resemble the more our brave admiral." Before the operation was finished, tidings were brought below that Nelson was shot; the man, who had never shrunk from the pain he had endured, started from his seat, and exclaimed: "Good God! I would rather the shot had taken off my head and spared his life."

Nelson always considered that his personal courage was more conspicuous on this occasion than on any other during his whole life. Notwithstanding the great disproportion of numbers, eighteen of the enemy were killed, all the rest wounded, and their launch taken. Nelson would have asked for a lieutenancy for Sykes if he had served long enough: his manner and conduct, he observed, were so entirely above his situation that Nature certainly intended him for a gentleman; but though he recovered from the dangerous wound which he received in this act of heroic attachment, he did not live to profit by the gratitude and friendship of his commander.

Twelve days after this rencontre, Nelson sailed at the head of an expedition against Teneriffe. A report had prevailed a few months before that the viceroy of Mexico, with the treasure-ships, had put into that island. This had led Nelson to meditate the plan of an attack upon it, which he communicated to Earl St. Vincent.

The plan was, that the boats should land in the night, between the fort on the N.E. side of Santa Cruz Bay and the town, make themselves masters of that fort, and then send a summons to the governor. By midnight the three frigates, having the force on board which was intended for this debarkation, approached within three miles of the place; but owing to a strong gale of wind in the offing, and a strong current against them inshore, they were not able to get within a mile of the landing-place before daybreak, and then they were seen and their intention discovered. Trowbridge and Bowen, with Captain Oldfield of the marines, went, upon this, to consult with the admiral what was to be done; and it was resolved that they should attempt to get possession of the heights above the fort. The frigates accordingly landed their men, and Nelson stood in with the line-of-battle ships, meaning to batter the fort for the purpose of distracting the attention of the garrison. A calm and contrary current hindered him from getting within

a league of the shore, and the heights were by this time so secured, and manned with such a force, as to be judged impracticable. Thus foiled in his plans by circumstances of wind and tide, he still considered it a point of honor that some attempt should be made. This was on the 22d of July; he reëmbarked his men that night, got the ships on the 24th to anchor about two miles north of the town, and made show as if he intended to attack the heights.

At eleven o'clock, the boats, containing between 600 and 700 men, with 180 on board the *Fox* cutter, and from 70 to 80 in a boat which had been taken the day before, proceeded in six divisions towards the town, conducted by all the captains of the squadron, except Freemantle and Bowen, who attended with Nelson to regulate and lead the way to the attack. They were to land on a mole, and thence hasten as fast as possible into the great square; then form and proceed as should be found expedient. They were not discovered until about half-past one o'clock, when, being within half-gunshot of the landing-place, Nelson directed the boats to cast off from each other, give a huzza, and push for the shore. But the Spaniards were excellently well prepared; the alarm-bells answered the huzza, and a fire of thirty or forty pieces of cannon, with musketry from one end of the town to the other, opened upon the invaders. Nothing, however, could check the intrepidity with which they advanced. The night was exceedingly dark; most of the boats missed the mole, and went on shore through a raging surf, which stove all to the left of it. The *Admiral*, *Freemantle*, *Thompson*, *Bowen*, and four or five other boats, found the mole; they stormed it instantly, and carried it, though it was defended, as they imagined, by four or five hundred men. Its guns, which were six-and-twenty pounders, were spiked; but such a heavy fire of musketry and grape was kept up from the citadel and the houses at the head of the mole, that the assailants could not advance, and nearly all of them were killed or wounded.

In the act of stepping out of the boat Nelson received a shot through the right elbow, and fell; but as he fell he caught the sword which he had just drawn, in his left hand, determined never to part with it while he lived, for it had belonged to his uncle, Captain Suckling, and he valued it like a relic. Nisbet, who was close to him, placed him at the bottom of the boat, and laid his hat over the shattered arm, lest the sight of the blood, which gushed out in great abundance, should increase his faintness. He then examined the wound, and taking some silk handkerchiefs from his neck, bound them tightly above the lacerated vessels. Had it not been for this presence of mind in his son-in-law,[1] Nelson must have perished. One of his bargemen, by name Lovel, tore his shirt into shreds, and made a sling with them for the broken limb. They then collected five other seamen, by whose assistance they succeeded at length in getting the boat afloat, for it had grounded with the falling tide. Nisbet took one of the oars, and ordered the steersman to go close under the guns of the battery, that they might be safe from its tremendous fire. Hearing his voice, Nelson roused himself, and desired to be lifted up in the boat that he might look about him. Nisbet raised him up, but nothing could be seen except the firing of the guns on shore, and what could be discerned by their flashes upon the stormy sea. In a few minutes a general shriek was heard from the crew of the *Fox*, which had received a shot under water, and went down. Ninety-seven men were lost in her; eighty-three were saved, many by Nelson himself, whose exertions on this occasion greatly increased the pain and danger of his wound. The first ship which the boat could reach happened to be the *Seahorse*, but nothing could induce him to go on board, though he was assured that if they attempted to row to another ship it might be at the risk of his life. "I had rather suffer death,"

[1] **Son-in-law.** — Nelson had no son-in-law. Reference is made to Nisbet, his step-son.

he replied, "than alarm Mrs. Freemantle by letting her see me in this state, when I can give her no tidings whatever of her husband." They pushed on for the *Theseus*. When they came alongside he peremptorily refused all assistance in getting on board, so impatient was he that the boat should return, in hopes that it might save a few more from the *Fox*. He desired to have only a single rope thrown over the side, which he twisted round his left hand, saying, "Let me alone; I have yet my legs left and one arm. Tell the surgeon to make haste and get his instruments. I know I must lose my right arm; so the sooner it is off the better."[1] The spirit which he displayed in jumping up the ship's side astonished everybody.

Freemantle had been severely wounded in the right arm soon after the admiral. He was fortunate enough to find a boat at the beach, and got instantly to his ship. Thompson was wounded; Bowen killed, to the great regret of Nelson; as was also one of his own officers, Lieutenant Weatherhead, who had followed him from the *Agamemnon*, and whom he greatly and deservedly esteemed. Trowbridge, meantime, fortunately for his party, missed the mole in the darkness, but pushed on shore under the batteries, close to the south end of the citadel. Captain Waller of the *Emerald*, and two or three other boats, landed at the same time. The surf was so high that many others put back. The boats were instantly filled with water and stove against the rocks, and most of the ammunition in the men's pouches was wetted. Having collected a few men, they

[1] During the Peace of Amiens, when Nelson was passing through Salisbury, and received there with those acclamations which followed him everywhere, he recognized amid the crowd a man who had assisted at the amputation, and attended him afterwards. He beckoned him up the stairs of the Council House, shook hands with him, and made him a present, in remembrance of his services at that time. The man took from his bosom a piece of lace which he had torn from the sleeve of the amputated limb, saying he had preserved and would preserve it to the last moment, in memory of his old commander.

pushed on to the great square, hoping there to find the Admiral and the rest of the force. The ladders were all lost, so that they could make no immediate attempt on the citadel; but they sent a sergeant with two of the townspeople to summon it. This messenger never returned, and Trowbridge, having waited about an hour in painful expectation of his friends, marched to join Captains Hood and Miller, who had effected their landing to the southwest. They then endeavored to procure some intelligence of the admiral and the rest of the officers, but without success.

By daybreak they had gathered together about eighty marines, eighty pikemen, and one hundred and eighty small-arm seamen — all the survivors of those who had made good their landing. They obtained some ammunition from the prisoners whom they had taken, and marched on to try what could be done at the citadel without ladders. They found all the streets commanded by field-pieces, and several thousand Spaniards, with about a hundred French, under arms, approaching by every avenue. Finding himself without provisions, the powder wet, and no possibility of obtaining either stores or reinforcements from the ships, the boats being lost, Trowbridge, with great presence of mind, sent Captain Samuel Hood with a flag of truce to the governor to say he was prepared to burn the town, and would instantly set fire to it, if the Spaniards approached one inch nearer. This, however, if he were compelled to do it, he should do with regret, for he had no wish to injure the inhabitants, and he was ready to treat upon these terms: that the British troops should reëmbark with all their arms of every kind, and take their own boats, if they were saved, or be provided with such others as might be wanting; they on their part engaging that the squadron should not molest the town nor any of the Canary Islands; all prisoners on both sides to be given up.

When these terms were proposed, the governor made answer that the English ought to surrender as prisoners of war; but

Captain Hood replied he was instructed to say that if the terms were not accepted in five minutes, Captain Trowbridge would set the town on fire and attack the Spaniards at the point of the bayonet. Satisfied with his success, which was indeed sufficiently complete, and respecting, like a brave and honorable man, the gallantry of his enemy, the Spaniard acceded to the proposal. "And here," says Nelson in his journal, "it is right we should notice the noble and generous conduct of Don Juan Antonio Gutierrez, the Spanish governor. The moment the terms were agreed to he directed our wounded men to be received into the hospitals, and all our people to be supplied with the best provisions that could be procured, and made it known that the ships were at liberty to send on shore and purchase whatever refreshments they were in want of during the time they might be off the island." A youth, by name Don Bernardo Collagon, stript himself of his shirt to make bandages for one of those Englishmen against whom, not an hour before, he had been engaged in battle. Nelson wrote to thank the governor for the humanity which he had displayed. Presents were interchanged between them. Sir Horatio offered to take charge of his dispatches for the Spanish government, and thus actually became the first messenger to Spain of his own defeat.

The total loss of the English in killed, wounded, and drowned amounted to 250. Nelson made no mention of his own wound in his official dispatches, but in a private letter to Lord St. Vincent — the first which he wrote with his left hand — he shows himself to have been deeply affected by the failure of this enterprise. "I am become," he said, "a burden to my friends and useless to my country; but by my last letter you will perceive my anxiety for the promotion of my son-in-law, Josiah Nisbet. When I leave your command I become dead to the world; 'I go hence and am no more seen.' If from poor Bowen's loss you think it proper to oblige me, I rest con-

fident you will do it. The boy is under obligations to me, but he repaid me by bringing me from the mole of Santa Cruz. I hope you will be able to give me a frigate to convey the remains of my carcass to England." — "A left-handed admiral," he said in a subsequent letter, "will never again be considered as useful; therefore the sooner I get to a very humble cottage the better, and make room for a sounder man to serve the State." His first letter to Lady Nelson was written under the same opinion, but in a more cheerful strain. "It was the chance of war," said he, "and I have great reason to be thankful; and I know it will add much to your pleasure to find that Josiah, under God's providence, was principally instrumental in saving my life. I shall not be surprised if I am neglected and forgotten; probably I shall no longer be considered as useful. However, I shall feel rich if I continue to enjoy your affection. I beg neither you nor my father will think much of this mishap; my mind has long been made up to such an event."

His son-in-law, according to his wish, was immediately promoted, and honors enough to heal his wounded spirit awaited him in England. Letters were addressed to him by the First Lord of the Admiralty, and by his steady friend the Duke of Clarence, to congratulate him on his return, covered as he was with glory. He assured the duke in his reply that not a scrap of that ardor with which he had hitherto served his King had been shot away. The freedom of the cities of Bristol and London was transmitted to him, he was invested with the Order of the Bath, and received a pension of £1000 a year. The memorial which, as a matter of form, he was called upon to present on this occasion, exhibited an extraordinary catalogue of services performed during the war. It stated that he had been in four actions with the fleets of the enemy, and in three actions with boats employed in cutting out of harbor, in destroying vessels, and in taking three towns; he had served on shore with the army four months, and commanded the

batteries at the sieges of Bastia and Calvi; he had assisted at the capture of seven sail of the line, six frigates, four corvettes, and eleven privateers; taken and destroyed nearly fifty sail of merchant vessels; and actually been engaged against the enemy upwards of one hundred and twenty times, in which service he had lost his right eye and right arm, and been severely wounded and bruised in his body.

His sufferings from the lost limb were long and painful. A nerve had been taken up in one of the ligatures at the time of the operation, and the ligature, according to the practice of the French surgeons, was of silk, instead of waxed thread. This produced a constant irritation and discharge, and the ends of the ligature being pulled every day, in hopes of bringing it away, occasioned great agony. He had scarcely any intermission of pain day or night for three months after his return to England. Lady Nelson, at his earnest request, attended the dressing of his arm till she had acquired sufficient resolution and skill to dress it herself. One night during this state of suffering, after a day of constant pain, Nelson retired early to bed in hope of enjoying some respite by means of laudanum. He was at that time lodging in Bond Street, and the family were soon disturbed by a mob knocking loudly and violently at the door. The news of Duncan's victory [1] had been made public, and the house was not illuminated. But when the mob were told that Admiral Nelson lay there in bed, badly wounded, the foremost of them made answer, "You shall hear no more from us to-night;" and in fact the feeling of respect and sympathy was communicated from one to another with such effect that under the confusion of such a night the house was not molested again.

About the end of November, after a night of sound sleep, he found the arm nearly free from pain; the surgeon was

[1] **Duncan's Victory.** — The reference is to Admiral Duncan's victory over the Dutch at Camperdoun, Oct. 11, 1797.

immediately sent for to examine it, and the ligature came away with the slightest touch. From that time it began to heal. As soon as he thought his health established, he sent the following form of thanksgiving to the minister of St. George's, Hanover Square: "An officer desires to return thanks to Almighty God for his perfect recovery from a severe wound, and also for the many mercies bestowed on him."

Not having been in England till now since he lost his eye, he went to receive a year's pay as smart-money, but could not obtain payment because he had neglected to bring a certificate from a surgeon that the sight was actually destroyed. A little irritated that this form should be insisted upon, because, though the fact was not apparent, he thought it was sufficiently notorious, he procured a certificate at the same time for the loss of his arm, saying they might just as well doubt one as the other. This put him in good humor with himself and with the clerk who had offended him. On his return to the office, the clerk, finding it was only the annual pay of a captain, observed he thought it had been more. "Oh!" replied Nelson, "this is only for an eye. In a few days I shall come for an arm, and in a little time longer, God knows, most probably for a leg." Accordingly, he soon afterwards went, and with perfect good humor exhibited the certificate of the loss of his arm.

CHAPTER V.

THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.

EARLY in the year 1798 Sir Horatio Nelson hoisted his flag in the *Vanguard*, and was ordered to rejoin Earl St. Vincent. Upon his departure his father addressed him with that affectionate solemnity by which all his letters were distinguished. "I trust in the Lord," said he, "that He will prosper your going out and your coming in. I earnestly desired once more to see you, and that wish has been heard. If I should presume to say, I hope to see you again, the question would be readily asked, How old art thou? *Vale! vale! Domine, vale!*"

Immediately on his rejoining the fleet he was dispatched to the Mediterranean with a small squadron, in order to ascertain, if possible, the object of the great expedition which at that time was fitting out under Bonaparte at Toulon. The defeat of this armament, whatever might be its destination, was deemed by the British government an object paramount to every other; and Earl St. Vincent was directed, if he thought it necessary, to take his whole force into the Mediterranean, to relinquish for that purpose the blockade of the Spanish fleet as a thing of inferior moment; but if he should deem a detachment sufficient, "I think it almost unnecessary," said the First Lord of the Admiralty in his secret instructions, "to suggest to you the propriety of putting it under Sir Horatio Nelson." It is to the honor of Earl St. Vincent that he had already made the same choice.

The armament at Toulon consisted of thirteen ships of the line, seven forty-gun frigates, with twenty-four smaller vessels of war and nearly 200 transports. Mr. Udney, our consul at

Leghorn, was the first person who procured certain intelligence of the enemy's design against Malta, and from his own sagacity foresaw that Egypt must be their after-object. Nelson sailed from Gibraltar on the 9th of May, with the *Vanguard*, *Orion*, and *Alexander*, seventy-fours; the *Caroline*, *Flora*, *Emerald*, and *Terpischore*, frigates; and the *Bonne Citoyenne*, sloop of war, to watch this formidable armament. On the 19th, when they were in the Gulf of Lyons, a gale came on from the N.W. It moderated so much on the 20th as to enable them to get their topgallant masts and yards aloft. After dark it again began to blow strong; but the ships had been prepared for a gale, and therefore Nelson's mind was easy. Shortly after midnight, however, his main-topmast went over the side, and the mizzen-topmast soon afterward. The night was so tempestuous that it was impossible for any signal either to be seen or heard, and Nelson determined, as soon as it should be daybreak, to wear, and scud before the gale; but at half-past three the foremast went in three pieces, and the bowsprit was found to be sprung in three places.

When day broke they succeeded in wearing the ship with a remnant of the spritsail. This was hardly to have been expected. The *Vanguard* was at that time twenty-five leagues south of the island of Hieres, with her head lying to the N.E., and if she had not wore the ship must have drifted to Corsica. Captain Ball, in the *Alexander*, took her in tow, to carry her into the Sardinian harbor of St. Pietro. Nelson, apprehensive that this attempt might endanger both vessels, ordered him to cast off; but that excellent officer, with a spirit like his commander's, replied he was confident he could save the *Vanguard*, and by God's help he would do it. There had been a previous coolness between these great men, but by this time Nelson became fully sensible of the extraordinary talents of Captain Ball, and a sincere friendship subsisted between them during the remainder of their lives.

"I ought not," said the admiral, writing to his wife, "I ought not to call what has happened to the *Vanguard* by the cold name of accident; I believe firmly it was the Almighty's goodness to check my consummate vanity. I hope it has made me a better officer, as I feel confident it has made me a better man. Figure to yourself, on Sunday evening at sunset, a vain man walking in his cabin, with a squadron around him, who looked up to their chief to lead them to glory, and in whom their chief placed the firmest reliance that the proudest ships of equal numbers belonging to France would have lowered their flags; figure to yourself, on Monday morning when the sun rose, this proud man, his ship dismasted, his fleet dispersed, and himself in such distress that the meanest frigate out of France would have been an unwelcome guest."

Nelson had indeed more reason to refuse the cold name of accident to this tempest than he was then aware of, for on that very day the French fleet sailed from Toulon, and must have passed within a few leagues of his little squadron, which was thus preserved by the thick weather that came on.

The British government at this time, with a becoming spirit, gave orders that any port in the Mediterranean should be considered as hostile where the governor or chief magistrate should refuse to let our ships of war procure supplies of provisions or of any article which they might require.

In the orders of the British government to consider all ports as hostile where the British ships should be refused supplies the ports of Sardinia were excepted. The continental possessions of the King of Sardinia were at this time completely at the mercy of the French, and that prince was now discovering, when too late, that the terms to which he had consented, for the purpose of escaping immediate danger, necessarily involved the loss of the dominions which they were intended to preserve. The citadel of Turin was now occupied by French troops, and his wretched court feared to afford the common

rights of humanity to British ships, lest it should give the French occasion to seize on the remainder of his dominions — a measure for which it was certain they would soon make a pretext if they did not find one. Nelson was informed that he could not be permitted to enter the port of St. Pietro. Regardless of this interdict, which under his circumstances it would have been an act of suicidal folly to have regarded, he anchored in the harbor; and by the exertions of Sir James Saumarez, Captain Ball, and Captain Berry, the *Vanguard* was refitted in four days: months would have been employed in refitting her in England.

The delay which was thus occasioned was useful to him in many respects. It enabled him to complete his supply of water, and to receive a reinforcement which Earl St. Vincent, being himself reinforced from England, was enabled to send him. It consisted of the best ships of his fleet: the *Culloden*, seventy-four, Captain T. Trowbridge; *Goliath*, seventy-four, Captain T. Foley; *Minotaur*, seventy-four, Captain T. Louis; *Defence*, seventy-four, Captain John Peyton; *Bellerophon*, seventy-four, Captain H. D. E. Darby; *Majestic*, seventy-four, Captain G. B. Westcott; *Zealous*, seventy-four, Captain S. Hood; *Swiftsure*, seventy-four, Captain B. Hallowell; *Theseus*, seventy-four, Captain R. W. Miller; *Audacious*, seventy-four, Captain Davidge Gould. The *Leander*, fifty, Captain T. B. Thompson, was afterwards added.

These ships were made ready for the service as soon as Earl St. Vincent received advice from England that he was to be reinforced. As soon as the reinforcement was seen from the masthead of the admiral's ship off Cadiz Bay, signal was immediately made to Captain Trowbridge to put to sea, and he was out of sight before the ships from home cast anchor in the British station. Trowbridge took with him no instructions to Nelson as to the course he was to steer, nor any certain account of the enemy's destination; everything was left to his

own judgment. Unfortunately, the frigates had been separated from him in the tempest, and had not been able to rejoin; they sought him unsuccessfully in the Bay of Naples, where they obtained no tidings of his course, and he sailed without them.

The first news of the enemy's armament was that it had surprised Malta. Nelson formed a plan for attacking it while at anchor at Gozo,[1] but on the 22d of June intelligence reached him that the French had left that island on the 16th, the day after their arrival. It was clear that their destination was eastward, — he thought for Egypt, and for Egypt, therefore, he made all sail. Had the frigates been with him he could scarcely have failed to gain information of the enemy; for want of them, he only spoke three vessels on the way: two came from Alexandria, one from the Archipelago,[2] and neither of them had seen anything of the French. He arrived off Alexandria on the 28th, and the enemy were not there, neither was there any account of them; but the governor was endeavoring to put the city in a state of defense, having received advice from Leghorn that the French expedition was intended against Egypt, after it had taken Malta. Nelson then shaped his course to the northward, for Caramania, and steered from thence along the southern side of Candia, carrying a press of sail both night and day, with a contrary wind.

It would have been his delight, he said, to have tried Bonaparte on a wind. It would have been the delight of Europe, too, and the blessing of the world, if that fleet had been overtaken with its general on board. But of the myriads and millions of human beings who would have been preserved by that day's victory there is not one to whom such essential benefit would have resulted as to Bonaparte himself. It would

[1] **Gozo.** — A little island to the northwest of Malta.

[2] **Archipelago.** — The Aegean Sea is meant, between Asia Minor and Greece.

have spared him his defeat at Acre,[1] — his only disgrace, for to have been defeated by Nelson upon the seas would not have been disgraceful; and it would have spared him all his after enormities. Hitherto his career had been glorious; the baneful principles of his heart had never yet passed his lips; history would have represented him as a soldier of fortune, who had faithfully served the cause in which he engaged, and whose career had been distinguished by a series of successes unexampled in modern times. A romantic obscurity would have hung over the expedition to Egypt, and he would have escaped the perpetration of those crimes which have incarnadined his soul with a deeper dye than that of the purple for which he committed them, — those acts of perfidy, midnight murder, usurpation, and remorseless tyranny, which have consigned his name to universal execration, now and forever.

Conceiving that when an officer is not successful in his plans it is absolutely necessary that he should explain the motives upon which they were founded, Nelson wrote at this time an account and vindication of his conduct for having carried the fleet to Egypt. The objection which he anticipated was, that he ought not to have made so long a voyage without more certain information. "My answer," said he, "is ready: Who was I to get it from? The governments of Naples and Sicily either knew not, or chose to keep me in ignorance. Was I to wait patiently until I heard certain accounts? If Egypt were their object, before I could hear of them they would have been in India. To do nothing was disgraceful, therefore I made use of my understanding. I am before your lordships' judgment, and if, under all circumstances, it is decided that I am

[1] **Defeat at Acre.** — This was the famous siege which Napoleon referred to when he said that Sir Philip Sidney "had made him miss his destiny." After a siege of 61 days and a loss of 3000 men Napoleon was baffled by the desperate resistance of the Turkish garrison assisted by Sidney.

wrong, I ought for the sake of our country to be superseded, for at this moment, when I know the French are not in Alexandria, I hold the same opinion as off Cape Passaro, — that, under all circumstances, I was right in steering for Alexandria; and by that opinion I must stand or fall."

Captain Ball, to whom he showed this paper, told him he should recommend a friend never to begin a defense of his conduct before he was accused of error; he might give the fullest reasons for what he had done, expressed in such terms as would evince that he had acted from the strongest conviction of being right, and of course he must expect that the public would view it in the same light. Captain Ball judged rightly of the public, whose first impulses, though from want of sufficient information they must frequently be erroneous, are generally founded upon just feelings. But the public are easily misled, and there are always persons ready to mislead them. Nelson had not yet attained that fame which compels envy to be silent, and when it was known in England that he had returned after an unsuccessful pursuit it was said that he deserved impeachment; and Earl St. Vincent was severely censured for having sent so young an officer upon so important a service.

Baffled in his pursuit, he returned to Sicily. The Neapolitan ministry had determined to give his squadron no assistance, being resolved to do nothing which could possibly endanger their peace with the French Directory; by means, however, of Lady Hamilton's influence at court he procured secret orders to the Sicilian governors, and under those orders obtained everything which he wanted at Syracuse, — a timely supply, without which, he always said, he could not have recommenced his pursuit with any hope of success. "I cannot to this moment learn," said he in his letter, "beyond vague conjecture, where the French fleet are gone to, and having gone a round of six hundred leagues at this season of the

year with an expedition incredible, here I am, as ignorant of the situation of the enemy as I was twenty-seven days ago. Every moment I have to regret the frigates having left me; had one-half of them been with me I could not have wanted information. Should the French be so strongly secured in port that I cannot get at them, I shall immediately shift my flag into some other ship, and send the *Vanguard* to Naples to be refitted, for hardly any person but myself would have continued on service so long in such a wretched state."

Vexed, however, and disappointed as he was, Nelson, with the true heart of a hero, was still full of hope. "Thanks to your exertions," said he, writing to Sir William and Lady Hamilton, "we have victualed and watered; and surely, watering at the fountain of Arethusa, we must have victory. We shall sail with the first breeze; and be assured I will return either crowned with laurel or covered with cypress." Earl St. Vincent he assured that if the French were above water he would find them out: he still held his opinion that they were bound for Egypt; "but," said he to the First Lord of the Admiralty, "be they bound to the Antipodes, your lordship may rely that I will not lose a moment in bringing them to action."

On the 25th of July he sailed from Syracuse for the Morea. Anxious beyond measure, and irritated that the enemy should so long have eluded him, the tediousness of the nights made him impatient, and the officer of the watch was repeatedly called on to let him know the hour, and convince him, who measured time by his own eagerness, that it was not yet daybreak. The squadron made the Gulf of Coron on the 28th. Trowbridge entered the port, and returned with the intelligence that the French had been seen about four weeks before steering to the S.E. from Candia. Nelson then determined immediately to return to Alexandria, and the British

fleet accordingly, with every sail set, stood once more for the coast of Egypt. On the 1st of August, about ten in the morning, they came in sight of Alexandria. The port had been vacant and solitary when they saw it last; it was now crowded with ships, and they perceived with exultation that the tri-color flag was flying upon the walls. At four in the afternoon, Captain Hood, in the *Zealous*, made the signal for the enemy's fleet. For many preceding days Nelson had hardly taken either sleep or food: he now ordered his dinner to be served while preparations were making for battle; and when his officers rose from the table and went to their separate stations he said to them, "Before this time to-morrow, I shall have gained a peerage or Westminster Abbey."

The French, steering direct for Candia, had made an angular passage for Alexandria; whereas Nelson, in pursuit of them, made straight for that place, and thus materially shortened the distance. The comparative smallness of his force made it necessary to sail in close order, and it covered a less space than it would have done if the frigates had been with him; the weather also was constantly hazy. These circumstances prevented the English from discovering the enemy on the way to Egypt, though it appeared, upon examining the journals of the French officers taken in the action, that the two fleets must actually have crossed on the night of the 22d of June. During the return to Syracuse the chances of falling in with them were fewer.

Why Bonaparte, having effected his landing, should not have suffered the fleet to return, has never yet been explained. Thus much is certain, that it was detained by his command; though, with his accustomed falsehood, he accused Admiral Brueys, after that officer's death, of having lingered on the coast contrary to orders. The French fleet arrived at Alexandria on the 1st of July, and Brueys, not being able to enter the port, which time and neglect had ruined, moored his ships

in Aboukir Bay,[1] in a strong and compact line of battle ; the headmost vessel, according to his own account, being as close as possible to a shoal on the N.W., and the rest of the fleet forming a kind of curve along the line of deep water, so as not to be turned by any means in the S.W. By Bonaparte's desire he had offered a reward of 10,000 livres to any pilot of the country who would carry the squadron in ; but none could be found who would venture to take charge of a single vessel drawing more than twenty feet. He had therefore made the best of his situation, and chosen the strongest position which he could possibly take in an open road. The commissary of the fleet said they were moored in such a manner as to bid defiance to a force more than double their own. This presumption could not then be thought unreasonable. Admiral Barrington, when moored in a similar manner off St. Lucia, in the year 1778, beat off the Comte d'Estaign in three several attacks, though his force was inferior by almost one-third to that which assailed it. Here the advantage of numbers, both in ships, guns, and men, was in favor of the French. They had thirteen ships of the line and four frigates, carrying 1196 guns and 11,230 men. The English had the same number of ships of the line, and one fifty-gun ship, carrying 1012 guns and 8068 men. The English ships were all seventy-fours ; the French had three eighty-gun ships, and one three-decker of one hundred and twenty.

During the whole pursuit it had been Nelson's practice, whenever circumstances would permit, to have his captains on board the *Vanguard*, and explain to them his own ideas of the different and best modes of attack, and such plans as he proposed to execute on falling in with the enemy, whatever their situation might be. There is no possible position, it is said,

[1] **Aboukir Bay.** — The battle of the Nile was not fought in the river, but at some distance from it. Aboukir Bay is between Alexandria and a branch of the Nile.

which he did not take into calculation. His officers were thus fully acquainted with his principles of tactics: and such was his confidence in their abilities that the only thing determined upon, in case they should find the French at anchor, was for the ships to form as most convenient for their mutual support, and to anchor by the stern. "First gain the victory," he said, "and then make the best use of it you can."

The moment he perceived the position of the French, that intuitive genius with which Nelson was endowed displayed itself, and it instantly struck him that where there was room for an enemy's ship to swing there was room for one of ours to anchor. The plan which he intended to pursue, therefore, was to keep entirely on the outer side of the French line, and station his ships, as far as he was able, one on the outer bow, and another on the outer quarter, of each of the enemy's. This plan of doubling on the enemy's ships was projected by Lord Hood when he designed to attack the French fleet at their anchorage in Gourjean Road. Lord Hood found it impossible to make the attempt; but the thought was not lost upon Nelson, who acknowledged himself on this occasion indebted for it to his old and excellent commander. Captain Berry, when he comprehended the scope of the design, exclaimed with transport: "If we succeed,[1] what will the world say?" — "There is no *if* in the case," replied the admiral. "That we shall succeed is certain; who may live to tell the story, is a very different question."

As the squadron advanced they were assailed by a shower of shot and shells from the batteries on the island, and the enemy opened a steady fire from the starboard side of their whole line, within half-gunshot distance, full into the bows of our van ships. It was received in silence; the men on board every ship were employed aloft in furling sails, and below in tending the braces and making ready for anchorage.

[1] **If we succeed, etc.** — It is claimed on good authority that there is no foundation of truth in this incident as here given by Southey.

A French brig was instructed to decoy the English by manœuvring so as to tempt them towards a shoal lying off the island of Bekier; but Nelson either knew the danger or suspected some deceit, and the lure was unsuccessful. Captain Foley led the way in the *Goliath*, outsailing the *Zealous*, which for some minutes disputed this post of honor with him. He had long conceived that if the enemy were moored in line-of-battle in with the land, the best plan of attack would be to lead between them and the shore, because the French guns on that side were not likely to be manned nor even ready for action. Intending, therefore, to fix himself on the inner bow of the *Guerrier*, he kept as near the edge of the bank as the depth of water would admit, but his anchor hung, and having opened his fire, he drifted to the second ship, the *Conquérant*, before it was clear, then anchored by the stern, inside of her, and in ten minutes shot away her mast. Hood, in the *Zealous*, perceiving this, took the station which the *Goliath* intended to have occupied, and totally disabled the *Guerrier* in twelve minutes. The third ship which doubled the enemy's van was the *Orion*, Sir J. Saumarez; she passed to windward of the *Zealous*, and opened her larboard guns as long as they bore on the *Guerrier*, then passing inside the *Goliath*, sunk a frigate which annoyed her, hauled round toward the French line, and anchoring inside, between the fifth and sixth ships from the *Guerrier*, took her station on the larboard bow of the *Franklin* and the quarter of the *Peuple Souverain*, receiving and returning the fire of both. The sun was now nearly down. The *Audacious*, Captain Gould, pouring a heavy fire into the *Guerrier* and the *Conquérant*, fixed herself on the larboard bow of the latter, and when that ship struck, passed on to the *Peuple Souverain*. The *Theseus*, Captain Miller, followed, brought down the *Guerrier's* remaining main and mizzen masts, then anchored inside of the *Spartiate*, the third in the French line.

While these advanced ships doubled the French line the *Vanguard* was the first that anchored on the outer side of the enemy, within half pistol-shot of their third ship, the *Spartiate*. Nelson had six colors flying in different parts of his rigging, lest they should be shot away — that they should be struck no British admiral considers as a possibility. He veered half a cable, and instantly opened a tremendous fire, under cover of which the other four ships of his division, the *Minotaur*, *Bellerophon*, *Defence*, and *Majestic*, sailed on ahead of the admiral. In a few minutes every man stationed at the first six guns in the fore part of the *Vanguard's* deck was killed or wounded — these guns were three times cleared. Captain Louis, in the *Minotaur*, anchored next ahead, and took off the fire of the *Aquilon*, the fourth in the enemy's line. The *Bellerophon*, Captain Darby, passed ahead, and dropped her stern anchor on the starboard bow of the *Orient*, seventh in the line, Brueys' own ship, of one hundred and twenty guns, whose difference of force was in proportion of more than seven to three, and whose weight of ball from the lower deck alone exceeded that from the whole broadside of the *Bellerophon*. Captain Peyton, in the *Defence*, took his station ahead of the *Minotaur* and engaged the *Franklin*, the sixth in line, by which judicious movement the British line remained unbroken. The *Majestic*, Captain Westcott, got entangled with the main rigging of one of the French ships astern of the *Orient*, and suffered dreadfully from that three-decker's fire; but she swung clear, and closely engaging the *Heureux*, the ninth ship on the starboard bow, received also the fire of the *Tonnant*, which was the eighth in the line. The other four ships of the British squadron, having been detached previous to the discovery of the French, were at a considerable distance when the action began. It commenced at half after six; about seven night closed, and there was no other light than that from the fire of the contending fleets.

Trowbridge, in the *Culloden*, then foremost of the remaining

ships, was two leagues astern. He came on, sounding, as the others had done; as he advanced the increasing darkness increased the difficulty of the navigation; and suddenly, after having found eleven fathoms water, before the lead could be hove again he was fast aground, nor could all his own exertions, joined to those of the *Leander* and the *Mutine* brig, which came to his assistance, get him off in time to bear a part in the action. His ship, however, served as a beacon to the *Alexander* and *Swiftsure*, which would else, from the course which they were holding, have gone considerably farther on the reef, and must inevitably have been lost. These ships entered the bay, and took their stations in the darkness in a manner long spoken of with admiration by all who remembered it.

Captain Hallowell, in the *Swiftsure*, as he was bearing down, fell in with what seemed to be a strange sail: Nelson had directed his ships to hoist four lights horizontally at the mizzen peak as soon as it became dark, and this vessel had no such distinction. Hallowell, however, with great judgment, ordered his men not to fire: if she was an enemy, he said, she was in too disabled a state to escape, but from her sails being loose, and the way in which her head was, it was probable she might be an English ship. It was the *Bellerophon*, overpowered by the huge *Orient;* her lights had gone overboard, nearly 200 of her crew were killed or wounded, all her masts and cables had been shot away, and she was drifting out of the line towards the lee side of the bay. Her station at this important time was occupied by the *Swiftsure*, which opened a steady fire on the quarter of the *Franklin* and the bows of the French admiral. At the same instant, Captain Ball, with the *Alexander*, passed under his stern, and anchored within side on his larboard quarter, raking him and keeping up a severe fire of musketry upon his decks.

The last ship which arrived to complete the destruction of the enemy was the *Leander*. Captain Thompson, finding that

nothing could be done that night to get off the *Culloden*, advanced with the intention of anchoring athwart-hawse of the *Orient*. The *Franklin* was so near her head that there was not room for him to pass clear of the two; he therefore took his station athwart-hawse of the latter in such a position as to rake both.

The two first ships of the French line had been dismasted within a quarter of an hour after the commencement of the action, and the others had in that time suffered so severely that victory was already certain. The third, fourth, and fifth were taken possession of at half-past eight.

Meantime, Nelson received a severe wound on the head from a piece of langridge shot. Captain Berry caught him in his arms as he was falling. The great effusion of blood occasioned an apprehension that the wound was mortal; Nelson himself thought so. A large flap of the skin of the forehead, cut from the bone, had fallen over one eye; and the other being blind, he was in total darkness. When he was carried down, the surgeon — in the midst of a scene scarcely to be conceived by those who have never seen a cock-pit[1] in time of action, and the heroism which is displayed amid its horrors — with a natural and pardonable eagerness, quitted the poor fellow then under his hands that he might instantly attend the admiral. "No!" said Nelson, "I will take my turn with my brave fellows."

Nor would he suffer his own wound to be examined till every man who had been previously wounded was properly attended to. Fully believing that the wound was mortal, and that he was about to die, as he had ever desired, in battle and in victory, he called the chaplain, and desired him to deliver what he supposed to be his dying remembrance to Lady Nelson. He then sent for Captain Louis on board from the *Minotaur*,

[1] **Cock-pit.** — A room under the lower deck of a man-of-war, where surgeons attend the wounded.

that he might thank him personally for the great assistance which he had rendered to the *Vanguard;* and ever mindful of those who deserved to be his friends, appointed Captain Hardy from the brig to the command of his own ship, Captain Berry having to go home with the news of the victory.

When the surgeon came in due time to examine his wound (for it was in vain to entreat him to let it be examined sooner) the most anxious silence prevailed, and the joy of the wounded men and of the whole crew, when they heard that the hurt was merely superficial, gave Nelson deeper pleasure than the unexpected assurance that his life was in no danger. The surgeon requested, and as far as he could, ordered him to remain quiet; but Nelson could not rest. He called for his secretary, Mr. Campbell, to write the dispatches. Campbell had himself been wounded, and was so affected at the blind and suffering state of the admiral that he was unable to write. The chaplain was then sent for, but before he came, Nelson, with his characteristic eagerness, took the pen and contrived to trace a few words, marking his devout sense of the success which had already been obtained. He was now left alone, when suddenly a cry was heard on the deck that the *Orient* was on fire. In the confusion he found his way up, unassisted and unnoticed, and, to the astonishment of every one, appeared on the quarter-deck, where he immediately gave orders that boats should be sent to the relief of the enemy.

It was soon after nine that the fire on board the *Orient* broke out. Brueys was dead: he had received three wounds, yet he would not leave his post; a fourth cut him almost in two. He desired not to be carried below, but to be left to die upon deck. The flames soon mastered his ship. Her sides had just been painted, and the oil-jars and paint-buckets were lying on the poop. By the prodigious light of this conflagration the situation of the two fleets could now be perceived, the colors of both being clearly distinguishable. About ten o'clock the

ship blew up with a shock which was felt to the very bottom of every vessel. Many of her officers and men jumped overboard, some clinging to the spars and pieces of wreck with which the sea was strewn, others swimming to escape from the destruction which they momentarily dreaded. Some were picked up by our boats, and some, even in the heat and fury of the action, were dragged into the lower ports of the nearest British vessel by the British sailors. The greater part of her crew, however, stood the danger till the last, and continued to fire from the lower deck. This tremendous explosion was followed by a silence not less awful; the firing immediately ceased on both sides, and the first sound which broke the silence was the dash of her shattered masts and yards falling into the water from the vast height to which they had been exploded. It is upon record that a battle between two armies was once broken off by an earthquake; such an event would be felt like a miracle; but no incident in war, produced by human means, has ever equaled the sublimity of this coïnstantaneous pause and all its circumstances.

About seventy of the *Orient's* crew were saved by the English boats. Among the many hundreds who perished were the commodore, Casa-Bianca, and his son, a brave boy,[1] only ten years old. They were seen floating on a shattered mast when the ship blew up. She had money on board (the plunder of Malta) to the amount of £600,000 sterling. The masses of burning wreck which were scattered by the explosion excited for some moments apprehensions in the English which they had never felt from any other danger. Two large pieces fell into the main and fore tops of the *Swiftsure* without injuring

[1] **A brave boy.** — Every schoolboy is familiar with the poem written by Mrs. Hemans in honor of this boy:

> "The boy stood on the burning deck,
> Whence all but he had fled."

any person. A port fire also fell into the main-royal of the *Alexander:* the fire which it occasioned was speedily extinguished. Captain Ball had provided, as far as human foresight could provide, against any such danger. All the shrouds and sails of his ship not absolutely necessary for its immediate management, were thoroughly wetted, and so rolled up that they were as hard and as little inflammable as so many solid cylinders.

The firing recommenced with the ships to leeward of the center, and continued till about three. At daybreak the *Guillaume Tell* and the *Généreux*, the two rear ships of the enemy, were the only French ships of the line which had their colors flying; they cut their cables in the forenoon, not having been engaged, and stood out to sea, and two frigates with them. The *Zealous* pursued, but as there was no other ship in a condition to support Captain Hood, he was recalled. It was generally believed by the officers that if Nelson had not been wounded, not one of these ships could have escaped: the four certainly could not if the *Culloden* had got into action; and if the frigates belonging to the squadron had been present, not one of the enemy's fleet would have left Aboukir Bay. These four vessels, however, were all that escaped, and the victory was the most complete and glorious in the annals of naval history. "Victory," said Nelson, "is not a name strong enough for such a scene;" he called it a conquest.

Of thirteen sail of the line, nine were taken and two burnt; of the four frigates, one was sunk; another, the *Artemise*, was burnt in a villainous manner by her captain, M. Estandlet, who having fired a broadside at the *Theseus*, struck his colors, then set fire to the ship, and escaped with most of his crew to shore. The British loss in killed and wounded amounted to 895. Westcott was the only captain who fell; 3105 of the French, including the wounded, were sent on shore by cartel, and 5225 perished.

The victory was complete,[1] but Nelson could not pursue it as he would have done, for want of means. Had he been provided with small craft, nothing could have prevented the destruction of the store-ships and transports in the port of Alexandria; four bomb-vessels would at that time have burnt the whole in a few hours. "Were I to die this moment," said he in his dispatches to the Admiralty, "*want of frigates* would be found stamped on my heart! No words of mine can express what I have suffered and am suffering for want of them." He had also to bear up against great bodily suffering; the blow had so shaken his head, that from its constant and violent aching, and the perpetual sickness which accompanied the pain, he could scarcely persuade himself that the skull was not fractured. Had it not been for Trowbridge, Ball, Hood, and Hallowell, he declared that he should have sunk under the fatigue of refitting the squadron. "All," he said, "had done well; but these officers were his supporters."

But amidst his sufferings and exertions Nelson could yet think of all the consequences of his victory, and that no advantage from it might be lost, he dispatched an officer overland to India, with letters to the governor of Bombay, informing him of the arrival of the French in Egypt, the total destruction of their fleet, and the consequent preservation of India from any attempt against it on the part of this formidable armament. "He knew that Bombay," he said, "was their first object if they could get there; but he trusted that Almighty God would overthrow in Egypt these pests of the

[1] "It was this battle which for two years delivered up the Mediterranean to the power of England; summoned thither the Russian squadrons; left the French army isolated amidst a hostile population; decided the Porte in declaring against it; saved India from French enterprise; and brought France within a hair's breadth of her ruin by reviving the smouldering flames of war with Austria and bringing Suwarrow and the Austro-Russians to the French frontiers." — Quoted from La Gravière by Pettigrew from PLUNKETT'S *Last Naval War*.

human race. Bonaparte had never yet had to contend with an English officer, and he would endeavor to make him respect us." This dispatch he sent upon his own responsibility, with letters of credit upon the East India Company, addressed to the British consuls, vice-consuls, and merchants on his route; Nelson saying, "that if he had done wrong he hoped the bills would be paid, and he would repay the Company; for, as an Englishman, he should be proud that it had been in his power to put our settlements on their guard." The information which by this means reached India was of great importance. Orders had just been received for defensive preparations upon a scale proportionate to the apprehended danger, and the extraordinary expenses which would otherwise have been incurred were thus prevented.

Nelson was now at the summit of glory; congratulations, rewards, and honors were showered upon him by all the states and princes and powers to whom his victory gave a respite. The first communication of this nature which he received was from the Turkish Sultan, who, as soon as the invasion of Egypt was known, had called upon "all true believers to take arms against those swinish infidels, the French, that they might deliver these blessed habitations from their accursed hands"; and who had ordered his "pashas to turn night into day in their efforts to take vengeance." The present of "his Imperial Majesty, the powerful, formidable, and most magnificent Grand Seignior," was a pelisse of sables with broad sleeves, valued at five thousand dollars; and a diamond aigrette, valued at eighteen thousand — the most honorable badge among the Turks, and in this instance more especially honorable, because it was taken from one of the royal turbans. "If it were worth a million," said Nelson to his wife, "my pleasure would be to see it in your possession." The Sultan also sent, in a spirit worthy of imitation, a purse of two thousand sequins to be distributed amongst the wounded. The mother of the Sultan sent

him a box set with diamonds, valued at one thousand pounds. The Czar Paul, in whom the better part of his strangely compounded nature at this time predominated, presented him with his portrait set in diamonds, in a gold box, accompanied with a letter of congratulation written by his own hand. The King of Sardinia also wrote to him, and sent a gold box set with diamonds. Honors in profusion were awaiting him at Naples.

In his own country the King granted these honorable augmentations to his armorial ensign: a chief undulated, *argent*, thereon waves of the sea, from which a palm-tree issuant, between a disabled ship on the dexter and a ruinous battery on the sinister, all *proper;* and for his crest, on a naval crown *or*, the chelengk, or plume, presented to him by the Turk, with the motto, *Palmam qui meruit ferat.*[1] [Let him

[1] It has been erroneously said that the motto was selected by the King; it was fixed on by Lord Grenville, and taken from an ode of Jortin's. The application was singularly fortunate, and the ode itself breathes a spirit in which no man ever more truly sympathized than Nelson:

Concurrant paribus cum ratibus rates,
Spectent numina ponti, et
Palmam qui meruit ferat.

The incongruity of these additions so greatly disfigured them — simplicity being the chief beauty of heraldry — that they needed only the supporters suggested by Admiral Goodall, two *crocodiles*, to have become if possible even a still more unfortunate specimen of modern armory. Lady Nelson having, very naturally, asked what all these hieroglyphics meant, Sir Isaac Heard (Garter King of Arms) gave her the following explanation, which may be as necessary to the reader as to her ladyship. "In the chief of the arms a *palm tree* (emblematic of victory) between a *disabled ship* and a *ruinous battery*, form striking memorials of the glorious event of the 1st of August in the bay of Aboukir. In the crest, the *chelengk* is an indication of the distinction rendered to his lordship's merits by the Grand Seignior; and *the naval crown* may bear a striking allusion to his lordship's victory in those seas, where the *corona navalis* was first conferred by the Romans on persons who had eminently distinguished themselves in naval combats. *The palm branch* in the hand of the sailor, and in the paw of the lion, is a

who has won it bear the palm.] And to his supporters, being a sailor on the dexter and a lion on the sinister, were given these honorable augmentations: a palm branch in the sailor's hand and another in the paw of the lion, both *proper;* with a tri-colored flag and staff in the lion's mouth. He was created Baron Nelson of the Nile and of Burnham Thorpe, with a pension of £2000 for his own life and those of his two immediate successors.

When the grant was moved in the House of Commons, General Walpole expressed an opinion that a higher degree of rank ought to be conferred. Mr. Pitt made answer that he thought it needless to enter into that question. "Admiral Nelson's fame," he said, "would be coequal with the British name, and it would be remembered that he had obtained the greatest naval victory on record, when no man would think of asking whether he had been created a baron, a viscount, or an earl!" It was strange that in the very act of conferring a title the minister should have excused himself for not having conferred a higher one by representing all titles on such an occasion as nugatory and superfluous. True, indeed, whatever title had been bestowed, whether viscount, earl, marquis, duke, or prince, if our laws had so permitted, he who received it would have been Nelson still. That name he had ennobled beyond all addition of nobility: it was the name by which England loved him, France feared him, Italy, Egypt, and Turkey celebrated him, and by which he will continue to be known while the present kingdoms and languages of the world endure, and as long as their history after them shall be held in remembrance. It depended upon the degree of rank what

continuation of the emblem in the chief of the arms, as well as allusion to the motto, '*Palmam qui meruit ferat.*' *The tri-colored flag* of the subdued enemy was added to, and involved with, the colors in the mouth of the lion, which had been granted to his lordship in commemoration of his distinguished gallantry and services on the 14th February, 1797."—Sir N. H. Nicolas, NELSON'S *Dispatches*.

should be the fashion of his coronet, in what page of the red book[1] his name was to be inserted, and what precedency should be allowed his lady in the drawing-room and at the ball. That Nelson's honors were affected thus far and no farther might be conceded to Mr. Pitt and his colleagues in administration; but the degree of rank which they thought proper to allot was the measure of their gratitude, though not of his services.[2] This Nelson felt, and this he expressed with indignation among his friends.

Whatever may have been the motives of the Ministry, and whatever the formalities with which they excused their conduct to themselves, the importance and magnitude of the victory were universally acknowledged. A grant of £10,000 was voted to Nelson by the East India Company; the Turkish Company presented him with a piece of plate; the city of London presented a sword to him and to each of his captains; gold medals were distributed to the captains, and the first lieutenants of all the ships were promoted, as had been done after Lord Howe's victory.[3]

[1] **Red book.** — A book bound in red covers in which the names of government officers were recorded.

[2] Mr. Wyndham must be excepted from this well-deserved censure. He, whose fate it seems to have been almost always to think and feel more generously than those with whom he acted, declared, when he contended against his own party for Lord Wellington's peerage, that he always thought Lord Nelson had been inadequately rewarded. The case was the more flagrant because an earldom had so lately been granted for the battle of St. Vincent, — an action which could never be compared with the battle of the Nile, if the very different manner in which it was rewarded did not necessarily force a comparison, especially when the part that Nelson bore in it was considered. Lords Duncan and St. Vincent had each a pension of £1000 from the Irish government. This was not granted to Nelson, in consequence of the Union; though surely it would be more becoming to increase the British grant than to save a thousand a year by the Union in such cases.

[3] **Lord Howe's Victory.** — A great victory over the French was gained off Ushaut, by Lord Howe, in 1794.

Nelson was exceedingly anxious that the captain and first lieutenant of the *Culloden* should not be passed over because of their misfortune. To Trowbridge himself he said: "Let us rejoice that the ship which got on shore was commanded by an officer whose character is so thoroughly established." To the Admiralty he stated that Captain Trowbridge's conduct was as fully entitled to praise as that of any one officer in the squadron, and as highly deserving of reward. "It was Trowbridge," said he, "who equipped the squadron so soon at Syracuse; it was Trowbridge who exerted himself for me after the action; it was Trowbridge who saved the *Culloden*, when none that I know in the service would have attempted it." The gold medal, therefore, by the King's desire, was given to Captain Trowbridge, "for his services both before and since, and for the great and wonderful exertion which he made at the time of the action in saving and getting off his ship."

The private letter from the Admiralty to Nelson informed him that the first lieutenants of the ships *engaged* were to be promoted. Nelson instantly wrote to the commander-in-chief. "I sincerely hope," he said, "this is not intended to exclude the first lieutenant of the *Culloden*. For heaven's sake — for my sake — if it be so, get it altered. Our dear friend Trowbridge has endured enough. His sufferings were in every respect more than any of us." To the Admiralty he wrote in terms equally warm: "I hope and believe the word *engaged* is not intended to exclude the *Culloden*. The merit of that ship and her gallant captain are too well known to benefit by anything I could say. Her misfortune was great in getting aground while her more fortunate companions were in the full tide of happiness. No, I am confident that my good Lord Spencer will never add misery to misfortune. Captain Trowbridge on shore is superior to captains afloat; in the midst of his great misfortunes he made those signals which prevented certainly the *Alexander* and *Swiftsure* from running on the shoals. I beg

your pardon for writing on a subject which, I verily believe, has never entered your lordship's head; but my heart, as it ought to be, is warm to my gallant friends." Thus feelingly alive was Nelson to the claims and interests and feelings of others. The Admiralty replied that the exception was necessary, as the ship had not been in action; but they desired the commander-in-chief to promote the lieutenant upon the first vacancy which should occur.

Nelson, in remembrance of an old and uninterrupted friendship, appointed Alexander Davison sole prize-agent for the captured ships; upon which Davison ordered medals to be struck in gold for the captains, in silver for the lieutenants and warrant officers, in gilt metal for petty officers, and in copper for the seamen and marines. The cost of this act of liberality amounted nearly to £2000. It is worthy of record on another account, for some of the gallant men, who received no other honorary badge on that memorable day than this copper medal from a private individual, years afterwards, when they died upon a foreign station, made it their last request that the medals might carefully be sent home to their respective friends. So sensible are brave men of honor, in whatever rank they may be placed.

CHAPTER VI.

FIGHTING THE FRENCH IN ITALY.

NELSON'S health had suffered greatly while he was in the *Agamemnon*. "My complaint," he said, "is as if a girth were buckled taut over my breast, and my endeavor in the night is to get it loose." After the battle of Cape St. Vincent he felt a little rest to be so essential to his recovery that he declared he would not continue to serve longer than the ensuing summer, unless it should be absolutely necessary; for, in his own strong language, he had then been four years and nine months without one moment's repose for body or mind. A few months' intermission of labor he had obtained — not of rest, for it was purchased with the loss of a limb; and the greater part of the time had been a season of constant pain. As soon as his shattered frame had sufficiently recovered for him to resume his duties, he was called to services of greater importance than any on which he had hitherto been employed, and they brought with them commensurate fatigue and care.

The anxiety which he endured during his long pursuit of the enemy was rather changed in its direction than abated by their defeat; and this constant wakefulness of thought, added to the effect of his wound, and the exertions from which it was not possible for one of so ardent and wide-reaching a mind to spare himself, nearly proved fatal. On his way back to Italy he was seized with fever. For eighteen hours his life was despaired of; and even when the disorder took a favorable turn, and he was so far recovered as again to appear on deck, he himself thought that his end was approaching — such was the weakness to which the fever and cough had reduced him.

Writing to Earl St. Vincent on the passage, he said to him: "I never expect, my dear lord, to see your face again. It may please God that this will be the finish to that fever of anxiety which I have endured from the middle of June; but be that as it pleases His goodness. I am resigned to His will."

The kindest attentions of the warmest friendship were awaiting him at Naples. "Come here, my dear friend," said Sir William Hamilton, "as soon as the service will permit you. A pleasant apartment is ready for you in my house, and Emma is looking out for the softest pillows to repose the few wearied limbs you have left." Happy would it have been for Nelson if warm and careful friendship had been all that awaited him there! He himself saw at that time the character of the Neapolitan Court, as it first struck an Englishman, in its true light, and when he was on the way he declared that he detested the voyage to Naples, and that nothing but necessity could have forced him to it. But never was any hero on his return from victory welcomed with more heartfelt joy. Before the battle of Aboukir the Court of Naples had been trembling for its existence. The language which the Directory held towards it was well described by Sir William Hamilton as being exactly the language of a highwayman. The Neapolitans were told that Benevento might be added to their dominions, provided they would pay a large sum, sufficient to satisfy the Directory; and they were warned that if the proposal were refused, or even if there were any delay in accepting it, the French would revolutionize all Italy.

The joy, therefore, of the Court at Nelson's success was in proportion to the dismay from which that success relieved them. The queen was a daughter of Maria Theresa and sister of Marie Antoinette. Had she been the wisest and gentlest of her sex, it would not have been possible for her to have regarded the French without hatred and horror; and the progress of revolutionary opinions, while it perpetually

reminded her of her sister's fate, excited no unreasonable apprehensions for her own. Her feelings, naturally ardent and little accustomed to restraint, were excited to the highest pitch when the news of the victory arrived. Lady Hamilton, her constant friend and favorite, who was present, says: "It is not possible to describe her transports. She wept, she kissed her husband, her children, walked frantically about the room, burst into tears again, and again kissed and embraced every person near her, exclaiming, 'O brave Nelson! O God, bless and protect our brave deliverer! O Nelson! Nelson! what do we not owe you! O conqueror — saviour of Italy! O that my swollen heart could now tell him personally what we owe to him.'"

Such being the feelings of the royal family, it may well be supposed with what delight and with what honors Nelson would be welcomed. Early on the 22d of September the poor wretched *Vanguard*, as he called his shattered vessel, appeared in sight of Naples. The *Culloden* and *Alexander* had preceded her by some days, and given notice of her approach. Many hundred boats and barges were ready to go forth and meet him, with music and streamers and every demonstration of joy and triumph. Sir William and Lady Hamilton led the way in their state barge. They had seen Nelson only for a few days four years ago, but they then perceived in him that heroic spirit which was now so fully and gloriously manifested to the world. Emma, Lady Hamilton, who from this time so greatly influenced his future life, was a woman whose personal accomplishments have seldom been equaled, and whose powers of mind were not less fascinating than her person. She was passionately attached to the queen, and by her influence the British fleet had obtained those supplies at Syracuse without which, Nelson always asserted, the battle of Aboukir could not have been fought.

During the long interval which passed before any tidings were received her anxiety had been hardly less than that of

Nelson himself, while pursuing an enemy of whom he could obtain no information; and when the tidings were brought her by a joyful bearer open-mouthed, its effect was such that she felt like one who had been shot. She and Sir William had literally been made ill by their hopes and fears and joy, at a catastrophe so far exceeding all that they had dared to hope for. Their admiration for the hero necessarily produced a degree of proportionate gratitude and affection; and when their barge came alongside the *Vanguard*, at the sight of Nelson Lady Hamilton almost fainted, and came on deck more like one dead than alive. He described the meeting as "terribly affecting." These friends had scarcely recovered from their tears when the king, who went out to meet him three leagues in the royal barge, came on board and took him by the hand, calling him his deliverer and preserver; from all the boats around he was saluted with the same appellations; the multitude who surrounded him when he landed repeated the same enthusiastic cries; and the lazzaroni displayed their joy by holding up birds in cages, and giving them their liberty as he passed.

His birthday, which occurred a week after his arrival, was celebrated with one of the most splendid *fêtes* ever beheld at Naples.

The battle of the Nile shook the power of France. Her most successful general and her finest army were blocked up in Egypt — hopeless, as it appeared, of return; and the government was in the hands of men without talents, without character, and divided among themselves. Austria, whom Bonaparte had terrified into a peace at a time when constancy on her part would probably have led to his destruction, took advantage of the crisis to renew the war. Russia also was preparing to enter the field with unbroken forces, led by a general whose extraordinary military genius[1] would have en-

[1] **Military genius.** — Suwarrow, the celebrated Russian general (1730–1800). It is said that he never lost a battle.

titled him to a high and honorable rank in history if it had not been sullied by all the ferocity of a barbarian. Naples, seeing its destruction at hand, and thinking that the only means of averting it was by meeting the danger, after long vacillations, which were produced by the fears and weakness and treachery of its council, agreed at last to join this new coalition [1] with a numerical force of 80,000 men.

Nelson told the king in plain terms that he had his choice either to advance, trusting to God for His blessing on a just cause, and prepared to die sword in hand; or to remain quiet and be kicked out of his kingdom: one of these things must happen. The king made answer he would go on, and trust in God and Nelson; and Nelson, who would else have returned to Egypt for the purpose of destroying the French shipping in Alexandria, gave up his intention at the desire of the Neapolitan Court, and resolved to remain on that station in the hope that he might be useful to the movements of the army. He suspected also, with reason, that the continuance of his fleet was so earnestly requested because the royal family thought their persons would be safer, in case of any mishap, under the British flag than under their own.

His first object was the recovery of Malta, an island which the King of Naples pretended to claim. The Maltese, whom the villainous knights of their order [2] had betrayed to France, had taken up arms against their rapacious invaders with a spirit and unanimity worthy the highest praise. They blockaded the French garrison by land, and a small squadron under Captain Ball began to blockade them by sea on the 12th of October.

[1] **New coalition.** — This is known as Pitt's second coalition, signed June 22, 1799, between England, Russia, Germany, Naples, Portugal, and Turkey.

[2] **Knights of their order.** — The Knights of St. John, afterward known as the Knights of Malta. The island of Malta was given to them by Charles V. in 1530. They surrendered their island to Napoleon in 1798 without resistance. Hence the force here of the epithet villainous.

Twelve days afterwards Nelson arrived, and the little island of Gozo, dependent upon Malta, which had also been seized and garrisoned by the French, capitulated soon after his arrival, and was taken possession of by the British in the name of his Sicilian Majesty, — a power who had no better claim to it than France. Having seen this effected and reinforced Captain Ball, he left that able officer to perform a most arduous and important part, and returned himself to coöperate with the intended movements of the Neapolitans.

General Mack was at the head of the Neapolitan troops. All that is now doubtful concerning this man is whether he was a coward or a traitor: at that time he was assiduously extolled as a most consummate commander, to whom Europe might look for deliverance; and when he was introduced by the king and queen to the British admiral, the queen said to him, "Be to us by land, general, what my hero Nelson has been by sea." Mack on his part did not fail to praise the force which he was appointed to command; "It was," he said, "the finest army in Europe." Nelson agreed with him that there could not be finer men; but when the general, at a review, so directed the operations of a mock fight that by an unhappy blunder his own troops were surrounded instead of those of the enemy, he turned to his friends, and exclaimed with bitterness that the fellow did not understand his business. Another circumstance, not less characteristic, confirmed Nelson in his judgment. "General Mack," said he in one of his letters, "cannot move without five carriages! I have formed my opinion. I heartily pray I may be mistaken."

While Mack at the head of 32,000 men marched into the Roman state, 5000 Neapolitans were embarked on board the British and Portuguese squadron to take possession of Leghorn. This was effected without opposition, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany, whose neutrality had been so outrageously violated by the French, was better satisfied with the measure than some

of the Neapolitans themselves. Naselli, their general, refused to seize the French vessels at Leghorn, because he and the Duke di Sangro, who was ambassador at the Tuscan Court, maintained that the King of Naples was not at war with France. "What!" said Nelson, "has not the king received, as a conquest made by him, the republican flag taken at Gozo? Is not his own flag flying there and at Malta, not only by his permission, but by his order? Is not his flag shot at every day by the French, and their shot returned from batteries which bear that flag? Are not two frigates and a corvette placed under my orders ready to fight the French, meet them where they may? Has not the king sent publicly from Naples guns, mortars, etc., with officers and artillery, against the French in Malta? If these acts are not tantamount to any written paper, I give up all knowledge of what is war."

This reasoning was of less avail than argument addressed to the general's fears. Nelson told him that if he permitted the many hundred French who were then in the mole to remain neutral till they had a fair opportunity of being active, they had one sure resource if all other schemes failed, which was to set one vessel on fire; the mole would be destroyed, probably the town also, and the port ruined for twenty years. This representation made Naselli agree to the half-measure of laying an embargo on the vessels; among them were a great number of French privateers, some of which were of such force as to threaten the greatest mischief to our commerce, and about seventy sail of vessels belonging to the Ligurian Republic, as Genoa was now called, laden with corn and ready to sail for Genoa and France, where their arrival would have expedited the entrance of more French troops into Italy.

"The general," said Nelson, "saw, I believe, the consequence of permitting these vessels to depart in the same light as myself; but there is this difference between us, — he prudently, and certainly safely, waits the orders of his Court, tak-

ing no responsibility upon himself; I act from the circumstances of the moment as I feel may be most advantageous for the cause which I serve, taking all responsibility on myself."

It was in vain to hope for anything vigorous or manly from such men as Nelson was compelled to act with. The crews of the French ships and their allies were ordered to depart in two days. Four days elapsed, and nobody obeyed the order; nor in spite of the representations of the British minister, Mr. Wyndham, were any means taken to enforce it. The true Neapolitan shuffle, as Nelson called it, took place on all occasions. After an absence of ten days he returned to Naples, and receiving intelligence there from Mr. Wyndham that the privateers were at last to be disarmed, the corn landed, and the crews sent away, he expressed satisfaction at the news in characteristic language, saying, "So far I am content. The enemy will be distressed, and, thank God, I shall get no money. The world, I know, thinks that money is our god, and now they will be undeceived as far as relates to us."

Odes, sonnets, and congratulatory poems of every description were poured in upon Nelson on his arrival at Naples. An Irish Franciscan, who was one of the poets, not being content with panegyric, upon this occasion ventured upon a flight of prophecy, and predicted that Lord Nelson would take Rome with his ships. His lordship reminded Father M'Cormick that ships could not ascend the Tiber; but the father, who had probably forgotten this circumstance, met the objection with a bold front, and declared he saw that it would come to pass notwithstanding.

Rejoicings of this kind were of short duration. The King of Naples was with the army which had entered Rome, but the castle of St. Angelo was held by the French, and 13,000 French were strongly posted in the Roman States at Castallana. Mack had marched against them with 20,000 men. Nelson saw that the event was doubtful, or rather that there

could be very little hope of the result. But the immediate fate of Naples, as he well knew, hung upon the issue. "If Mack is defeated," said he, "in fourteen days this country is lost, for the emperor has not yet moved his army, and Naples has not the power of resisting the enemy."

His fears were soon verified. "The Neapolitan officers," said Nelson, "did not lose much honor, for God knows they had not much to lose; but they lost all they had." General St. Philip commanded the right wing of 19,000 men. He fell in with 3000 of the enemy, and as soon as he came near enough deserted to them. One of his men had virtue enough to level a musket at him, and shot him through the arm; but the wound was not sufficient to prevent him from joining with the French in pursuit of his own countrymen. Cannon, tents, baggage, and military chest were all forsaken by the runaways, though they lost only forty men; for the French, having put them to flight and got possession of everything, did not pursue an army of more than three times their own number. The main body of the Neapolitans, under Mack, did not behave better. The king returned to Naples, where every day brought with it the tidings of some new disgrace from the army, and the discovery of some new treachery at home; till four days after his return, the general sent him advice that there was no prospect of stopping the progress of the enemy, and that the royal family must look to their own personal safety.

On the night of the 21st, at half past eight, Nelson landed, brought out the whole of the royal family, embarked them in three barges, and carried them safely through a tremendous sea to the *Vanguard*. Notice was then immediately given to the British merchants that they would be received on board any ship in the squadron. Their property had been previously embarked in transports. Two days were passed in the bay, for the purpose of taking such persons on board as required an asylum; and on the night of the 23d the fleet sailed. The next

day a more violent storm arose than Nelson had ever before encountered. On the 25th the youngest of the princes was taken ill, and died in Lady Hamilton's arms. During this whole trying season Lady Hamilton waited upon the royal family with the zeal of the most devoted servant, at a time when, except one man, no person belonging to the Court assisted them.

On the morning of the 26th the royal family were landed at Palermo.

The King of Sardinia, finding it impossible longer to endure the exactions of France and the insults of the French commissary, went to Leghorn, embarked on board a Danish frigate, and sailed under British protection to Sardinia — that part of his dominions which the maritime supremacy of England rendered a secure asylum. On his arrival he published a protest against the conduct of France, declaring, upon the faith and word of a king, that he had never infringed, even in the slightest degree, the treaties which he had made with the French Republic.

Tuscany was soon occupied by French troops; a fate which bolder policy might perhaps have failed to avert, but which its weak and timid neutrality rendered inevitable. Nelson began to fear even for Sicily. "Oh, my dear sir," said he, writing to Commodore Duckworth, "one thousand English troops would save Messina, and I fear General Stuart cannot give me men to save this most important island!" But his representations were not lost upon Sir Charles Stuart: this officer hastened immediately from Minorca with a thousand men, assisted in the measures of defense which were taken, and did not return before he had satisfied himself that, if the Neapolitans were excluded from the management of affairs, and the spirit of the peasantry properly directed, Sicily was safe. Before his coming, Nelson had offered the king, if no resources should arrive, to defend Messina with a ship's company of an English man-of-war.

Russia had now entered into the war. Corfu surrendered to a Russian and Turkish fleet, acting now for the first time in strange confederacy, yet against a power which was certainly the common and worst enemy of both. Trowbridge having given up the blockade of Alexandria to Sir Sydney Smith, joined Nelson, bringing with him a considerable addition of strength; and in himself, what Nelson valued more, a man upon whose sagacity, indefatigable zeal, and inexhaustible resources he could place full reliance. Trowbridge was instructed to commence the operations against the French in the Bay of Naples; meantime Cardinal Ruffo, a man of questionable character, but of a temper fitted for such times, having landed in Calabria, raised what he called a Christian army, composed of the best and vilest materials, — loyal peasants, enthusiastic priests and friars, galley slaves, the emptying of the jails, and banditti. The islands in the Bay of Naples were joyfully delivered up by the inhabitants, who were in a state of famine already from the effect of this baleful revolution. Trowbridge distributed among them all his flour; and Nelson pressed the Sicilian Court incessantly for supplies, telling them that £10,000 given away in provisions would at this time purchase a kingdom. Money, he was told, they had not to give; and the wisdom and integrity which might have supplied its want were not to be found. "There is nothing," said he, "which I propose that is not, as far as orders go, implicitly complied with; but the execution is dreadful, and almost makes me mad. My desire to serve their Majesties faithfully, as is my duty, has been such that I am almost blind and worn out, and cannot in my present state hold much longer."

About this time intelligence arrived that the French fleet had escaped from Brest under cover of a fog, passed Cadiz, unseen by Lord Keith's squadron, in hazy weather, and entered the Mediterranean. It was said to consist of twenty-four sail of the line, six frigates, and three sloops. The object of the

French was to liberate the Spanish fleet, form a junction with them, act against Minorca and Sicily, and overpower our naval force in the Mediterranean by falling in with detached squadrons and thus destroying it in detail. When they arrived off Carthagena they requested the Spanish ships to make sail and join, but the Spaniards replied they had not men to man them. To this it was answered that the French had men enough on board for that purpose. But the Spaniards seem to have been apprehensive of delivering up their ships thus entirely into the power of such allies, and refused to come out. The fleet from Cadiz, however, consisting of seventeen to twenty sail of the line, got out, under Masaredo, a man who then bore an honorable name, which he afterwards rendered infamous by betraying his country. They met with a violent storm off the coast of Oran, which dismasted many of their ships, and so effectually disabled them as to prevent the junction and frustrate a well-planned expedition.

Before this occurred, and while the junction was as probable as it would have been formidable, Nelson was in a state of the greatest anxiety. "What a state am I in!" said he to Earl St. Vincent. "If I go I risk, and more than risk, Sicily; for we know from experience that more depends upon opinion than upon acts themselves, and as I stay my heart is breaking." His first business was to summon Trowbridge to join him, with all the ships of the line under his command, and a frigate if possible. Then hearing that the French had entered the Mediterranean, and expecting them at Palermo, where he had only his own ship, with that single ship he prepared to make all the resistance possible. Trowbridge having joined him, he left Captain E. J. Foote, of the *Seahorse*, to command the smaller vessels in the Bay of Naples, and sailed with six ships — one a Portuguese, and a Portuguese corvette — telling Earl St. Vincent that the squadron should never fall into the hands of the enemy. "And before we are destroyed," said he, "I

have little doubt but they will have their wings so completely clipped, that they may be easily overtaken."

It was just at this time that he received from Captain Hallowell the present of the coffin. Such a present was regarded by the men with natural astonishment; one of his old shipmates in the *Agamemnon* said: "We shall have hot work of it indeed! You see the admiral intends to fight till he is killed; and there he is to be buried!" Nelson placed it upright against the bulkhead of his cabin, behind his chair where he sat at dinner. The gift suited him at this time. It is said that he was disappointed in the son-in-law whom he had loved so dearly from his childhood, and who had saved his life at Teneriffe.

Nelson was dissatisfied with himself, and therefore weary of the world. This feeling he now frequently expressed. "There is no true happiness in this life," said he, "and in my present state I could quit it with a smile." And in a letter to his old friend Davison he said: "Believe me, my only wish is to sink with honor into the grave; and when that shall please God, I shall meet death with a smile. Not that I am insensible to the honors and riches my King and country have heaped upon me — so much more than any officer could deserve; yet am I ready to quit this world of trouble, and envy none but those of the estate six feet by two."

While he sailed from Palermo with the intention of collecting his whole force, and keeping off Maretimo, either to receive reinforcements there if the French were bound upwards, or to hasten to Minorca if that should be their destination, Captain Foote, in the *Seahorse*, with the Neapolitan frigates and some small vessels under his command, was left to act with a land force, consisting of a few regular troops of four different nations, and with the armed rabble which Cardinal Ruffo called the Christian army. His directions were to coöperate to the utmost of his power with royalists at whose head Ruffo had been

placed, and he had no other instructions whatever. Ruffo advancing without any plan, but relying upon the enemy's want of numbers, which prevented them from attempting to act upon the offensive, and ready to take advantage of any accident which might occur, approached Naples. Fort St. Elmo, which commands the town, was wholly garrisoned by the French troops; the castles of Uovo and Nuovo, which commanded the anchorage, were chiefly defended by Neapolitan revolutionists, the powerful men among them having taken shelter there. If these castles were taken the reduction of Fort St. Elmo would be greatly expedited. They were strong places, and there was reason to apprehend that the French fleet might arrive to relieve them.

Ruffo proposed to the garrison to capitulate, on condition that their persons and property should be guaranteed, and that they should at their own option either be sent to Toulon or remain at Naples, without being molested either in their persons or families. This capitulation was accepted. It was signed by the cardinal and the Russian and Turkish commanders, and lastly by Captain Foote, as commander of the British force. About six and thirty hours afterwards Nelson arrived in the bay with a force, which had joined him during his cruise, consisting of seventeen sail of the line, with 1700 troops on board, and the prince royal of Naples in the admiral's ship. A flag of truce was flying on the castles and on board the *Seahorse*. Nelson made a signal to annul the treaty, declaring that he would grant rebels no other terms than those of unconditional submission.

The cardinal objected to this, nor could all the arguments of Nelson, Sir William Hamilton, and Lady Hamilton, who took an active part in the conference, convince him that a treaty of such a nature, solemnly concluded, could honorably be set aside. He retired at last, silenced by Nelson's authority, but not convinced. Captain Foote was sent out of the bay, and

the garrisons, taken out of the castles under pretense of carrying the treaty into effect, were delivered over as rebels to the vengeance of the Sicilian Court. A deplorable transaction, — a stain upon the memory of Nelson and the honor of England! To palliate it would be in vain; to justify it would be wicked. There is no alternative for one who will not make himself a participator in guilt but to record the disgraceful story with sorrow and with shame.

The castles of St. Elmo, Gaieta, and Capua remained to be subdued. On the land side there was no danger that the French in these garrisons should be relieved, for Suvorof was now beginning to drive the enemy before him; but Nelson thought his presence necessary in the Bay of Naples, and when Lord Keith, having received intelligence that the French and Spanish fleets had formed a junction and sailed for Carthagena, ordered him to repair to Minorca with the whole or the greater part of his force, he sent Admiral Duckworth with a small part only. This was a dilemma which he had foreseen. "Should such an order come at this moment," he said in a letter previously written to the Admiralty, "it would be a case for some consideration whether Minorca is to be risked, or the two kingdoms of Naples and Sicily; I rather think my decision would be to risk the former." And after he had acted upon this opinion he wrote in these terms to the Duke of Clarence, with whose high notions of obedience he was well acquainted: "I am well aware of the consequences of disobeying my orders; but as I have often before risked my life for the good cause, so I with cheerfulness did my commission; for although a military tribunal may think me criminal, the world will approve of my conduct; and I regard not my own safety when the honor of my King is at stake."

Nelson was right in his judgment — no attempt was made upon Minorca; and the expulsion of the French from Naples may rather be said to have been effected than accelerated by

the English and Portuguese of the allied fleet, acting upon shore under Trowbridge.

The Admiralty, however, thought it expedient to censure him for disobeying Lord Keith's orders, and thus hazarding Minorca, without, as it appeared to them, any sufficient reason; and also for having landed seamen for the siege of Capua to form part of an army employed in operations at a distance from the coast, where in case of defeat they might have been prevented from returning to their ships; and they enjoined him "not to employ the seamen in like manner in the future." This reprimand was issued before the event was known, though indeed the event would not affect the principle upon which it proceeded. When Nelson communicated the tidings of his complete success he said in his public letter that "it would not be the less acceptable for having been principally brought about by British sailors." His judgment in thus employing them had been justified by the result, and his joy was evidently heightened by the gratification of a professional and becoming pride. To the First Lord he said at the same time, "I certainly, from having only a left hand, cannot enter into details which may explain the motives that actuated my conduct. My principle is to assist in driving out the French, and in restoring peace and happiness to mankind. I feel that I am fitter to do the action than to describe it." He then added that he would take care of Minorca.

The Sicilian Court, however, were at this time duly sensible of the services which had been rendered them by the British fleet, and their gratitude to Nelson was shown with proper and princely munificence. They gave him the dukedom and domain of Bronte, worth about £3000 a year. It was some days before he could be persuaded to accept it; the argument which finally prevailed is said to have been suggested by the queen, and urged at her request by Lady Hamilton upon her knees. "He considered his own honor too much," she said,

"if he persisted in refusing what the king and queen felt to be absolutely necessary for the preservation of theirs." The king himself also is said to have addressed him in words which show that the sense of rank will sometimes confer a virtue upon those who seem to be most unworthy of the lot to which they have been born. "Lord Nelson, do you wish that your name alone should pass with honor to posterity, and that I, Ferdinand Bourbon, should appear ungrateful?"

He gave him also, when the dukedom was accepted, a diamond-hilted sword, which his father, Charles III. of Spain, had given him on his accession to the throne of the two Sicilies. Nelson said, "the reward was magnificent and worthy of a king, and he was determined that the inhabitants on the domain should be the happiest in all his Sicilian Majesty's dominions. Yet," said he, speaking of these and the other remunerations which were made him for his services, "these presents, rich as they are, do not elevate me. My pride is, that at Constantinople, from the grand seignior to the lowest Turk, the name of Nelson is familiar in their mouths; and in this country I am everything which a grateful monarch and people can call me."

Nelson, however, had a pardonable pride in the outward and visible signs of honor which he had so fairly won. He was fond of his Sicilian title: the signification perhaps pleased him — Duke of Thunder was what in Dahomy would be called a strong name. It was to a sailor's taste, and certainly to no man could it ever be more applicable. But a simple offering, which he received not long afterwards from the island of Zante, affected him with a deeper and finer feeling. The Greeks of that little community sent him a golden-headed sword and a truncheon, set round with all the diamonds that the island could furnish, in a single row. They thanked him "for having by his victory preserved that part of Greece from the horrors of anarchy, and prayed that his exploits might accelerate the

day in which, amidst the glory and peace of thrones, the miseries of the human race would cease." This unexpected tribute touched Nelson to the heart. "No officer," he said, "had ever received from any country a higher acknowledgment of his services."

The French still occupied the Roman States, from which, according to their own admission, they had extorted in jewels, plate, specie, and requisitions of every kind to the enormous amount of eight millions sterling, yet they affected to appear as deliverers among the people whom they were thus cruelly plundering, and they distributed portraits of Bonaparte with the blasphemous inscription, "This is the true likeness of the holy savior of the world!" The people, detesting the impiety, and groaning beneath the exactions of these perfidious robbers, were ready to join any regular force that should come to their assistance; but they dreaded Cardinal Ruffo's rabble, and declared they would resist him as a bandit who came only for the purpose of pillage.

Nelson perceived that no object was now so essential for the tranquillity of Naples as the recovery of Rome, which in the present state of things, when Suvorof was driving the French before him, would complete the deliverance of Italy. He applied, therefore, to Sir James St. Clair Erskine, who, in the absence of General Fox, commanded at Minorca, to assist in this great object with twelve hundred men. "The field of glory," said he, "is a large one, and was never more open to any one than at this moment to you. Rome would throw open her gates and receive you as her deliverer, and the Pope would owe his restoration to a heretic." But Sir James Erskine looked only at the difficulties of the undertaking. "Twelve hundred men," he thought, "would be too small a force to be committed in such an enterprise, for Civita Vecchia was a regular fortress; the local situation and climate also were such that even if this force were adequate it would be proper

to delay the expedition till October. General Fox, too, was soon expected, and during his absence and under existing circumstances he did not feel justified in sending away such a detachment."

What this general thought it imprudent to attempt, Nelson and Trowbridge effected without his assistance, by a small detachment from the fleet.

Having thus completed his work upon the continent of Italy, Nelson's whole attention was directed towards Malta, where Captain Ball, with most inadequate means, was besieging the French garrison. Never was any officer engaged in a more anxious and painful service. The smallest reinforcement from France would at any moment have turned the scale against him; and had it not been for his consummate ability and the love and veneration with which the Maltese regarded him, Malta must have remained in the hands of the enemy. Men, money, food, — all things were wanting. The garrison consisted of five thousand troops, the besieging force of five hundred English and Portuguese marines, and about fifteen hundred armed peasants. Long and repeatedly did Nelson solicit troops to effect the reduction of this important place. "It has been no fault of the navy," said he, "that Malta has not been attacked by land; but we have neither the means ourselves nor influence with those who have."

The same causes of demurral existed which prevented British troops from assisting in the expulsion of the French from Rome. Sir James Erskine was expecting General Fox, — he could not act without orders; and not having, like Nelson, that lively spring of hope within him which partakes enough of the nature of faith to work miracles in war, he thought it "evident that unless a respectable land force, in numbers sufficient to undertake the siege of such a garrison, in one of the strongest places of Europe, and supplied with proportionate artillery and stores, were

sent against it, no reasonable hope could be entertained of its surrender."

At length General Fox arrived at Minorca, and, at length, permitted Colonel Graham to go to Malta, but with means miserably limited. In fact, the expedition was at a stand for want of money, when Trowbridge, arriving at Messina to co-operate in it, and finding this fresh delay, immediately offered all that he could command of his own. "I procured him, my lord," said he to Nelson, "fifteen thousand of my cobs: every farthing and every atom of me shall be devoted to the cause." "What can this mean?" said Nelson, when he learned that Colonel Graham was ordered not to incur any expenses for stores or any articles except provisions. "The cause cannot stand still for want of a little money. If nobody will pay it, I will sell Bronte and the Emperor of Russia's box." And he actually pledged Bronte for £6600 if there should be any difficulty about paying the bills.

The long-delayed expedition was thus at last sent forth, but Trowbridge little imagined in what scenes of misery he was to bear his part. He looked to Sicily for supplies: it was the interest as well as the duty of the Sicilian government to use every exertion for furnishing them; and Nelson and the British ambassador were on the spot to press upon them the necessity of exertion. But though Nelson saw with what a knavish crew the Sicilian Court was surrounded, he was blind to the vices of the Court itself; and resigning himself wholly to Lady Hamilton's influence, never even suspected the crooked policy which it was remorselessly pursuing. The Maltese and the British in Malta severely felt it. Trowbridge, who had the truest affection for Nelson, knew his infatuation, and feared that it might prove injurious to his character as well as fatal to an enterprise which had begun so well and been carried on so patiently. "My lord," said he, writing to him from the siege, "we are dying off fast for want. I learn that Sir William Hamilton says Prince

Luzzi refused corn some time ago, and Sir William does not think it worth while making another application. If that be the case, I wish he commanded this distressing scene instead of me. Puglia had an immense harvest: nearly thirty sail left Messina before I did, to load corn. Will they let us have any? If not, a short time will decide the business. The German interest prevails. I wish I was at your lordship's elbow for an hour. *All, all*, will be thrown on you! I will parry the blow as much as in my power: I foresee much mischief brewing. God bless your lordship! I am miserable; I cannot assist your operations more. Many happy returns of the day to you. (It was the first day of the new year.) I never spent so miserable a one. I am not very tender-hearted, but really the distress here would even move a Neapolitan."

Soon afterwards he wrote: "I have this day saved thirty thousand people from starving, but with this day my ability ceases. As the government are bent on starving us, I see no alternative but to leave these poor unhappy people to perish, without our being witnesses of their distress. I curse the day I ever served the Neapolitan government. We have characters, my lord, to lose: these people have none. Do not suffer their infamous conduct to fall on us. Our country is just, but severe. Such is the fever of my brain this minute, that I assure you, on my honor, if the Palermo traitors were here, I would shoot them first, and then myself. Girgenti is full of corn; the money is ready to pay for it, we do not ask it as a gift. Oh! could you see the horrid distress I daily experience, something would be done. Some engine is at work against us at Naples, and I believe I hit on the proper person. If you complain, he will be immediately promoted, agreeably to the Neapolitan custom. All I write to you is known at the queen's. For my own part, I look upon the Neapolitans as the worst of intriguing enemies: every hour shows me their infamy and duplicity. I pray your lordship, be cautious: your honest,

open manner of acting will be made a handle of. When I see you and tell of their infamous tricks you will be as much surprised as I am. The whole will fall on you."

Nelson was not, and could not be, insensible to the distress which his friend so earnestly represented. He begged, almost on his knees, he said, small supplies of money and corn to keep the Maltese from starving. And when the Court granted a small supply, protesting their poverty, he believed their protestations and was satisfied with their professions, instead of insisting that the restrictions upon the exportation of corn should be withdrawn. The anxiety, however, which he endured affected him so deeply that he said it had broken his spirit forever. Happily, all that Trowbridge with so much reason foreboded, did not come to pass; for Captain Ball, with more decision than Nelson himself would have shown at that time and upon that occasion, ventured upon a resolute measure, for which his name would deserve always to be held in veneration by the Maltese, even if it had no other claims to the love and reverence of a grateful people. Finding it hopeless longer to look for succor or common humanity from the deceitful and infatuated Court of Sicily, which persisted in prohibiting by sanguinary edicts the exportation of supplies, at his own risk he sent his first lieutenant to the port of Girgenti with orders to seize and bring with him to Malta the ships which were there lying laden with corn, of the number of which he had received accurate information. These orders were executed, to the great delight and advantage of the shipowners and proprietors; the necessity of raising the siege was removed, and Captain Ball waited in calmness for the consequences to himself. "But," said Mr. Coleridge, "the sole result was that the Governor of Malta became an especial object of the hatred, fear, and respect of the Court of Naples."

Nelson himself, at the beginning of February, sailed for that island. On the way he fell in with a French squadron bound

for its relief, and consisting of the *Généreux*, seventy-four, three frigates, and a corvette. One of these frigates and the line-of-battle ship were taken; the others escaped, but failed in their purpose of reaching La Valette. This success was peculiarly gratifying to Nelson for many reasons. During some months he had acted as commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean while Lord Keith was in England. Lord Keith returned; and Nelson had, upon his own plan, and at his own risk, left him, to sail for Malta, "for which," said he, "if I had not succeeded, I might have been broke; and if I had not acted thus, the *Généreux* never would have been taken."

This ship was one of those which had escaped from Aboukir. Two frigates and the *Guillaume Tell*, eighty-six, were all that now remained of the fleet which Bonaparte had conducted to Egypt. The *Guillaume Tell* was at this time closely watched in the harbor of La Valette; and shortly afterwards, attempting to make her escape from thence, was taken, after an action in which greater skill was never displayed by British ships, nor greater gallantry by an enemy. She was taken by the *Foudroyant*, *Lion*, and *Penelope* frigate. Nelson, rejoicing at what he called this glorious finish to the whole French Mediterranean fleet, rejoiced also that he was not present to have taken a sprig off these brave men's laurels. "They are," said he, "and I glory in them, my children: they served in my school; and all of us caught our professional zeal and fire from the great and good Earl St. Vincent. What a pleasure, what happiness, to have the Nile fleet all taken, under my orders and regulations!" The two frigates still remained in La Valette. Before its surrender they stole out: one was taken in the attempt; the other was the only ship of the whole fleet which escaped capture or destruction.

Letters were found on board the *Guillaume Tell* showing that the French were now become hopeless of preserving the conquest which they had so foully acquired. Trowbridge and his

brother officers were anxious that Nelson should have the honor of signing the capitulation. They told him that they absolutely, as far as they dared, insisted on his staying to do this; but their earnest and affectionate entreaties were vain. Sir William Hamilton had just been superseded; Nelson had no feeling of cordiality towards Lord Keith; and thinking that, after Earl St. Vincent, no man had so good a claim to the command in the Mediterranean as himself, he applied for permission to return to England, telling the First Lord of the Admiralty that his spirit could not submit patiently, and that he was a broken-hearted man.

A ship could not be spared to convey him to England; he therefore traveled through Germany to Hamburg, in company with his inseparable friends, Sir William and Lady Hamilton. The Queen of Naples went with them to Vienna. While they were at Leghorn, upon a report that the French were approaching (for through the folly of weak Courts and the treachery of venal Cabinets they had now recovered their ascendency in Italy), the people rose tumultuously, and would fain have persuaded Nelson to lead them against the enemy. Public honors and yet more gratifying testimonials of public admiration awaited Nelson wherever he went. The Prince of Esterhazy entertained him in a style of Hungarian magnificence — a hundred grenadiers, each six feet in height, constantly waiting at table. At Madgeburg, the master of the hotel where he was entertained contrived to show him for money, admitting the curious to mount a ladder and peep at him through a small window. A wine merchant at Hamburg, who was above seventy years of age, requested to speak with Lady Hamilton and told her he had some Rhenish wine of the vintage of 1625, which had been in his own possession more than half a century; he had preserved it for some extraordinary occasion, and that which had now arrived was far beyond any that he could ever have expected. His request

was, that her ladyship would prevail upon Lord Nelson to accept six dozen of this incomparable wine; part of it would then have the honor to flow into the heart's blood of that immortal hero, and this thought would make him happy during the remainder of his life. Nelson, when this singular request was reported to him, went into the room, and taking the worthy old gentleman kindly by the hand, consented to receive six bottles, provided the donor would dine with him next day. Twelve were sent, and Nelson, saying that he hoped yet to win half a dozen more great victories, promised to lay by six bottles of his Hamburg friend's wine for the purpose of drinking one after each. A German pastor, between seventy and eighty years of age, traveled forty miles, with the Bible of his parish church, to request that Nelson would write his name on the first leaf of it. He called him the saviour of the Christian world. The old man's hope deceived him. There was no Nelson upon shore, or Europe would have been saved; but in his foresight of the horrors with which all Germany and all Christendom were threatened by France, the pastor could not possibly have apprehended more than has actually taken place.

CHAPTER VII.

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

NELSON was welcomed in England with every mark of popular honor. At Yarmouth, where he landed, every ship in the harbor hoisted her colors. The mayor and corporation waited upon him with the freedom of the town, and accompanied him in procession to church, with all the naval officers on shore and the principal inhabitants. Bonfires and illuminations concluded the day; and on the morrow the volunteer cavalry drew up and saluted him as he departed, and followed the carriage to the borders of the county. At Ipswich the people came out to meet him, drew him a mile into the town and three miles out. When he was in the *Agamemnon* he wished to represent this place in Parliament, and some of his friends had consulted the leading men of the corporation; the result was not successful, and Nelson, observing that he would endeavor to find out a preferable path into Parliament, said there might come a time when the people of Ipswich would think it an honor to have had him for their representative. In London he was feasted by the City, drawn by the populace from Ludgate Hill to Guildhall, and received the thanks of the Common Council for his great victory, and a golden-hilted sword studded with diamonds.

The Addington administration was just at this time formed, and Nelson, who had solicited employment, and been made Vice-Admiral of the Blue, was sent to the Baltic, as second in command under Sir Hyde Parker, by Earl St. Vincent, the new First Lord of the Admiralty. The three northern Courts had formed a confederacy for making England resign her naval

rights. Of these Courts, Russia was guided by the passions of its emperor, Paul, a man not without fits of generosity and some natural goodness, but subject to the wildest humors of caprice, and crazed by the possession of greater power than can ever be safely or perhaps innocently possessed by weak humanity. Denmark was French at heart; ready to coöperate in all the views of France, to recognize all her usurpations, and obey all her injunctions. Sweden, under a king whose principles were right and whose feelings were generous, but who had a taint of hereditary insanity, acted in acquiescence with the dictates of two Powers whom it feared to offend.

The Danish navy at this time consisted of twenty-three ships of the line, with about thirty-one frigates and smaller vessels, exclusive of guardships. The Swedes had eighteen ships of the line, fourteen frigates and sloops, seventy-four galleys and smaller vessels, besides gunboats; and this force was in a far better state of equipment than the Danish. The Russians had eighty-two sail of the line and forty frigates. Of these, there were forty-seven sail of the line at Cronstadt, Revel, Petersburg, and Archangel; but the Russian fleet was ill manned, ill officered, and ill equipped. Such a combination under the influence of France would soon have become formidable; and never did the British Cabinet display more decision than in instantly preparing to crush it. They erred, however, in permitting any petty consideration to prevent them from appointing Nelson to the command. The public properly murmured at seeing it entrusted to another; and he himself said to Earl St. Vincent, that, circumstanced as he was, this expedition would probably be the last service that he should ever perform. The earl, in reply, besought him not to suffer himself to be carried away by any sudden impulse.

The season happened to be unusually favorable: so mild a winter had not been known in the Baltic for many years. When Nelson joined the fleet at Yarmouth he found the

admiral "a little nervous about dark nights and fields of ice." "But we must brace up," said he; "these are not times for nervous systems. I hope we shall give our northern enemies that hailstorm of bullets which gives our dear country the dominion of the sea. We have it, and all the powers in the north cannot take it from us, if our wooden walls have fair play." Before the fleet left Yarmouth it was sufficiently known that its destination was against Denmark. Some Danes, who belonged to the *Amazon* frigate, went to Captain Riou, and telling him what they had heard, begged that he would get them exchanged into a ship bound on some other destination. "They had no wish," they said, "to quit the British service; but they entreated that they might not be forced to fight against their own country." There was not in our whole navy a man who had a higher and more chivalrous sense of duty than Riou. Tears came into his eyes while the men were speaking; without making any reply, he instantly ordered his boat, and did not return to the *Amazon* until he could tell them that their wish was effected.

The fleet sailed on the 12th of March. Mr. Vansittart sailed in it, the British Cabinet still hoping to obtain its end by negotiation. It was well for England that Sir Hyde Parker placed a fuller confidence in Nelson than the government seems to have done at this most important crisis. Her enemies might well have been astonished at learning that any other man should for a moment have been thought of for the command. But so little deference was paid, even at this time, to his intuitive and all-commanding genius, that when the fleet had reached its first rendezvous, at the entrance of the Cattegat, he had received no official communication whatever of the intended operations. His own mind had been made up upon them with its accustomed decision. "All I have gathered of our first plans," said he, "I disapprove most exceedingly. Honor may arise from them; good cannot. I hear we are

likely to anchor outside of Cronenburg Castle, instead of Copenhagen, which would give weight to our negotiation. A Danish minister would think twice before he would put his name to war with England, when the next moment he would probably see his master's fleet in flames, and his capital in ruins. The Dane should see our flag every moment he lifted up his head."

Mr. Vansittart left the fleet at the Scaw, and preceded it in a frigate with a flag of truce. Precious time was lost by this delay, which was to be purchased by the dearest blood of Britain and Denmark; according to the Danes themselves, the intelligence that a British fleet was seen off the Sound produced a much more general alarm in Copenhagen than its actual arrival in the roads; for their means of defense were at that time in such a state that they could hardly hope to resist, still less to repel, an enemy. On the 21st Nelson had a long conference with Sir Hyde; and the next day addressed a letter to him worthy of himself and of the occasion. Mr. Vansittart's report had then been received. It represented the Danish government as in the highest degree hostile, and their state of preparation as exceeding what our Cabinet had supposed possible; for Denmark had profited, with all activity, of the leisure which had so impoliticly been given her. "The more I have reflected," said Nelson to his commander, "the more I am confirmed in opinion that not a moment should be lost in attacking the enemy. They will every day and every hour be stronger; we shall never be so good a match for them as at this moment. The only consideration is, how to get at them with the least risk to our ships. Here you are, with almost the safety — certainly with the honor — of England more entrusted to you than ever yet fell to the lot of any British officer. On your decision depends whether our country shall be degraded in the eyes of Europe, or whether she shall rear her head higher than ever. Again I do repeat, never did our country

depend so much upon the success of any fleet as on this. How best to honor her and abate the pride of her enemies must be the subject of your deepest consideration."

Supposing him to force the passage of the Sound, Nelson thought some damage might be done among the masts and yards, though perhaps not one of them but would be serviceable again. "If the wind be fair," said he, "and you determine to attack the ships and Crown Islands, you must expect the natural issue of such a battle, — ships crippled, and perhaps one or two lost, for the wind which carries you in will most probably not bring out a crippled ship. This method I call taking the bull by the horns. It will, however, not prevent the Revel ships or the Swedes from joining the Danes; and to prevent this is, in my humble opinion, a measure absolutely necessary, and still to attack Copenhagen." For this he proposed two modes. One was to pass Cronenburg, taking the risk of danger, take the deepest and straightest channel along the Middle Grounds, and then coming down the Garbar, or King's Channel, attack the Danish line of floating batteries and ships as might be found convenient. This would prevent a junction, and might give an opportunity of bombarding Copenhagen. Or to take the passage of the Belt, which might be accomplished in four or five days, and then the attack by Draco might be made and the junction of the Russians prevented. Supposing them through the Belt, he proposed that a detachment of the fleet should be sent to destroy the Russian squadron at Revel, and that the business at Copenhagen should be attempted with the remainder. "The measure," he said, "might be thought bold; but the boldest measures are the safest."

The pilots, as men who had nothing but safety to think of, were terrified by the formidable report of the batteries of Elsinore, and the tremendous preparations which our negotiators, who were now returned from their fruitless mission,

witnessed. They therefore persuaded Sir Hyde to prefer the passage of the Belt. "Let it be by the Sound,[1] by the Belt, or anyhow," cried Nelson; "only lose not an hour!" On the 26th they sailed for the Belt; such was the habitual reserve of Sir Hyde that his own captain, the captain of the fleet, did not know which course he had resolved to take till the fleet were getting under way. When Captain Domett was thus apprised of it, he felt it his duty to represent to the admiral his belief that, if that course were persevered in, the ultimate object would be totally defeated. It was liable to long delays and to accidents of ships grounding. In the whole fleet there were only one captain and one pilot who knew anything of this formidable passage (as it was then deemed), and their knowledge was very slight. Their instructions did not authorize them to attempt it. Supposing them safe through the Belts, the heavy ships could not come over the Grounds to attack Copenhagen, and light vessels would have no effect on such a line of defense as had been prepared against them. Domett urged these reasons so forcibly that Sir Hyde's opinion was shaken, and he consented to bring the fleet to and send for Nelson on board. There can be little doubt but that the expedition would have failed if Captain Domett had not thus timely and earnestly given his advice. Nelson entirely agreed with him, and it was finally determined to take the passage of the Sound, and the fleet returned to its former anchorage.

The next day was more idly expended in dispatching a flag of truce to the governor of Cronenburg Castle, to ask whether he had received orders to fire at the British fleet, as the admiral must consider the first gun to be a declaration of war on the part of Denmark. A soldier-like and becoming answer

[1] **Sound.** — The strait between the Danish island of Zealand on the west and the coast of Sweden on the east. **The Belt.** — There were two "belts" or passages from the Cattegat to the Baltic, passing to the west of the island of Zealand.

was returned to this formality. The governor said that the British minister had not been sent away from Copenhagen, but had obtained a passport at his own demand. He himself, as a soldier, could not meddle with politics, but he was not at liberty to suffer a fleet, of which the intention was not yet known, to approach the guns of the castle which he had the honor to command, and he requested, if the British admiral should think proper to make any proposals to the King of Denmark, that he might be apprised of it before the fleet approached nearer. During this intercourse a Dane, who came on board the commander's ship, having occasion to express his business in writing, found the pen blunt, and holding it up, sarcastically said, "If your guns are not better pointed than your pens, you will make little impression on Copenhagen."

On that day intelligence reached the admiral of the loss of one of his fleet, the *Invincible*, seventy-four, wrecked on a sand-bank as she was coming out of Yarmouth; 400 of her men perished in her. Nelson, who was now appointed to lead the van, shifted his flag to the *Elephant*, Captain Foley — a lighter ship than the *St. George*, and therefore fitter for the expected operations. The two following days were calm. Orders had been given to pass the Sound as soon as the wind would permit, and on the afternoon of the 29th the ships were cleared for action with an alacrity characteristic of British seamen. At daybreak on the 30th it blew a topsail breeze from N.W. The signal was made, and the fleet moved on in order of battle; Nelson's division in the van, Sir Hyde's in the center, and Admiral Graves' in the rear.

Great actions, whether military or naval, have generally given celebrity to the scenes from whence they are denominated, and thus petty villages, and capes, and bays, known only to the coasting trader, become associated with mighty deeds, and their names are made conspicuous in the history of

the world. Here, however, the scene was every way worthy of the drama. The political importance of the Sound is such that grand objects are not needed there to impress the imagination, yet is the channel full of grand and interesting objects, both of art and nature. This passage, which Denmark had so long considered as the key of the Baltic, is in its narrowest part about three miles wide, and here the city of Elsinore is situated, except Copenhagen the most flourishing of the Danish towns. Every vessel which passes lowers her top-gallant sails and pays toll at Elsinore, a toll which is believed to have had its origin in the consent of the traders to that sea, Denmark taking upon itself the charge of constructing lighthouses and erecting signals to mark the shoals and rocks from the Cattegat to the Baltic; and they on their part agreeing that all ships should pass this way in order that all might pay their shares; none from that time using the passage of the Belt, because it was not fitting that they who enjoyed the benefit of the beacons in dark and stormy weather should evade contributing to them in fair seasons and summer nights. Of late years about ten thousand vessels had annually paid this contribution in time of peace. Adjoining Elsinore, and at the edge of the peninsular promontory, upon the nearest point of land to the Swedish coast, stands Cronenburg Castle, built after Tycho Brahe's [1] design, a magnificent pile — at once a palace and fortress and state prison, with its spires and towers, and battlements and batteries. On the left of the strait is the old Swedish city of Helsinburg, at the foot and on the side of a hill.

To the north of Helsinburg the shores are steep and rocky; they lower to the south, and the distant spires of Landscrona, Lund, and Malmoe are seen in the flat country. The Danish shores consist partly of ridges of sand, but more frequently their slopes are covered with rich wood, and villages and villas,

[1] **Tycho Brahe** (1546–1601). — The celebrated Danish astronomer.

denoting the vicinity of a great capital. The isles of Huen, Satholm, and Amak appear in the widening channel; and at the distance of twenty miles from Elsinore stands Copenhagen, in full view, — the best city of the north, and one of the finest capitals of Europe, visible, with its stately spires, far off.

Amid these magnificent objects there are some which possess a peculiar interest for the recollections which they call forth. The isle of Huen, a lovely domain, about six miles in circumference, had been the munificent gift of Frederic the Second to Tycho Brahe. Here most of his discoveries were made, and here the ruins are to be seen of his observatory, and of the mansion where he was visited by princes, and where, with a princely spirit, he received and entertained all comers from all parts, and promoted science by his liberality as well as by his labors. Elsinore[1] is a name familiar to English ears, being inseparably associated with Hamlet, and one of the noblest works of human genius. Cronenburg had been the scene of deeper tragedy; here Queen Matilda[2] was confined, the victim of a foul and murderous court intrigue. Here, amid heart-breaking griefs, she found consolation in nursing her infant. Here she took her everlasting leave of that infant, when, by the interference of England, her own deliverance was obtained, and as the ship bore her away she fixed her eyes upon these towers, and stood upon the deck, obstinately gazing toward them till the last speck had disappeared.

The Sound being the only frequented entrance to the Baltic, the great Mediterranean of the North, few parts of the sea display so frequent a navigation. In the height of the season

[1] —— "think of them that sleep
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore."

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

[2] **Queen Matilda.** — Queen of Denmark, sister of George III. She was imprisoned in Cronenburg Castle in 1784.

not fewer than a hundred vessels pass every four and twenty hours for many weeks in succession; but never had so busy or so splendid a scene been exhibited there as on this day, when the British fleet prepared to force that passage where till now all ships had veiled their topsails to the flag of Denmark. The whole force consisted of fifty-one sail of various descriptions, of which sixteen were of the line. The greater part of the bomb and gun vessels took their stations off Cronenburg Castle to cover the fleet; while others, on the larboard, were ready to engage the Swedish shore. The Danes, having improved every moment which ill-timed negotiation and baffling weather gave them, had lined their shore with batteries; and as soon as the *Monarch*, which was the leading ship, came abreast of them, a fire was opened from about a hundred pieces of cannon and mortars; our light vessels immediately, in return, opened their fire upon the castle.

Here were all the pompous circumstance and exciting reality of war without its effects, for this ostentatious display was but a bloodless prelude to the wide and sweeping destruction which was soon to follow. The enemy's shot fell near enough to splash the water on board our ships; not relying upon any forbearance of the Swedes, they meant to have kept the mid-channel; but when they perceived that not a shot was fired from Helsinburg, and that no batteries were to be seen on the Swedish shore, they inclined to that side, so as completely to get out of reach of the Danish guns. The uninterrupted blaze which was kept up from them till the fleet had passed served only to exhilarate our sailors, and afford them matter for jest, as the shot fell in showers a full cable's length short of its destined aim. A few rounds were returned from some of our leading ships till they perceived its inutility; this, however, occasioned the only bloodshed of the day, some of our men being killed and wounded by the bursting of a gun. As soon as the main body had passed the gun-vessels followed, desisting from their bom-

bardment, which had been as innocent as that of the enemy; and about mid-day the whole fleet anchored between the island of Huen and Copenhagen. Sir Hyde, with Nelson, Admiral Graves, some of the senior captains, and the commanding officers of the artillery and the troops, then proceeded in a lugger to reconnoitre the enemy's means of defense, — a formidable line of ships, radeaus, pontoons, galleys, fire-ships, and gun-boats, flanked and supported by extensive batteries, and occupying, from one extreme point to the other, an extent of nearly four miles.

A council of war was held in the afternoon. It was apparent that the Danes could not be attacked without great difficulty and risk; and some of the members of the council spoke of the number of the Swedes and the Russians whom they should afterwards have to engage as a consideration which ought to be borne in mind. Nelson, who kept pacing the cabin, impatient as he ever was of anything which savored of irresolution, repeatedly said, "The more numerous the better; I wish they were twice as many — the easier the victory, depend on it." The plan upon which he had determined, if ever it should be his fortune to bring a Baltic fleet to action, was to attack the head of their line, and confuse their movements. "Close with a Frenchman," he used to say, "but out-manœuvre a Russian." He offered his services for the attack, requiring ten sail of the line and the whole of the smaller craft. Sir Hyde gave him two more line-of-battle ships than he asked, and left everything to his judgment.

The enemy's force was not the only nor the greatest obstacle with which the British fleet had to contend; there was another to be overcome before they could come in contact with it. The channel was little known and extremely intricate; all the buoys had been removed, and the Danes considered this difficulty as almost insuperable, thinking the channel impracticable for so large a fleet. Nelson himself saw the soundings made and the

buoys laid down, boating it upon this exhausting service, day and night, till it was effected. When this was done he thanked God for having enabled him to get through this difficult part of his duty. "It had worn him down," he said, "and was infinitely more grievous to him than any resistance which he could experience from the enemy."

At the first council of war, opinions inclined to an attack from the eastward; but the next day, the wind being southerly, after a second examination of the Danish position, it was determined to attack from the south, approaching in the manner which Nelson suggested in his first thoughts. On the morning of the first of April the whole fleet removed to an anchorage within two leagues of the town, and off the N.W. end of the Middle Ground; a shoal lying exactly before the town, at about three-quarters of a mile distance, and extending along its whole sea front. The King's Channel, where there is deep water, is between this shoal and the town, and here the Danes had arranged their line of defense as near the shore as possible: nineteen ships and floating batteries, flanked, at the end nearest the town, by the Crown Batteries, which were two artificial islands at the mouth of the harbor, — most formidable works, the larger one having, by the Danish account, sixty-six guns, but as Nelson believed, eighty-eight.

The fleet having anchored, Nelson, with Riou in the *Amazon*, made his last examination of the ground, and about one o'clock, returning to his own ship, threw out the signal to weigh. It was received with a shout throughout the whole division; they weighed with a light and favorable wind; the narrow channel between the island of Saltholm and the Middle Ground had been accurately buoyed; the small craft pointed out the course distinctly; Riou led the way; the whole division coasted along the outer edge of the shoal, doubled its further extremity, and anchored there off Draco Point, just as the darkness closed, the headmost of the enemy's line not being

more than two miles distant. The signal to prepare for action had been made early in the evening, and as his own anchor dropped, Nelson called out: "I will fight them the moment I have a fair wind." It had been agreed that Sir Hyde, with the remaining ships, should weigh on the following morning at the same time as Nelson, to menace the Crown Batteries on his side and the four ships of the line which lay at the entrance of the arsenal, and to cover our own disabled ships as they came out of action.

The Danes meantime had not been idle: no sooner did the guns of Cronenburg make it known to the whole city that all negotiation was at an end, that the British fleet was passing the Sound, and that the dispute between the two crowns must now be decided by arms, than a spirit displayed itself most honorable to the Danish character. All ranks offered themselves to the service of their country; the university furnished a corps of twelve hundred youths, the flower of Denmark: it was one of those emergencies in which little drilling or discipline is necessary to render courage available; they had nothing to learn but how to manage the guns, and were employed day and night in practicing them. When the movements of Nelson's squadron were perceived, it was known when and where the attack was to be expected, and the line of defense was manned indiscriminately by soldiers, sailors, and citizens. Had not the whole attention of the Danes been directed to strengthen their own means of defense, they might most materially have annoyed the invading squadron, and perhaps frustrated the impending attack, for the British ships were crowded in an anchoring-ground of little extent; it was calm, so that mortar-boats might have acted against them to the utmost advantage, and they were within range of shells from Amak Island.[1] A few fell among them, but the enemy soon ceased to fire. It was learned afterwards that, fortunately for the fleet, the bed of the

[1] **Amak Island.** — Copenhagen is built partly on this island.

mortar had given way, and the Danes either could not get it replaced, or in the darkness lost the direction.

This was an awful night for Copenhagen — far more so than for the British fleet, where the men were accustomed to battle and victory, and had none of those objects before their eyes which render death terrible. Nelson sat down to table with a large party of his officers; he was, as he was ever wont to be when on the eve of action, in high spirits, and drank to a leading wind and to the success of the morrow. After supper they returned to their respective ships, except Riou, who remained to arrange the order of battle with Nelson and Foley, and to draw up instructions; Hardy meantime went in a small boat to examine the channel between them and the enemy, approaching so near that he sounded round their leading ship with a pole, lest the noise of throwing the lead should discover him.

The incessant fatigue of body as well as mind which Nelson had undergone during the last three days had so exhausted him that he was earnestly urged to go to his cot, and his old servant, Allen, using that kind of authority which long and affectionate services entitled and enabled him to assume on such occasions, insisted upon his complying. The cot was placed on the floor, and he continued to dictate from it. About eleven, Hardy returned, and reported the practicability of the channel, and the depth of water up to the enemy's line. About one the orders were completed, and half a dozen clerks in the foremost cabin proceeded to transcribe them, Nelson frequently calling out to them from his cot to hasten their work, for the wind was becoming fair. Instead of attempting to get a few hours of sleep, he was constantly receiving reports on this important point. At daybreak it was announced as becoming perfectly fair. The clerks finished their work about six. Nelson, who was already up, breakfasted, and made signal for all captains. The land forces and five hundred sea-

men, under Captain Freemantle and the Honorable Colonel Stewart, were to storm the Crown Battery as soon as its fire should be silenced; and Riou — whom Nelson had never seen till this expedition, but whose worth he had instantly perceived, and appreciated as it deserved — had the *Blanche* and *Alcmene* frigates, the *Dart* and *Arrow* sloops, and the *Zephyr* and *Otter* fire-ships, given him, with a special command to act as circumstances might require: every other ship had its station appointed.

Between eight and nine the pilots and masters were ordered on board the admiral's ship. The pilots were mostly men who had been mates in Baltic traders, and their hesitation about the bearing of the east end of the shoal and the exact line of deep water gave ominous warning of how little their knowledge was to be trusted. The signal for action had been made, the wind was fair — not a moment to be lost. Nelson urged them to be steady, to be resolute, and to decide; but they wanted the only ground for steadiness and decision in such cases, and Nelson had reason to regret that he had not trusted to Hardy's single report. This was one of the most painful moments of his life, and he always spoke of it with bitterness. "I experienced in the Sound," said he, "the misery of having the honor of our country intrusted to a set of pilots who have no other thought than to keep the ships clear of danger, and their own silly heads clear of shot. Everybody knows what I must have suffered, and if any merit attaches itself to me, it was for combating the dangers of the shallows in defiance of them." At length Mr. Bryerly, the master of the *Bellona*, declared that he was prepared to lead the fleet; his judgment was acceded to by the rest; they returned to their ships, and at half-past nine the signal was made to weigh in succession.

At five minutes after ten the action began. The first half of our fleet was engaged in about half an hour, and by half-past eleven the battle became general. The plan of the attack had

been complete; but seldom has any plan been more disconcerted by untoward accidents. Of twelve ships of the line, one was entirely useless, and two others in a situation where they could not render half the service which was required of them. Of the squadron of gun-brigs only one could get into action: the rest were prevented by baffling currents from weathering the eastern end of the shoal; and only two of the bomb-vessels could reach their station on the Middle Ground, and open their mortars on the arsenal, firing over both fleets. Riou took the vacant station against the Crown Battery with his frigates, attempting with that unequal force a service in which three sail of the line had been directed to assist.

Nelson's agitation had been extreme when he saw himself, before the action began, deprived of a fourth part of his ships of the line; but no sooner was he in battle, where his squadron was received with the fire of more than a thousand guns, than, as if that artillery, like music, had driven away all care and painful thoughts, his countenance brightened, and, as a bystander describes him, his conversation became joyous, animated, elevated, and delightful.

The commander-in-chief meantime, near enough to the scene of action to know the unfavorable accidents which had so materially weakened Nelson, and yet too distant to know the real state of the contending parties, suffered the most dreadful anxiety. To get to his assistance was impossible; both wind and current were against him. Fear for the event in such circumstances would naturally preponderate in the bravest mind; and at one o'clock, perceiving that after three hours' endurance the enemy's fire was unslackened, he began to despair of success. "I will make the signal of recall," said he to his captain, "for Nelson's sake. If he is in a condition to continue the action successfully, he will disregard it; if he is not, it will be an excuse for his retreat, and no blame can be imputed to him." Captain Domett urged him at least to delay

the signal till he could communicate with Nelson, but in Sir Hyde's opinion the danger was too pressing for delay. "The fire," he said, "was too hot for Nelson to oppose; a retreat he thought must be made. He was aware of the consequences to his own personal reputation, but it would be cowardly in him to leave Nelson to bear the whole shame of the failure, if shame it should be deemed." Under a mistaken judgment, therefore, but with this disinterested and generous feeling, he made the signal for retreat.

Nelson was at this time in all the excitement of action, pacing the quarter-deck. A shot through the mainmast knocked the splinters about, and he observed to one of his officers with a smile, "It is warm work; and this day may be the last to any of us at a moment"; and then stopping short at the gangway, added with emotion, "but, mark you, I would not be elsewhere for thousands." About this time the signal lieutenant called out that No. 39 (the signal for discontinuing the action) was thrown out by the commander-in-chief. He continued to walk the deck, and appeared to take no notice of it. The signal officer met him at the next turn, and asked him if he should repeat it. "No," he replied, "acknowledge it." Presently he called after him to know if the signal for close action was still hoisted, and being answered in the affirmative, said, "Mind you keep it so." He now paced the deck, moving the stump of his lost arm in a manner which always indicated great emotion. "Do you know," said he to Mr. Ferguson, "what is shown on board the commander-in-chief? No. 39!" Mr. Ferguson asked what that meant. "Why, to leave off action!" Then, shrugging up his shoulders, he repeated the words, "Leave off action? Now, hang me if I do! You know, Foley," turning to the captain, "I have only one eye; I have a right to be blind sometimes." And then, putting the glass to his blind eye in that mood of mind that sports with bitterness, he exclaimed, "I really do not see the signal!" Presently he

exclaimed, "Hang the signal! Keep mine for closer battle flying! That 's the way I answer such signals! Nail mine to the mast!"

Admiral Graves, who was so situated that he could not discern what was done on board the *Elephant*, disobeyed Sir Hyde's signal in like manner; whether by fortunate mistake or by a like brave intention has not been made known. The other ships of the line, looking only to Nelson, continued the action. The signal, however, saved Riou's little squadron, but did not save its heroic leader. This squadron, which was nearest the commander-in-chief, obeyed, and hauled off. It had suffered severely in its most unequal contest. For a long time the *Amazon* had been firing, enveloped in smoke, when Riou desired his men to stand fast, and let the smoke clear off, that they might see what they were about. A fatal order, for the Danes then got clear sight of her from the batteries, and pointed their guns with such tremendous effect that nothing but the signal for retreat saved this frigate from destruction. "What will Nelson think of us?" was Riou's mournful exclamation when he unwillingly drew off. He had been wounded in the head by a splinter, and was sitting on a gun, encouraging his men, when, just as the *Amazon* showed her stern to the Trekroner Battery, his clerk was killed by his side, and another shot swept away several marines who were hauling in the mainbrace. "Come, then, my boys," cried Riou, "let us all die together!" The words had scarcely been uttered before a raking shot cut him in two. Except it had been Nelson himself, the British navy could not have suffered a severer loss.

The action continued along the line with unabated vigor on our side, and with the most determined resolution on the part of the Danes. They fought to great advantage, because most of the vessels in their line of defense were without masts; the few which had any standing had their topmasts struck, and the hulls could only be seen at intervals.

The Prince Royal had taken his station upon one of the batteries, from whence he beheld the action and issued his orders. Denmark had never been engaged in so arduous a contest, and never did the Danes more nobly display their national courage, — a courage not more unhappily than impoliticly exerted in subserviency to the interest of France. Captain Thura, of the *Indfoedsretten*, fell early in the action, and all his officers, except one lieutenant and one marine officer, were either killed or wounded. In the confusion the colors were either struck or shot away; but she was moored athwart one of the batteries in such a situation that the British made no attempt to board her, and a boat was dispatched to the prince to inform him of her situation. He turned to those about him, and said, "Gentlemen, Thura is killed; which of you will take the command?" Schroedersee, a captain who had lately resigned on account of extreme ill health, answered in a feeble voice, "I will!" and hastened on board. The crew, perceiving a new commander coming alongside, hoisted their colors again, and fired a broadside. Schroedersee, when he came on deck, found himself surrounded by the dead and wounded, and called to those in the boat to get quickly on board; a ball struck him at that moment. A lieutenant who had accompanied him then took the command, and continued to fight the ship. A youth of seventeen, by name Villemoes, particularly distinguished himself on this memorable day. He had volunteered to take the command of a floating battery, which was a raft, consisting merely of a number of beams nailed together, with a flooring to support the guns; it was square, with a breastwork full of port-holes, and without masts — carrying twenty-four guns and 120 men. With this he got under the stern of the *Elephant*, below the reach of the stern-chasers; and under a heavy fire of small arms from the marines, fought his raft, till the truce was announced, with such skill as well as courage as to excite Nelson's warmest admiration.

Between one and two the fire of the Danes slackened; about two it ceased from the greater part of their line, and some of their lighter ships were adrift. It was, however, difficult to take possession of those which struck, because the batteries on Amak Island protected them, and because an irregular fire was kept up from the ships themselves as the boats approached. This arose from the nature of the action. The crews were continually reinforced from the shore, and fresh men coming on board did not inquire whether the flag had been struck, or perhaps did not heed it; many or most of them never having been engaged in war before, knowing nothing therefore of its laws, and thinking only of defending their country to the last extremity. The *Dannebrog* fired upon the *Elephant's* boats in this manner, though her commodore had removed her pendant and deserted her, though she had struck, and though she was in flames. After she had been abandoned by the commodore, Braun fought her till he lost his right hand, and then Captain Lemming took the command. This unexpected renewal of her fire made the *Elephant* and *Glatton* renew theirs, till she was not only silenced, but nearly every man in the praams ahead and astern of her was killed. When the smoke of their guns died away she was seen drifting in flames before the wind, those of her crew who remained alive and able to exert themselves throwing themselves out at her port-holes.

By half-past two the action had ceased along that part of the line which was astern of the *Elephant*, but not with the ships ahead and the Crown Batteries. Nelson, seeing the manner in which his boats were fired upon when they went to take possession of the prizes, became angry, and said he must either send on shore to have this irregular proceeding stopped, or send a fire-ship and burn them. Half the shot from the Trekroner and from the batteries at Amak at this time struck the surrendered ships, four of which had got close together, and the fire of the English in return was equally or even more

destructive to these poor devoted Danes. Nelson, who was as humane as he was brave, was shocked at this massacre — for such he called it — and, with a presence of mind peculiar to himself, and never more signally displayed than now, he retired into the stern galley, and wrote thus to the Crown Prince: "Vice-admiral Lord Nelson has been commanded to spare Denmark when she no longer resists. The line of defense which covered her shores has struck to the British flag; but if the firing is continued on the part of Denmark, he must set on fire all the prizes that he has taken, without having the power of saving the men who have so nobly defended them. The brave Danes are the brothers and should never be the enemies of the English." A wafer was given him, but he ordered a candle to be brought from the cockpit, and sealed the letter with wax, affixing a larger seal than he ordinarily used. "This," said he, "is no time to appear hurried and informal." Captain Sir Frederick Thesiger, who acted as his aide-de-camp, carried this letter with a flag of truce. Meantime the fire of ships ahead, and the appoach of the *Ramilies* and *Defence* from Sir Hyde's division, which had now worked near enough to alarm the enemy, though not to injure them, silenced the remainder of the Danish line to the eastward of the Trekroner. That battery, however, continued its fire. This formidable work, owing to the want of the ships which had been destined to attack it, and the inadequate force of Riou's little squadron, was comparatively uninjured. Towards the close of the action it had been manned with nearly fifteen hundred men, and the intention of storming it, for which every preparation had been made, was abandoned as impracticable.

During Thesiger's absence Nelson sent for Freemantle from the *Ganges*, and consulted with him and Foley, whether it was advisable to advance with those ships which had sustained least damage against the yet uninjured part of the Danish line. They were decidedly of opinion that the best thing which

could be done was, while the wind continued fair, to remove the fleet out of the intricate channel from which it had to retreat. In somewhat more than half an hour after Thesiger had been dispatched, the Danish adjutant-general, Lindholm, came bearing a flag of truce; upon which the Trekroner ceased to fire, and the action closed, after four hours' continuance. He brought an inquiry from the prince: What was the object of Nelson's note? The British admiral wrote in reply: "Lord Nelson's object in sending the flag of truce was humanity; he therefore consents that hostilities shall cease, and that the wounded Danes may be taken on shore. And Lord Nelson will take his prisoners out of the vessels, and burn or carry off his prizes as he shall think fit. Lord Nelson, with humble duty to his Royal Highness the Prince, will consider this the greatest victory he has ever gained if it may be the cause of a happy reconciliation and union between his own most gracious sovereign and his Majesty the King of Denmark." Sir Frederick Thesiger was dispatched a second time with the reply; and the Danish adjutant-general was referred to the commander-in-chief for a conference upon this overture. Lindholm assenting to this, proceeded to the *London*, which was riding at anchor full four miles off; and Nelson, losing not one of the critical moments which he had thus gained, made signal for his leading ships to weigh in succession — they had the shoal to clear, they were much crippled, and their course was immediately under the guns of the Trekroner.

The *Monarch* led the way. This ship had received six and twenty shot between wind and water. She had not a shroud standing; there was a double-headed shot in the heart of her foremast; and the slightest wind would have sent every mast over her side.[1] The imminent danger from which Nelson had

[1] It would have been well if the fleet, before they went under the batteries, had left their spare spars moored out of reach of shot. Many would have been saved which were destroyed lying on the booms, and the hurt

extricated himself soon became apparent; the *Monarch* touched immediately upon a shoal, over which she was pushed by the *Ganges* taking her amidships; the *Glatton* went clear; but the other two, the *Defiance* and the *Elephant*, grounded about a mile from the Trekroner, and there remained fixed for many hours, in spite of all the exertions of their wearied crews. The *Désirée* frigate also, at the other end of the line, having gone towards the close of the action to assist the *Bellona*, became fast on the same shoal. Nelson left the *Elephant*, soon after she took the ground, to follow Lindholm. The heat of action was over, and that kind of feeling which the surrounding scene of havoc was so well fitted to produce pressed heavily upon his exhausted spirits. The sky had suddenly become overcast; white flags were waving from the mastheads of so many shattered ships; the slaughter had ceased; but the grief was to come, for the account of the dead was not yet made up, and no man could tell for what friends he would have to mourn. The very silence which follows the cessation of such a battle becomes a weight upon the heart at first, rather than a relief; and though the work of mutual destruction was at an end, the *Danbrog* was at this time drifting about in flames; presently she blew up, while our boats, which had put off in all directions to assist her, were endeavoring to pick up her devoted crew, few of whom could be saved.

The fate of these men, after the gallantry which they had displayed, particularly affected Nelson; for there was nothing in this action of that indignation against the enemy, and that impression of retributive justice, which at the Nile had given a sterner temper to his mind, and a sense of austere delight in beholding the vengeance of which he was the appointed

done by their splinters would have been saved also. Small craft could have towed them up when they were required, and after such an action so many must necessarily be wanted, that if those which were not in use were wounded, it might thus have been rendered impossible to refit the ships.

minister. The Danes were an honorable foe; they were of English mould as well as English blood; and now that the battle had ceased, he regarded them rather as brethren than as enemies. There was another reflection also, which mingled with these melancholy thoughts, and predisposed him to receive them. He was not here master of his own movements, as at Egypt: he had won the day by disobeying his orders; and in so far as he had been successful, had convicted the commander-in-chief of an error in judgment. "Well," said he as he left the *Elephant*, "I have fought contrary to orders, and I shall perhaps be hanged! Never mind, let them!"

This was the language of a man who, while he is giving utterance to an uneasy thought, clothes it half in jest because he half repents that it has been disclosed. His services had been too eminent on that day, his judgment too conspicuous, his success too signal, for any commander, however jealous of his own authority, or envious of another's merits, to express anything but satisfaction and gratitude, which Sir Hyde heartily felt and sincerely expressed. It was speedily agreed that there should be a suspension of hostilities for four and twenty hours; that all the prizes should be surrendered and the wounded Danes carried on shore. There was a pressing necessity for this, for the Danes—either from too much confidence in the strength of their position and the difficulty of the channel, or supposing that the wounded might be carried on shore during the action, which was found totally impracticable, or perhaps from the confusion which the attack excited—had provided no surgeons; so that when our men boarded the captured ships they found many of the mangled and mutilated Danes bleeding to death for want of proper assistance,—a scene of all others the most shocking to a brave man's feelings.

This was indeed a mournful day for Copenhagen. It was Good Friday; but the general agitation and the mourning which was in every house made all distinction of days be

forgotten. There were at that hour thousands in that city who felt, and more perhaps who needed, the consolations of Christianity, but few or none who could be calm enough to think of its observances. The English were actively employed in refitting their own ships, securing the prizes, and distributing the prisoners; the Danes, in carrying on shore and disposing of the wounded and the dead. It had been a murderous action. Our loss in killed and wounded was nine hundred and fifty-three. Part of this slaughter might have been spared. The commanding officer of the troops on board one of our ships asked where his men should be stationed. He was told that they could be of no use; that they were not near enough for musketry, and were not wanted at the guns; they had therefore better go below. This, he said was impossible, — it would be a disgrace that could never be wiped away. They were therefore drawn up upon the gangway, to satisfy this cruel point of honor; and there, without the possibility of annoying the enemy, they were mowed down! The loss of the Danes, including prisoners, amounted to about six thousand.

The negotiations meantime went on, and it was agreed that Nelson should have an interview with the prince the following day. Hardy and Freemantle landed with him. This was a thing as unexampled as the other circumstances of the battle. A strong guard was appointed to escort him to the palace, as much for the purpose of security as of honor. The populace, according to the British account, showed a mixture of admiration, curiosity, and displeasure at beholding that man in the midst of them who had inflicted such wounds upon Denmark. But there were neither acclamations nor murmurs. "The people," says a Dane, "did not degrade themselves with the former, nor disgrace themselves with the latter: the admiral was received as one brave enemy ever ought to receive another. He was received with respect." The preliminaries of the negotiation were adjusted at this interview. During the repast which

followed, Nelson, with all the sincerity of his character, bore willing testimony to the valor of his foes. He told the prince that he had been in a hundred and five engagements, but that this was the most tremendous of all. "The French," he said, "fought bravely; but they could not have stood for one hour the fight which the Danes supported for four." He requested that Villemoes might be introduced to him; and shaking hands with the youth, told the prince that he ought to be made an admiral. The prince replied: "If, my lord, I am to make all my brave officers admirals, I should have no captains or lieutenants in my service."

The sympathy of the Danes for their countrymen who had bled in their defense was not weakened by distance of time or place in this instance. Things needful for the service or the comfort of the wounded were sent in profusion to the hospitals, till the superintendents gave public notice that they could receive no more. On the third day after the action the dead were buried in the naval churchyard; the ceremony was made as public and as solemn as the occasion required, — such a procession had never before been seen in that or perhaps in any other city. A public monument was erected upon the spot where the slain were gathered together. A subscription was opened on the day of the funeral for the relief of the sufferers, and collections in aid of it made throughout all the churches in the kingdom. This appeal to the feelings of the people was made with circumstances which gave it full effect. A monument was raised in the midst of the church, surmounted by the Danish colors: young maidens, dressed in white, stood round it, with either one who had been wounded in the battle, or the widow and orphans of some one who had fallen; a suitable oration was delivered from the pulpit, and patriotic hymns and songs were afterwards performed. Medals were distributed to all the officers and to the men who had distinguished themselves. Poets and painters vied with each other

in celebrating a battle which, disastrous as it was, had yet been honorable to their country; some, with pardonable sophistry, represented the advantage of the day as on their own side. One writer discovered a more curious but less disputable ground of satisfaction in the reflection that Nelson, as may be inferred from his name, was of Danish descent, and his actions, therefore, the Dane argued, were attributable to Danish valor.

The negotiation was continued during the five following days, and in that interval the prizes were disposed of in a manner which was little approved by Nelson. Six line-of-battle ships and eight praams had been taken. Of these, the *Holstein*, sixty-four, was the only one which was sent home.

The *Zealand* was a finer ship, but the *Zealand* and all the others were burned, and their brass battering cannon sunk with the hulls in such shoal water that when the fleet returned from Revel they found the Danes with craft over the wrecks employed in getting the guns up again. Nelson, though he forbore from any public expression of displeasure at seeing the proofs and trophies of his victory destroyed, did not forget to represent to the Admiralty the case of those who were thus deprived of their prize-money.

"Whether," said he to Earl St. Vincent, "Sir Hyde Parker may mention the subject to you, I know not, for he is rich and does not want it; nor is it, you will believe me, any desire to get a few hundred pounds that actuates me to address this letter to you, but justice to the brave officers and men who fought on that day. It is true our opponents were in hulks and floats, only adapted for the position they were in; but that made our battle so much the harder, and victory so much the more difficult to obtain. Believe me, I have weighed all the circumstances, and in my conscience I think that the King should send a gracious message to the House of Commons for a gift to this fleet; for what must be the natural feelings of

the officers and men belonging to it, to see their rich commander-in-chief burn all the fruits of their victory, which, if fitted up and sent to England (as many of them might have been by dismantling part of our fleet), would have sold for a good round sum?"

On the 9th Nelson landed again, to conclude the terms of the armistice. During its continuance the armed ships and vessels of Denmark were to remain in their then actual situation as to armament, equipment, and hostile position; and the treaty of armed neutrality, as far as related to the coöperation of Denmark, was suspended. The prisoners were to be sent on shore; an acknowledgment being given for them, and for the wounded also, that they might be carried to Great Britain's credit in the account of war, in case hostilities should be renewed. The British fleet was allowed to provide itself with all things requisite for the health and comfort of its men. A difficulty arose respecting the duration of the armistice. The Danish commissioners fairly stated their fears of Russia; and Nelson, with that frankness which sound policy and the sense of power seem often to require as well as justify in diplomacy, told them his reason for demanding a long term was, that he might have time to act against the Russian fleet, and then return to Copenhagen. Neither party would yield upon this point; and one of the Danes hinted at the renewal of hostilities. "Renew hostilities!" cried Nelson to one of his friends, for he understood French enough to comprehend what was said, though not to answer it in the same language. "Tell him we are ready at a moment! ready to bombard this very night!"

The conference, however, proceeded amicably on both sides; and as the commissioners could not agree upon this head, they broke up, leaving Nelson to settle it with the prince. A levée was held forthwith in one of the staterooms; a scene well suited for such a consultation, for all these rooms had been

stripped of their furniture, in fear of a bombardment. To a bombardment also Nelson was looking at this time. Fatigue and anxiety, and vexation at the dilatory measures of the commander-in-chief, combined to make him irritable; and as he was on the way to the prince's dining-room he whispered to the officer on whose arm he was leaning, "Though I have only one eye, I can see that all this will burn well." After dinner he was closeted with the prince, and they agreed that the armistice should continue fourteen weeks, and that at its termination fourteen days' notice should be given before the recommencement of hostilities.

For the battle of Copenhagen[1] Nelson was raised to the rank of viscount, an inadequate mark of reward for services so splendid and of such paramount importance to the dearest interests of England. There was, however, some prudence in dealing out honors to him step by step; had he lived long enough he would have fought his way up to a dukedom.

[1] Southey's animated description of this battle no doubt inspired Campbell's noble lines,

> "Of Nelson and the North
> Sing the glorious day's renown."

CHAPTER VIII.

NELSON AGAIN IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

WHEN Nelson informed Earl St. Vincent that the armistice had been concluded, he told him also without reserve his own discontent at the dilatoriness and indecision which he witnessed and could not remedy. "No man," said he, "but those who are on the spot can tell what I have gone through and do suffer. I make no scruple in saying that I would have been at Revel fourteen days ago; that without this armistice the fleet would never have gone but by order of the Admiralty, and with it I dare say we shall not go this week. I wanted Sir Hyde to let me at least go and cruise off Carlscrona, to prevent the Revel ships from getting in. I said I would not go to Revel to take any of those laurels which I was sure he would reap there. Think for me, my dear lord, and if I have deserved well let me return; if ill, for Heaven's sake supersede me, for I cannot exist in this state."

Fatigue, incessant anxiety, and a climate little suited to one of a tender constitution, which had now for many years been accustomed to more genial latitudes, made him at this time seriously determine upon returning home. "If the northern business were not settled," he said, "they must send more admirals, for the keen air of the north had cut him to the heart." He felt the want of activity and decision in the commander-in-chief more keenly, and this affected his spirits, and consequently his health, more than the inclemency of the Baltic.

Soon after the armistice was signed Sir Hyde proceeded to the eastward with such ships as were fit for service, leaving

Nelson to follow with the rest as soon as those which had received slight damages should be repaired and the rest sent to England. In passing between the isles of Amak and Saltholm most of the ships touched the ground, and some of them stuck fast for awhile; no serious injury, however, was sustained. It was intended to act against the Russians first before the breaking up of the frost should enable them to leave Revel; but learning on the way that the Swedes had put to sea to effect a junction with them, Sir Hyde altered his course in hopes of intercepting this part of the enemy's force.

Nelson had at this time provided for the more pressing emergencies of the service, and prepared on the 18th to follow the fleet. The *St. George* drew too much water to pass the channel between the isles without being lightened; the guns were therefore taken out and put on board an American vessel. A contrary wind, however, prevented Nelson from moving, and on that same evening, while he was thus delayed, information reached him of the relative situation of the Swedish and British fleets, and the probability of an action. The fleet was nearly ten leagues distant, and both wind and current contrary, but it was not possible that Nelson could wait for a favorable season under such an expectation. He ordered his boat immediately, and stepped into it. Night was setting in — one of the cold spring nights of the north, — and it was discovered, soon after they had left the ship, that in their haste they had forgotten to provide him with a boat-cloak. He, however forbade them to return for one; and when one of his companions offered his own greatcoat, and urged him to make use of it, he replied: "I thank you very much; but, to tell you the truth, my anxiety keeps me sufficiently warm at present."

"Do you think," said he presently, "that our fleet has quitted Bornholm? If it has, we must follow it to Carlscrona." About midnight he reached it, and once more got on board the *Elephant.* On the following morning the Swedes were dis-

covered; as soon, however, as they perceived the English approaching they retired, and took shelter in Carlscrona, behind the batteries on the island at the entrance of that port. Sir Hyde sent in a flag of truce, stating that Denmark had concluded an armistice, and requiring an explicit declaration from the Court of Sweden, whether it would adhere to or abandon the hostile measures which it had taken against the rights and interests of Great Britain. The commander, Vice-admiral Cronstadt, replied that "he could not answer a question which did not come within the particular circle of his duty, but that the king was then at Maloe, and would soon be at Carlscrona."

Gustavus shortly afterwards arrived, and an answer was then returned to this effect: "That his Swedish Majesty would not for a moment fail to fulfil, with fidelity and sincerity, the engagement he had entered into with his allies, but he would not refuse to listen to equitable proposals made by deputies furnished with proper authority by the King of Great Britain to the united northern Powers."

Satisfied with this answer, and with the known disposition of the Swedish Court, Sir Hyde sailed for the Gulf of Finland, but he had not proceeded far before a dispatch boat from the Russian ambassador at Copenhagen arrived, bringing intelligence of the death of the Emperor Paul, and that his successor, Alexander, had accepted the offer made by England to his father — of terminating the dispute by a convention. The British admiral was therefore required to desist from all further hostilities.

It was Nelson's maxim, that, to negotiate with effect, force should be at hand, and in a situation to act. The fleet, having been reinforced from England, amounted to eighteen sail of the line, and the wind was fair for Revel. There he would have sailed immediately, to place himself between that division of the Russian fleet and the squadron at Cronstadt, in case this offer should prove insincere. Sir Hyde, on the other hand,

believed that the death of Paul had effected all that was necessary. The manner of that death, indeed, rendered it apparent that a change of policy would take place in the Cabinet of Petersburg; but Nelson never trusted anything to the uncertain events of time which could possibly be secured by promptitude or resolution. It was not, therefore, without severe mortification that he saw the commander-in-chief return to the coast of Zealand, and anchor in Kioge Bay, there to wait patiently for what might happen.

There the fleet remained till dispatches arrived from home, on the 5th of May, recalling Sir Hyde and appointing Nelson commander-in-chief.

Not a moment was now lost. His first signal as commander-in-chief was to hoist in all launches and prepare to weigh, and on the 7th sailed from Kioge. Part of his fleet was left at Bornholm to watch the Swedes, from whom he required and obtained an assurance that the British trade in the Cattegat and in the Baltic should not be molested; and saying how unpleasant it would be to him if anything should happen which might for a moment disturb the returning harmony between Sweden and Great Britain, he apprised them that he was not directed to abstain from hostilities should he meet with the Swedish fleet at sea.

Meantime, he himself, with ten sail of the line, two frigates, a brig, and a schooner, made for the Gulf of Finland. Paul, in one of the freaks of his tyranny, had seized upon all the British effects in Russia, and even considered British subjects as his prisoners. "I will have all the English shipping and property restored," said Nelson, "but I will do nothing violently; neither commit the affairs of my country, nor suffer Russia to mix the affairs of Denmark or Sweden with the detention of our ships."

The wind was fair, and carried him in four days to Revel roads. But the bay had been clear of firm ice on the 29th of April, while the English were lying idly at Kioge. The

Russians had cut through the ice in the mole, six feet thick, and their whole squadron had sailed for Cronstadt on the 3d. Before that time it had lain at the mercy of the English. "Nothing," Nelson said, "if it had been right to make the attack, could have saved one ship of them in two hours after our entering the bay."

It so happened that there was no cause to regret the opportunity which had been lost, and Nelson immediately put the intentions of Russia to the proof. He sent on shore to say that he came with friendly views, and was ready to return a salute. On their part the salute was delayed till a message was sent to them to inquire for what reason; and the officer whose neglect had occasioned the delay was put under arrest. Nelson wrote to the emperor, proposing to wait on him personally, and congratulate him on his accession, and urged the immediate release of British subjects and restoration of British property.

The answer arrived on the 16th; Nelson meantime had exchanged visits with the governor, and the most friendly intercourse had subsisted between the ships and the shore. Alexander's ministers in their reply expressed their surprise at the arrival of a British fleet in a Russian port, and their wish that it should return; they professed, on the part of Russia, the most friendly disposition towards Great Britain, but declined the personal visit of Lord Nelson, unless he came in a single ship. There was a suspicion implied in this which stung Nelson, and he said the Russian ministers would never have written thus if their fleet had been at Revel.

He wrote an immediate reply expressing what he felt; he told the Court of Petersburg that "the word of a British admiral, when given in explanation of any part of his conduct, was as sacred as that of any sovereign in Europe." And he repeated, that "under other circumstances it would have been his anxious wish to have paid his personal respects to the

emperor, and signed with his own hand the act of amity between the two countries." Having dispatched this, he stood out to sea immediately, leaving a brig to bring off the provisions which had been contracted for, and to settle the accounts. "I hope all is right," said he, writing to our ambassador at Berlin; "but seamen are but bad negotiators, for we put to issue in five minutes what diplomatic forms would be five months doing."

On his way down the Baltic, however, he met the Russian admiral, Tchitchagof, whom the emperor, in reply to Sir Hyde's overtures, had sent to communicate personally with the British commander-in-chief. The reply was such as had been wished and expected, and these negotiators, going, seaman-like, straight to their object, satisfied each other of the friendly intentions of their respective governments. Nelson then anchored off Rostock, and there he received an answer to his last dispatch from Revel, in which the Russian Court expressed their regret that there should have been any misconception between them, informed him that the British vessels which Paul had detained were ordered to be liberated, and invited him to Petersburg in whatever mode might be most agreeable to himself. Other honors awaited him: the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, the queen's brother, came to visit him on board his ship; and towns of the inland parts of Mecklenburg sent deputations, with their public books of record, that they might have the name of Nelson in them written by his own hand.

From Rostock the fleet returned to Kioge Bay. Nelson saw that the temper of the Danes towards England was such as naturally arose from the chastisement which they had so recently received. "In this nation," said he, "we shall not be forgiven for having the upper hand of them; I only thank God we have, or they would try to humble us to the dust."

Nelson was not deceived in his judgment of the Danish Cabinet, but the battle of Copenhagen had crippled its power.

The death of the Czar Paul had broken the confederacy, and that Cabinet, therefore, was compelled to defer till a more convenient season the indulgence of its enmity towards Great Britain. Soon afterwards, Admiral Sir Charles Maurice Pole arrived to take the command. The business, military and political, had by that time been so far completed that the presence of the British fleet soon became no longer necessary. Sir Charles, however, made the short time of his command memorable by passing the Great Belt for the first time with line-of-battle ships, — working through the channel against adverse winds.

When Nelson left the fleet, this speedy termination of the expedition, though confidently expected, was not certain; and he, in his unwillingness to weaken the British force, thought at one time of traversing Jutland in his boat by the canal to Tonningen, on the Eyder, and finding his way home from thence. This intention was not executed, but he returned in a brig, declining to accept a frigate, which few admirals would have done; especially if, like him, they suffered from sea-sickness in a small vessel. On his arrival at Yarmouth, the first thing he did was to visit the hospital and see the men who had been wounded in the late battle, that victory which had added new glory to the name of Nelson, and which was of more importance even than the battle of the Nile to the honor, the strength, and security of England.

He had not been many weeks on shore before he was called upon to undertake a service for which no Nelson was required. Bonaparte, who was now first consul and in reality sole ruler of France, was making preparations upon a great scale for invading England, but his schemes in the Baltic had been baffled; fleets could not be created as they were wanted; and his armies, therefore, were to come over in gun-boats and such small craft as could be rapidly built or collected for the occasion. From the former governments of France such threats

have only been matter of insult or policy; in Bonaparte they were sincere, for this adventurer, intoxicated with success, already began to imagine that all things were to be submitted to his fortune. We had not at that time proved the superiority of our soldiers over the French, and the unreflecting multitude were not to be persuaded that an invasion could only be effected by numerous and powerful fleets. A general alarm was excited, and in condescension to this unworthy feeling Nelson was appointed to a command extending from Orfordness to Beachy Head, on both shores; a sort of service, he said, for which he felt no other ability than what might be found in his zeal.

To this service, however, such as it was, he applied himself with his wonted alacrity; and having hoisted his flag in the *Medusa* frigate, he went to reconnoitre Boulogne, the point from which it was supposed the great attempt would be made, and which the French, in fear of an attack themselves, were fortifying with all care. He approached near enough to sink two of their floating batteries and destroy a few gun-boats which were without the pier; what damage was done within could not be ascertained. "Boulogne," he said, "was certainly not a very pleasant place that morning; but," he added, "it is not my wish to injure the poor inhabitants, and the town is spared as much as the nature of the service will admit." Enough was done to show the enemy that they could not with impunity come outside their own ports. Nelson was satisfied by what he saw that they meant to make an attempt from this place, but that it was impracticable, for the least wind at W.N.W. and they were lost. The ports of Flushing and Flanders were better points; there we could not tell by our eyes what means of transport were provided. From thence, therefore, if it came forth at all, the expedition would come. "And what a forlorn undertaking!" said he; "consider cross-tides, etc. As for rowing, that is impossible. It is perfectly

right to be prepared for a mad government, but with the active force which has been given me I may pronounce it almost impracticable."

That force had been got together with an alacrity which has seldom been equaled. On the 28th of July we were, in Nelson's own words, literally at the foundation of our fabric of defense; and twelve days afterwards we were so prepared on the enemy's coast that he did not believe they could get three miles from their ports. The *Medusa*, returning to our own shores, anchored in the rolling ground off Harwich; and when Nelson wished to get to the Nore in her, the wind rendered it impossible to proceed there by the usual channel. In haste to be at the Nore, remembering that he had been a tolerable pilot for the mouth of the Thames in his younger days, and thinking it necessary that he should know all that could be known of the navigation, he requested the maritime surveyor of the coast, Mr. Spence, to get him into the Swin by any channel, for neither the pilots whom he had on board, nor the Harwich ones, would take charge of the ship. No vessel drawing more than fourteen feet had ever before ventured over the Naze. Mr. Spence, however, who had surveyed the channel, carried her safely through. The channel has since been called Nelson's, though he himself wished it to be named after the *Medusa;* his name needed no new memorial.

Nelson's eye was upon Flushing. "To take possession of that place," he said, "would be a week's expedition for four or five thousand troops." This, however, required a consultation with the Admiralty; and that something might be done meantime, he resolved upon attacking the flotilla in the mouth of Boulogne harbor. This resolution was made in deference to the opinion of others, and to the public feeling which was so preposterously excited. He himself scrupled not to assert that the French army would never embark at Boulogne for the invasion of England; and he owned that this boat warfare was

not congenial to his feelings. Into Helvoet or Flushing he should be happy to lead, if Government turned their thoughts that way. "While I serve," said he, "I will do it actively, and to the very best of my abilities. I require nursing like a child," he added; "my mind carries me beyond by strength, and will do me up. But such is my nature."

The attack was made by the boats of the squadron in five divisions, under Captains Somerville, Parker, Cotgrave, Jones, and Conn. The previous essay had taught the French the weak parts of their position, and they omitted no means of strengthening it, and of guarding against the expected attempt. The boats put off about half an hour before midnight; but owing to the darkness and tide and half-tide, which must always make night attacks so uncertain on the coasts of the Channel, the divisions separated. One could not arrive at all; another not till near daybreak. The others made their attack gallantly; but the enemy were fully prepared: every vessel was defended by long poles, headed with iron spikes projecting from their sides; strong nettings were braced up to their lower yards; they were moored by the bottom to the shore; they were strongly manned with soldiers and protected by land batteries, and the shore was lined with troops. Many were taken possession of; and though they could not have been brought out, they would have been burned, had not the French resorted to a mode of offense which they have often used, but which no other people have ever been wicked enough to employ. The moment the firing ceased on board one of their own vessels, they fired upon it from the shore, perfectly regardless of their own men.

The commander of one of the French divisions acted like a generous enemy. He hailed the boats as they approached, and cried out in English, "Let me advise you, my brave Englishmen, to keep your distance — you can do nothing here; and it is only uselessly shedding the blood of brave men to make the

attempt." The French official account boasted of the victory. "The combat," it said, "took place in sight of both countries; it was the first of the kind, and the historian would have cause to make the remark." They guessed our loss at four or five hundred: it amounted to one hundred and seventy-two. In his private letters to the Admiralty, Nelson affirmed that had our force arrived as he intended, it was not all the chains in France which could have prevented our men from bringing off the whole of the vessels. There had been no error committed, and never did Englishmen display more courage. Upon this point Nelson was fully satisfied; but he said he should never bring himself again to allow any attack wherein he was not personally concerned, and that his mind suffered more than if he had had a leg shot off in the affair.

He grieved particularly for Captain Parker, an excellent officer, to whom he was greatly attached, and who had an aged father looking to him for assistance. His thigh was shattered in the action, and the wound proved mortal after some weeks of suffering and manly resignation. During this interval Nelson's anxiety was very great. "Dear Parker is my child," said he, "for I found him in distress." And when he received the tidings of his death, he replied: "You will judge of my feelings: God's will be done. I beg that his hair may be cut off and given me; it shall be buried in my grave. Poor Mr. Parker! what a son has he lost! If I were to say I was content, I should lie; but I shall endeavor to submit with all the fortitude in my power. His loss has made a wound in my heart which time will hardly heal."

He now wished to be relieved from this service. The country, he said, had attached a confidence to his name which he had submitted to, and therefore had cheerfully repaired to the station; but this boat business, though it might be part of a great plan of invasion, could never be the only one, and he did not think it was a command for a vice-admiral. It was not that

he wanted a more lucrative situation, for, seriously indisposed as he was, and low-spirited from private considerations, he did not know, if the Mediterranean were vacant, that he should be equal to undertake it. Just at this time the Peace of Amiens was signed. Nelson rejoiced that the experiment was made, but was well aware that it was an experiment: he saw what he called the misery of peace, unless the utmost vigilance and prudence were exerted; and he expressed in bitter terms his proper indignation at the manner in which the mob of London welcomed the French general who brought the ratification, saying that, "they made him ashamed of his country."

He had purchased a house and estate at Merton, in Surrey, meaning to pass his days there in the society of Sir William and Lady Hamilton. This place he had never seen till he was now welcomed there by the friends to whom he had so passionately devoted himself, and who were not less sincerely attached to him. The place, and everything which Lady Hamilton had done to it, delighted him; and he declared that the longest liver should possess it all. His pensions for his victories and for the loss of his eye and arm amounted, with his half-pay, to about £3400 a year. From this he gave £1800 to Lady Nelson, £200 to a brother's widow, and £150 for the education of his children, and he paid £500 interest for borrowed money; so that Nelson was comparatively a poor man, and even if he had been free from the pecuniary embarrassment which he suffered, his income would not have been sufficient for the rank which he held, and the claims which would necessarily be made upon his bounty.

The depression of spirits under which he had long labored arose partly from this state of his circumstances and partly from domestic disquietudes, which were increased a few months afterwards by the death of his father, at the age of seventy-nine.

Soon after the conclusion of peace, tidings arrived of our final and decisive successes in Egypt; in consequence of which

the Common Council voted their thanks to the army and navy for bringing the campaign to so glorious a conclusion. When Nelson, after the action of Cape St. Vincent, had been entertained at a City feast, he had observed to the Lord Mayor, that "if the City continued its generosity, the navy would ruin them in gifts." To which the Lord Mayor replied, putting his hand upon the admiral's shoulder, "Do you find victories and we will find rewards."

The happiness which Nelson enjoyed in the society of his chosen friends was of no long continuance. Sir William Hamilton, who was far advanced in years, died early in 1803. He expired in his wife's arms, holding Nelson by the hand, and almost in his last words left her to his protection; requesting him that he would see justice done her by the government, as he knew what she had done for her country. He left him her portrait in enamel, calling him his dearest friend — the most virtuous, loyal, and truly brave character he had ever known. The codicil containing this bequest concluded with these words: "God bless him, and shame fall on those who do not say Amen." Sir William's pension, of £120 a year, ceased with his death. Nelson applied to Mr. Addington, in Lady Hamilton's behalf, stating the important service which she had rendered to the fleet at Syracuse; and Mr. Addington, it is said, acknowledged that she had a just claim upon the gratitude of the country. This barren acknowledgment was all that was obtained; but a sum equal to the pension which her husband had enjoyed was settled on her by Nelson, and paid in monthly payments during his life. A few weeks after this event the war was renewed, and the day after his Majesty's message to Parliament Nelson departed to take the command of the Mediterranean fleet.[1]

[1] George Ticknor, the eminent historian, in his "Life and Letters," vol. i. p. 63, cites a significant anecdote of Nelson. It was told to him by Benjamin West, the famous painter. It seems that at a banquet given to the great admiral, West sat next to him. In the course of the dinner Nelson

He took his station immediately off Toulon, and there, with incessant vigilance, waited for the coming out of the enemy. When he had been fourteen months thus employed he received a vote of thanks from the city of London for his skill and perseverance in blockading that port, so as to prevent the French from putting to sea. Nelson had not forgotten the wrong which the city had done to the Baltic fleet by their omission, and he did not lose the opportunity which this vote afforded of recurring to that point. "I do assure your lordship," said he in his answer to the Lord Mayor, "that there is not that man breathing who sets a higher value upon the thanks of his fellow-citizens of London than myself; but I should feel as much ashamed to receive them for a particular service, marked in the resolution, if I felt that I did not come within that line of service, as I should feel hurt at having a great victory passed over without notice. I beg to inform your lordship that the port of Toulon has never been blockaded by me — quite the reverse. Every opportunity has been offered the enemy to put to sea, for it is there we hope to realize the hopes and expectations of our country."

Nelson then remarked that the junior flag-officers of his fleet had been omitted in this vote of thanks, and his surprise at the omission was expressed with more asperity, perhaps, than an

expressed to Sir William Hamilton his regret that in his youth he had not acquired some taste for art. "But," said he, turning to West, "there is one picture whose power I do feel. I never pass a paint-shop where your 'Death of Wolfe' is in the window, without being stopped by it." West, of course acknowledged the compliment, and Nelson went on to ask why he had painted no more like it. "Because, my lord, there are no more subjects." "I did n't think of that," said the admiral, and asked him to take a glass of champagne. "But, my lord, I fear your intrepidity will yet furnish me such another scene; and, if it should, I shall certainly avail myself of it." "Will you," said Nelson, touching his glass violently against West's, — "will you, Mr. West? Then I hope I shall die in the next battle." He sailed a few days after, and the result was the magnificent painting by the world's great painter of historic events.

offense so entirely and manifestly unintentional deserved; but it arose from that generous regard for the feelings as well as interests of all who were under his command, which made him as much beloved in the fleets of Britain as he was dreaded in those of the enemy.

Never was any commander more beloved. He governed men by their reason and their affections: they knew that he was incapable of caprice or tyranny, and they obeyed him with alacrity and joy, because he possessed their confidence as well as their love. "Our Nel," they used to say, "is as brave as a lion and as gentle as a lamb." Severe discipline he detested, though he had been bred in a severe school; he never inflicted corporal punishment if it were possible to avoid it, and when compelled to enforce it he who was familiar with wounds and death suffered like a woman. In his whole life Nelson was never known to act unkindly towards an officer. If he was asked to prosecute one for ill-behavior, he used to answer that "there was no occasion for him to ruin a poor wretch who was sufficiently his own enemy to ruin himself." But in Nelson there was more than the easiness and humanity of a happy nature; he did not merely abstain from injury; his was an active and watchful benevolence, ever desirous not only to render justice, but to do good. During the peace he had spoken in Parliament upon the abuses respecting prize-money, and had submitted plans to Government for more easily manning the navy, and preventing desertion from it, by bettering the condition of the seamen. He proposed that their certificates should be registered, and that every man who had served with a good character five years in war should receive a bounty of two guineas annually after that time, and of four guineas after eight years. "This," he said, "might at first sight appear an enormous sum for the State to pay, but the average life of a seaman is, from hard service, finished at forty-five: he cannot therefore enjoy the annuity many years,

and the interest of the money saved by their not deserting would go far to pay the whole expense."

To his midshipmen he ever showed the most winning kindness, encouraging the diffident, tempering the hasty, counselling and befriending both. "Recollect," he used to say, "that you must be a seaman to be an officer, and also that you cannot be a good officer without being a gentleman." A lieutenant wrote to him to say that he was dissatisfied with his captain. Nelson's answer was in that spirit of perfect wisdom and perfect goodness which regulated his whole conduct toward those who were under his command. "I have just received your letter, and I am truly sorry that any difference should arise between your captain, who has the reputation of being one of the bright officers of the service, and yourself, a very young man and a very young officer, who must naturally have much to learn; therefore the chance is that you are perfectly wrong in the disagreement. However, as your present situation must be very disagreeable, I will certainly take an early opportunity of removing you, provided your conduct to your present captain be such that another may not refuse to receive you."[1]

[1] Some interesting details of Nelson's great industry, even in apparently trifling matters, are given by his chaplain, the Rev. A. J. Scott. It appears that the great admiral had Dr. Samuel Johnson's capacity of tearing the heart out of a book. A swift glance at a page or two enabled him to gather the writer's object. Day after day he and his chaplain and a secretary sat poring over the papers which loaded the table. The cabin was furnished with two black leather arm-chairs, each with capacious pockets, and Scott, exhausted by the labor of translating, would sometimes throw into one of these pockets some score or so of unopened private letters found in captured ships; but such was Nelson's restless solicitude that he was uneasy if even a single document was unexamined. These leathern chairs, with the help of an ottoman, when lashed together, formed a couch on which he would often snatch a few winks of sleep, which supplied him with as much refreshment as an ordinary mortal might obtain from a long night's rest.

The gentleness and benignity of his disposition never made him forget what was due to discipline. Being on one occasion applied to to save a young officer from a court-martial which he had provoked by his misconduct, his reply was, that "he would do everything in his power to oblige so gallant and good an officer as Sir John Warren," in whose name the intercession had been made; "but what," he added, "would he do if he were here? Exactly what I have done, and am still willing to do. The young man must write such a letter of contrition as would be an acknowledgment of his great fault, and with a sincere promise, if his captain will intercede to prevent the impending court-martial, never to so misbehave again. On his captain inclosing me such a letter, with a request to cancel the order for the trial, I might be induced to do it; but the letters and reprimand will be given in the public order-book of the fleet and read to all the officers. The young man has pushed himself forward to notice, and he must take the consequence. It was upon the quarter-deck, in the face of the ship's company, that he treated his captain with contempt; and I am in duty bound to support the authority and consequence of every officer under my command. A poor ignorant seaman is forever punished for contempt to *his* superiors."

A dispute occurred in the fleet while it was off Toulon, which called forth Nelson's zeal for the rights and interests of the navy. Some young artillery officers, serving on board the bomb-vessels, refused to let their men perform any other duty but what related to the mortars. They wished to have it established that their corps was not subject to the captain's authority. The same pretensions were made in the Channel Fleet about the same time, and the artillery rested their claims to separate and independent authority on board upon a clause in the act which they interpreted in their favor. Nelson took up the subject with all the earnestness which its importance deserved. "There is no real happiness in this world," said he,

writing to Earl St. Vincent as First Lord. "With all content and smiles around me up start these artillery boys (I understand they are not beyond that age) and set us at defiance, speaking in the most disrespectful manner of the navy and its commanders. I know you, my dear lord, so well, that with your quickness the matter would have been settled, and perhaps some of them been broke. I am perhaps more patient, but, I do assure you, not less resolved, if my plan of conciliation is not attended to. You and I are on the eve of quitting the theatre of our exploits; but we hold it due to our successors never, whilst we have a tongue to speak or a hand to write, to allow the navy to be in the smallest degree injured in its discipline by our conduct."

To Trowbridge he wrote in the same spirit: "It is the old history, trying to do away the act of parliament; but I trust they will never succeed, for when they do, farewell to our naval superiority. We should be prettily commanded! Let them once gain the step of being independent of the navy on board a ship, and they will soon have the other and command us. But, thank God, my dear Trowbridge, the King himself cannot do away the act of parliament. Although my career is nearly run, yet it would embitter my future days and expiring moments to hear of our navy being sacrificed to the army." As the surest way of preventing such disputes, he suggested that the navy should have its own corps of artillery; and a corps of marine artillery was accordingly established.

Instead of lessening the power of the commander, Nelson would have wished to see it increased. It was absolutely necessary, he thought, that merit should be rewarded at the moment, and that the officers of the fleet should look up to the commander-in-chief for their reward. He himself was never more happy than when he could promote those who were deserving of promotion. Many were the services which he thus rendered unsolicited, and frequently the officer in whose

behalf he had interested himself with the Admiralty did not know to whose friendly interference he was indebted for his good fortune. He used to say, "I wish it to appear as a God-send." The love which he bore the navy made him promote the interests and honor the memory of all who had added to its glories. "The near relations of brother officers," he said, "he considered as legacies to the service." Upon mention being made to him of a son of Rodney by the Duke of Clarence, his reply was: "I agree with your Royal Highness most entirely, that the son of a Rodney ought to be the *protégé* of every person in the kingdom, and particularly of the sea officers. Had I known that there had been this claimant, some of my own lieutenants must have given way to such a name, and he should have been placed in the *Victory;* she is full, and I have twenty on my list, but whatever numbers I have, the name of Rodney must cut many of them out."

Such was the proper sense which Nelson felt of what was due to splendid services and illustrious names. His feelings toward the brave men who had served with him are shown by a note in his diary, which was probably not intended for any other eye than his own: — "Nov. 7. I had the comfort of making an old '*Agamemnon*,' George Jones, a gunner into the *Chameleon* brig."

When Nelson took the command it was expected that the Mediterranean would be an active scene. Nelson well understood the character of the perfidious Corsican who was now sole tyrant of France, and knowing that he was as ready to attack his friends as his enemies, knew therefore that nothing could be more uncertain than the direction of the fleet from Toulon, whenever it should put to sea. "It had as many destinations," he said, "as there were countries." The momentous revolutions of the last ten years had given him ample matter for reflection as well as opportunities for observation. The film was cleared from his eyes, and now, when the French

no longer went abroad with the cry of liberty and equality, he saw that the oppression and misrule of the powers which had been opposed to them had been the main causes of their success, and that those causes would still prepare the way before them. Even in Sicily, where, if it had been possible longer to blind himself, Nelson would willingly have seen no evil, he perceived that the people wished for a change, and acknowledged that they had reason to wish for it. In Sardinia the same burden of misgovernment was felt, and the people, like the Sicilians, were impoverished by a government so utterly incompetent to perform its first and most essential duties, that it did not protect its own coasts from the Barbary pirates. He would fain have had us purchase this island (the finest in the Mediterranean) from its sovereign, who did not receive £5000 a year from it after its wretched establishment was paid.

There was reason to think that France was preparing to possess herself of this important point, which afforded our fleet facilities for watching Toulon not to be obtained elsewhere. An expedition was preparing at Corsica for the purpose, and all the Sardes who had taken part with revolutionary France were ordered to assemble there. It was certain that if the attack were made it would succeed. Nelson thought that the only means to prevent Sardinia from becoming French was to make it English, and that half a million would give the king a rich price and England a cheap purchase.

The proposed attack was postponed. Views of wider ambition were opening upon Bonaparte, who now almost undisguisedly aspired to make himself master of the continent of Europe, and Austria was preparing for another struggle, to be conducted as weakly and terminated as miserably as the former. Spain, too, was once more to be involved in war by the policy of France; that perfidious government having in

view the double object of employing the Spanish resources against England, and exhausting them in order to render Spain herself finally its prey. Nelson, who knew that England and the Peninsula ought to be in alliance, for the common interest of both, frequently expressed his hopes that Spain might resume her national rank among the nations. "We ought," he said, "by mutual consent, to be the very best friends, and both to be ever hostile to France." But he saw that Bonaparte was meditating the destruction of Spain, and that, while the wretched court of Madrid professed to remain neutral, the appearances of neutrality were scarcely preserved.

An order of the year 1771, excluding British ships of war from the Spanish ports, was revived and put in force, while French privateers from these very ports annoyed the British trade, carried their prizes in, and sold them even at Barcelona. Nelson complained of this to the captain-general of Catalonia, informing him that he claimed for every British ship or squadron the right of lying as long as it pleased in the ports of Spain while that was allowed to other powers. To the British ambassador he said, "I am ready to make large allowances for the miserable situation Spain has placed herself in, but there is a certain line beyond which I cannot submit to be treated with disrespect. We have given up French vessels taken within gunshot of the Spanish shore, and yet French vessels are permitted to attack our ships from the Spanish shore. Your Excellency may assure the Spanish government that in whatever place the Spaniards allow the French to attack us, in that place I shall order the French to be attacked."

During this state of things, to which the weakness of Spain, and not her will, consented, the enemy's fleet did not venture to put to sea. Nelson watched it with unremitting and almost unexampled perseverance. The station off Toulon he called his home. "We are in the right fighting trim," said he; "let them come as soon as they please. I never saw a fleet alto-

gether so well officered and manned: would to God the ships were half so good! The finest ones in the service would soon be destroyed by such terrible weather. I know well enough that if I were to go into Malta I should save the ships during this bad season; but if I am to watch the French I must be at sea, and if at sea, must have bad weather; and if the ships are not fit to stand bad weather they are useless."

Then only he was satisfied and at ease when he had the enemy in view. Mr. Elliot, our minister at Naples, seems at this time to have proposed to send a confidential Frenchman to him with information. "I should be very happy," he replied, "to receive authentic intelligence of the destination of the French squadron, their route, and time of sailing. Anything short of this is useless, and I assure your Excellency that I would not upon any consideration have a Frenchman in the fleet except as a prisoner. I put no confidence in them. You think yours good; the queen thinks the same; I believe they are all alike. Whatever information you can get me I shall be very thankful for; but not a Frenchman comes here. Forgive me, but my mother hated the French!"

M. Latouche Treville, who had commanded at Boulogne, commanded now at Toulon. "He was sent for on purpose," said Nelson, "as he *beat* me at Boulogne, to beat me again; but he seems very loath to try." One day, while the main body of our fleet was out of sight of land, Rear-admiral Campbell reconnoitring with the *Canopas*, *Donegal*, and *Amazon*, stood in close to the port, and M. Latouche, taking advantage of a breeze which sprung up, pushed out with four ships of the line and three heavy frigates, and chased him about four leagues. The Frenchman, delighted at having found himself in so novel a situation, published a boastful account, affirming that he had given chase to the whole British fleet, and that Nelson had fled before him. Nelson thought it due to the Admiralty to send home a copy of the *Victory's* log upon this occasion. "As

for himself," he said, "if his character was not established by that time for not being apt to run away, it was not worth his while to put the world right." "If this fleet gets fairly up with M. Latouche," said he to one of his correspondents, "his letter, with all his ingenuity, must be different from his last. We had fancied that we chased him into Toulon, for, blind as I am, I could see his water-line when he clued his topsails up, shutting in Sepet. But from the time of his meeting Captain Hawker in the *Isis* I never heard of his acting otherwise than as a poltroon and a liar. Contempt is the best mode of treating such a miscreant." In spite, however, of contempt, the impudence of this Frenchman half angered him. He said to his brother, "You will have seen Latouche's letter; how he chased me, and how I ran. I keep it, and if I take him, he shall eat it!"

Nelson, who used to say that in sea affairs nothing is impossible and nothing improbable, feared the more that this Frenchman might get out and elude his vigilance because he was so especially desirous of catching him, and administering to him his own lying letter in a sandwich. M. Latouche, however, escaped him in another way. He died, according to the French papers, in consequence of walking so often up to the signal-post upon Sepet to watch the British fleet. "I always pronounced that would be his death," said Nelson. "If he had come out and fought me, it would at least have added ten years to my life." The patience with which he had watched Toulon he spoke of truly as a perseverance at sea which had never been surpassed. From May, 1803, to August, 1805, he himself went out of his ship but three times; each of those times was upon the King's service, and neither time of absence exceeded an hour. The weather had been so unusually severe that he said the Mediterranean seemed altered. It was his rule never to contend with the gales, but either run to the southward to escape their violence, or furl all the sails and

make the ships as easy as possible. The men, though he said flesh and blood could hardly stand it, continued in excellent health, which he ascribed in great measure to a plentiful supply of lemons and onions. For himself he thought he could only last till the battle was over.

One battle more it was his hope that he might fight. "However," said he, "whatever happens I have run a glorious race." He was afraid of blindness, and this was the only evil which he could not contemplate without unhappiness. More alarming symptoms he regarded with less apprehension, describing his own "shattered carcass" as in the worst plight of any in the fleet, and he says: "I have felt the blood gushing up the left side of my head, and the moment it covers the brain I am fast asleep." The fleet was in worse trim than the men, but when he compared it with the enemy's, it was with a right English feeling. "The French fleet yesterday," said he in one of his letters, "was to appearance in high feather, and as fine as paint could make them; but when they may sail, or where they may go, I am very sorry to say is a secret I am not acquainted with. Our weather-beaten ships, I have no fear, will make their sides like a plum pudding."

Hostilities at length commenced between Great Britain and Spain. That country, whose miserable government made her subservient to France, was once more destined to lavish her resources and her blood in furtherance of the designs of a perfidious ally. The immediate occasion of the war was the seizure of four treasure-ships by the English. The act was perfectly justifiable, for those treasures were intended to furnish means for France; but the circumstances which attended it were as unhappy as they were unforeseen. Four frigates had been dispatched to intercept them. They met with an equal force. Resistance therefore became a point of honor on the part of the Spaniards, and one of their ships soon blew up with all on board. Had a stronger squadron been sent this deplor-

able catastrophe might have been spared — a catastrophe which excited not more indignation in Spain than it did grief in those who were its unwilling instruments, in the English government and in the English people. On the 5th of October this unhappy affair occurred, and Nelson was not apprised of it till the 12th of the ensuing month.

He had indeed sufficient mortification at the breaking out of the Spanish war, an event which it might reasonably have been supposed would amply enrich the officers of the Mediterranean fleet, and repay them for the severe and unremitting duty on which they had been so long employed. But of this harvest they were deprived, for Sir John Orde was sent with a small squadron and a separate command to Cadiz. Nelson's feelings were never wounded so deeply as now. "I had thought," said he, writing in the first flow and freshness of indignation: "I fancied — but nay, it must have been a dream, an idle dream — yet, I confess it, I *did* fancy that I had done my country service, and thus they use me! And under what circumstances and with what pointed aggravation! Yet if I know my own thoughts, it is not for myself, or on my own account chiefly, that I feel the sting and the disappointment. No! it is for my brave officers, for my noble-minded friends and comrades. Such a gallant set of fellows! Such a band of brothers! My heart swells at the thought of them!"

War between Spain and England was now declared, and on the 18th of January the Toulon fleet, having the Spaniards to coöperate with them, put to sea. Nelson was at anchor off the coast of Sardinia, where the Madelena Islands form one of the finest harbors in the world, when at three in the afternoon of the 19th the *Active* and *Seahorse* frigates brought this long-hoped-for intelligence. They had been close to the enemy at ten on the preceding night, but lost sight of them in about four hours. The fleet immediately unmoored and weighed, and at six in the evening ran through the straits between Biche and

Sardinia, a passage so narrow that the ships could only pass one at a time, each following the stern lights of its leader. From the position of the enemy when they were last seen it was inferred that they must be bound round the southern end of Sardinia. Signal was made the next morning to prepare for battle. Bad weather came on, baffling the one fleet in its object and the other in its pursuit. Nelson beat about the Sicilian seas for ten days without obtaining any other information of the enemy than that one of their ships had put into Ajaccio dismasted, and having seen that Sardinia, Naples, and Sicily were safe, believing Egypt to be their destination, for Egypt he ran.

The disappointment and distress which he had experienced in his former pursuits of the French through the same seas were now renewed, but Nelson, while he endured these anxious and unhappy feelings, was still consoled by the same confidence as on the former occasion, that though his judgment might be erroneous, under all circumstances he was right in having formed it. "I have consulted no man," said he to the Admiralty, "therefore the whole blame of ignorance in forming my judgment must rest with me. I would allow no man to take from me an atom of my glory had I fallen in with the French fleet, nor do I desire any man to partake any of the responsibility. All is mine, right or wrong." Then stating the grounds upon which he had proceeded, he added: "At this moment of sorrow I still feel that I have acted right." In the same spirit he said to Sir Alexander Ball: "When I call to remembrance all the circumstances, I approve, if nobody else does, of my own conduct."

Baffled thus, he bore up for Malta, and met intelligence from Naples that the French, having been dispersed in a gale, had put back to Toulon. From the same quarter he learned that a great number of saddles and muskets had been embarked; and this confirmed him in his opinion that Egypt was their destina-

tion. That they should have put back in consequence of storms which he had weathered, gave him a consoling sense of British superiority. "These gentlemen," said he, "are not accustomed to a Gulf of Lyons gale; we have buffeted them for one and twenty months, and not carried away a spar." He, however, who had so often braved these gales was now, though not mastered by them, vexatiously thwarted and impeded; and on February 27th he was compelled to anchor in Pulla Bay, in the Gulf of Cagliari. From the 21st of January the fleet had remained ready for battle, without a bulkhead up night or day. He anchored here that he might not be driven to leeward. As soon as the weather moderated he put to sea again; and after again beating about against contrary winds, another gale drove him to anchor in the Gulf of Palma on the 8th of March. This he made his rendezvous; he knew that the French troops still remained embarked, and wishing to lead them into a belief that he was stationed upon the Spanish coast, he made his appearance off Barcelona with that intent.

About the end of the month he began to fear that the plan of the expedition was abandoned, and sailing once more towards his old station off Toulon, on the 4th of April he met the *Phœbe*, with news that Villeneuve had put to sea on the last of March with eleven ships of the line, seven frigates, and two brigs. When last seen they were steering towards the coast of Africa. Nelson first covered the channel between Sardinia and Barbary, so as to satisfy himself that Villeneuve was not taking the same route for Egypt which Gantheaume had taken before him, when he attempted to carry reinforcements there. Certain of this, he bore up on the 7th for Palermo, lest the French should pass to the north of Corsica, and he dispatched cruisers in all directions. On the 11th he felt assured that they were not going down the Mediterranean, and sending off frigates to Gibraltar, to Lisbon, and to Admiral Cornwallis, who commanded

the squadron off Brest, he endeavored to get to the westward, beating against westerly winds. After five days a neutral gave intelligence that the French had been seen off Cape de Gatte on the 7th. It was soon afterwards ascertained that they had passed the Straits of Gibraltar on the day following; and Nelson, knowing that they might already be half-way to Ireland or to Jamaica, exclaimed that he was miserable. One gleam of comfort only came across him in the reflection that his vigilance had rendered it impossible for them to undertake any expedition in the Mediterranean.

Eight days after this certain intelligence had been obtained he described his state of mind thus forcibly in writing to the governor of Malta: "My good fortune, my dear Ball, seems flown away. I cannot get a fair wind, or even a side wind. Dead foul! Dead foul! But my soul is fully made up what to do when I leave the Straits, supposing there is no certain account of the enemy's destination. I believe this ill-luck will go near to kill me; but as these are times of exertion, I must not be cast down, whatever I may feel." In spite of every exertion which could be made by all the zeal and all the skill of British seamen, he did not get in sight of Gibraltar till the 30th of April, and the wind was then so adverse that it was impossible to pass the Gut. He anchored in Mazari Bay, on the Barbary shore; obtained supplies from Tetuan; and when on the 5th a breeze from the eastward sprang up at last, sailed once more, hoping to hear of the enemy from Sir John Orde, who commanded off Cadiz, or from Lisbon. "If nothing is heard of them," said he to the Admiralty, "I shall probably think the rumors which have been spread are true, that their object is the West Indies, and in that case I think it my duty to follow them; or to the Antipodes, should I believe that to be their destination." At the time when this resolution was taken the physician of the fleet had ordered him to return to England before the hot months.

Nelson had formed his judgment of their destination, and made up his mind accordingly, when Donald Campbell, at that time an admiral in the Portuguese service, the same person who had given important tidings to Earl St. Vincent of the movements of that fleet from which he won his title, a second time gave timely and momentous intelligence to the flag of his country. He went on board the *Victory*, and communicated to Nelson his certain knowledge that the combined Spanish and French fleets were bound for the West Indies. Hitherto all things had favored the enemy. While the British commander was beating up against strong southerly and westerly gales, they had wind to their wish from the N.E., and had done in nine days what he was a whole month in accomplishing. Villeneuve, finding the Spaniards at Carthagena were not in a state of equipment to join him, dared not wait, but hastened on to Cadiz. Sir John Orde necessarily retired at his approach. Admiral Gravina, with six Spanish ships of the line and two French, came out to him, and they sailed without a moment's loss of time. They had about three thousand French troops on board and fifteen hundred Spanish; six hundred were under orders expecting them at Martinique, and one thousand at Guadaloupe. General Lauriston commanded the troops. The combined fleet now consisted of eighteen sail of the line, six forty-four gun frigates, one of twenty-six guns, three corvettes, and a brig. They were joined afterwards by two new French line-of-battle ships and one forty-four. Nelson pursued them with ten sail of the line and three frigates. "Take you a Frenchman apiece," said he to his captains, "and leave me the Spaniards; when I haul down my colors I expect you to do the same, and not till then."

The enemy had five and thirty days' start, but he calculated that he should gain eight or ten days upon them by his exertions. May 15th he made Madeira, and on June 4th reached Barbadoes, whither he had sent dispatches before him, and

where he found Admiral Cochrane, with two ships, part of our squadron in those seas being at Jamaica. He found here also accounts that the combined fleets had been seen from St. Lucia on the 28th, standing to the southward, and that Tobago and Trinidad were their objects. This Nelson doubted, but he was alone in his opinion, and yielded it with these foreboding words: "If your intelligence proves false, you lose me the French fleet." Sir William Myers offered to embark here with two thousand troops; they were taken on board, and the next morning he sailed for Tobago.

Here accident confirmed the false intelligence which had, whether from intention or error, misled him. A merchant at Tobago, in the general alarm, not knowing whether this fleet was friend or foe, sent out a schooner to reconnoitre, and acquaint him by signal. The signal which he had chosen happened to be the very one which had been appointed by Colonel Shipley, of the Engineers, to signify that the enemy were at Trinidad; and as this was at the close of the day there was no opportunity of discovering the mistake. An American brig was met with about the same time, the master of which, with that propensity to deceive the English and assist the French in any manner which has been but too common among his countrymen, affirmed that he had been boarded off Granada a few days before by the French, who were standing towards the Bocas of Trinidad. This fresh intelligence removed all doubts. The ships were cleared for action before daylight, and Nelson entered the Bay of Paria on the 7th, hoping and expecting to make the mouths of the Orinoco as famous in the annals of the British navy as those of the Nile. Not an enemy was there; and it was discovered that accident and artifice had combined to lead him so far to leeward that there could have been little hope of fetching to windward of Granada for any other fleet. Nelson, however, with skill and exertions never exceeded and almost unexampled, bore for that island.

Advices met him on the way, that the combined fleets, having captured the Diamond Rock, were then at Martinique, on the 4th, and were expected to sail that night for the attack of Granada. On the 9th Nelson arrived off that island, and there learned that they had passed to leeward of Antigua the preceding day, and taken a homeward-bound convoy. Had it not been for false information, upon which Nelson had acted reluctantly and in opposition to his own judgment, he would have been off Port Royal just as they were leaving it, and the battle would have been fought on the spot where Rodney defeated De Grasse. This he remembered in his vexation; but he had saved the colonies and above two hundred ships laden for Europe, which would else have fallen into the enemy's hands, and he had the satisfaction of knowing that the mere terror of his name had effected this, and had put to flight the allied enemies, whose force nearly doubled that before which they fled. That they were flying back to Europe, he believed; and for Europe he steered in pursuit on the 13th, having disembarked the troops at Antigua, and taking with him the *Spartiate*, seventy-four, the only addition to the squadron with which he was pursuing so superior a force. Five days afterwards, the *Amazon* brought intelligence that she had spoke a schooner who had seen them, on the evening of the 15th, steering to the north, and by computation eighty-seven leagues off. Nelson's diary at this time denotes his great anxiety and his perpetual and all-observing vigilance: "June 21, midnight. Nearly calm; saw three planks, which I think came from the French fleet. Very miserable, which is very foolish." On the 17th of July he came in sight of Cape St. Vincent, and steered for Gibraltar. "June 18th," his diary says, "Cape Spartel in sight, but no French fleet, nor any information about them. How sorrowful this makes me! But I cannot help myself." The next day he anchored at Gibraltar, and on the 20th, says he, "I went on shore for the first time since June 16th, 1803; and from having my foot out of the *Victory*, two years, wanting ten days."

Here he communicated with his old friend Collingwood, who, having been detached with a squadron when the disappearance of the combined fleets and of Nelson in their pursuit was known in England, had taken his station off Cadiz. He thought that Ireland was the enemy's ultimate object; that they would now liberate the Ferrol squadron, which was blocked up by Sir Robert Calder, call for the Rochefort ships, and then appear off Ushant with three or four and thirty sail, there to be joined by the Brest fleet. With this great force he supposed they would make for Ireland, the real mark and bent of all their operations; and their flight to the West Indies, he thought, had been merely undertaken to take off Nelson's force, which was the great impediment to their undertaking.

Collingwood was gifted with great political penetration. As yet, however, all was conjecture concerning the enemy, and Nelson having victualed and watered at Tetuan, stood for Ceuta on the 24th, still without information of their course. Next day intelligence arrived that the *Curieux* brig had seen them on the 19th standing to the northward. He proceeded off Cape St. Vincent, rather cruising for intelligence than knowing whither to betake himself; and here a case occurred that, more than any other event in real history, resembles those whimsical proofs of sagacity which Voltaire, in his "Zadig," has borrowed from the Orientals. One of our frigates spoke an American, who, a little to the westward of the Azores, had fallen in with an armed vessel, appearing to be a dismasted privateer, deserted by her crew, which had been run on board by another ship, and had been set fire to, but the fire had gone out. A log-book and a few seamen's jackets were found in the cabin, and these were brought to Nelson. The log-book closed with these words: "Two large vessels in the W.N.W."; and this led him to conclude that the vessel had been an English privateer cruising off the Western Islands. But there was in this book a scrap of dirty paper filled with figures. Nelson, immediately upon see-

ing it, observed that the figures were written by a Frenchman, and after studying this for awhile, said: "I can explain the whole. The jackets are of French manufacture and prove that the privateer was in possession of the enemy. She had been chased and taken by the two ships that were seen in the W. N.W. The prize-master, going on board in a hurry, forgot to take with him his reckoning; there is none in the log-book, and the dirty paper contains her work for the number of days since the privateer last left Corvo, with an unaccounted-for run, which I take to have been the chase, in his endeavor to find out her situation by back-reckonings. By some mismanagement, I conclude, she was run on board by one of the enemy's ships, and dismasted. Not liking delay (for I am satisfied that these two ships were the advanced ones of the French squadron), and fancying we were close at their heels, they set fire to the vessel, and abandoned her in a hurry. If this explanation be correct, I infer from it that they are gone more to the northward, and more to the northward I will look for them."

This course accordingly he held, but still without success. Still persevering and still disappointed, he returned near enough to Cadiz to ascertain that they were not there, traversed the Bay of Biscay, and then, as a last hope, stood over for the northwest coast of Ireland, against adverse winds, till on the evening of the 12th of August he learned that they had not been heard of there. Frustrated thus in all his hopes, after a pursuit to which, for its extent, rapidity, and perseverance, no parallel can be produced, he judged it best to reinforce the Channel Fleet with his squadron, lest the enemy, as Collingwood apprehended, should bear down upon Brest with their whole collected force. On the 15th he joined Admiral Cornwallis off Ushant. No news had yet been obtained of the enemy, and on the same evening he received orders to proceed with the *Victory* and *Superb* to Portsmouth.

CHAPTER IX.

BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.

AT Portsmouth Nelson at length found news of the combined fleets. Sir Robert Calder, who had been sent out to intercept their return, had fallen in with them, on the 22d of July, sixty leagues west of Cape Finisterre. Their force consisted of twenty sail of the line, three fifty-gun ships, five frigates, and two brigs; his, of fifteen line-of-battle ships, two frigates, a cutter, and a lugger. After an action of four hours he had captured an eighty-four and a seventy-four, and then thought it necessary to bring-to the squadron for the purpose of securing their prizes. The hostile fleets remained in sight of each other till the 26th, when the enemy bore away. The capture of two ships from so superior a force would have been considered as no inconsiderable victory a few years earlier, but Nelson had introduced a new era in our naval history, and the nation felt respecting this action as he had felt on a somewhat similar occasion. They regretted that Nelson, with his eleven ships, had not been in Sir Robert Calder's place, and their disappointment was generally and loudly expressed.

Frustrated as his own hopes had been, Nelson had yet the high satisfaction of knowing that his judgment had never been more conspicuously approved, and that he had rendered essential service to his country by driving the enemy from those islands where they expected there could be no force capable of opposing them. The West India merchants in London, as men whose interests were more immediately benefited, appointed a deputation to express their thanks for his great and judicious exertions. It was now his intention to rest awhile from his labors, and recruit himself, after all his

fatigues and cares, in the society of those whom he loved. All his stores were brought up from the *Victory*, and he found in his house at Merton the enjoyment which he had anticipated. Many days had not elapsed before Captain Blackwood, on his way to London with dispatches, called on him at five in the morning. Nelson, who was already dressed, exclaimed, the moment he saw him: "I am sure you bring me news of the French and Spanish fleets! I think I shall yet have to beat them!"

They had refitted at Vigo, after the indecisive action with Sir Robert Calder; then proceeded to Ferrol, brought out the squadron from thence, and with it entered Cadiz in safety. "Depend upon it, Blackwood," he repeatedly said, "I shall yet give M. Villeneuve a drubbing." But when Blackwood had left him he wanted resolution to declare his wishes to Lady Hamilton and his sisters, and endeavored to drive away the thought. He had done enough, he said; "let the man trudge it who has lost his budget!" His countenance belied his lips; and as he was pacing one of the walks in the garden, which he used to call the quarter-deck, Lady Hamilton came up to him and told him she saw he was uneasy. He smiled, and said: "No, he was as happy as possible; he was surrounded by his family, his health was better since he had been on shore, and he would not give sixpence to call the King his uncle."

She replied that she did not believe him, that she knew he was longing to get at the combined fleets, that he considered them as his own property, that he would be miserable if any man but himself did the business, and that he ought to have them as the price and reward of his two years long watching and his hard chase. "Nelson," said she, "however we may lament your absence, offer your services; they will be accepted, and you will gain a quiet heart by it; you will have a glorious victory, and then you may return here and be happy." He

looked at her with tears in his eyes: "Brave Emma! Good Emma! If there were more Emmas, there would be more Nelsons." [1]

His services were as willingly accepted as they were offered, and Lord Barham, giving him the list of the navy, desired him to choose his own officers. "Choose yourself, my lord," was his reply; "the same spirit actuates the whole profession; you cannot chose wrong." Lord Barham then desired him to say what ships and how many he would wish, in addition to the fleet which he was going to command, and said they should follow him as soon as each was ready. No appointment was ever more in unison with the feelings and judgment of the whole nation. They, like Lady Hamilton, thought that the destruction of the combined fleets ought properly to be Nelson's work; that he who had been

> "Half around the sea-girt ball
> The hunter of the recreant Gaul," [2]

ought to reap the spoils of the chase, which he had watched so long and so perseveringly pursued.

Unremitting exertions were made to equip the ships which he had chosen, and especially to refit the *Victory*, which was once more to bear his flag. Before he left London he called at his upholsterer's, where the coffin which Captain Hallowell had given him was deposited, and desired that its history might be engraven upon the lid, saying, it was highly probable he might want it on his return. He seemed, indeed, to have been impressed with an expectation that he should fall in the battle.

[1] "One of the many lies with a purpose which Lady Hamilton put in circulation in order to strengthen the claims which she fancied she had on the government. Southey, ignorantly or inconsiderately, gave it currency which it could not otherwise have had, and it has thus been very commonly received as absolute fact. It is, on the contrary, absolute falsehood."—LAUGHTON'S *Nelson* (*English Men of Action*).

[2] *Songs of Trafalgar*, J. W. Croker.

In a letter to his brother, written immediately after his return, he had said: "We must not talk of Sir Robert Calder's battle. I might not have done so much with my small force. If I had fallen in with them, you might probably have been a lord before I wished, for I know they meant to make a dead set at the *Victory*."

Nelson had once regarded the prospect of death with gloomy satisfaction. The state of his feelings now was expressed in his private journal in these words: "Friday night (Sept. 13th), at half-past ten, I drove from dear, dear Merton, where I left all which I hold dear in this world, to go to serve my King and country. May the great God whom I adore enable me to fulfil the expectations of my country! And if it is His good pleasure that I should return, my thanks will never cease being offered up to the throne of His mercy. If it is His good providence to cut short my days upon earth, I bow with the greatest submission; relying that He will protect those so dear to me whom I may leave behind! His will be done. Amen! Amen! Amen!"

Early on the following morning he reached Portsmouth, and having dispatched his business on shore, endeavored to elude the populace by taking a by-way to the beach, but a crowd collected in his train, pressing forward to obtain sight of his face; many were in tears, and many knelt down before him, and blessed him as they passed. England has had many heroes, but never one who so entirely possessed the love of his fellow-countrymen as Nelson. All men knew that his heart was as humane as it was fearless; that there was not in his nature the slightest alloy of selfishness or cupidity, but that with perfect and entire devotion he served his country with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength; and therefore they loved him as truly and as fervently as he loved England. They pressed upon the parapet to gaze after him when his barge pushed off, and he was returning their cheers

by waving his hat. The sentinels, who endeavored to prevent them from trespassing upon this ground, were wedged among the crowd, and an officer, who, not very prudently upon such an occasion, ordered them to drive the people down with their bayonets, was compelled speedily to retreat; for the people would not be debarred from gazing till the last moment upon the hero — the darling hero — of England.

He arrived off Cadiz on the 29th of September — his birthday. Fearing that, if the enemy knew his force, they might be deterred from venturing to sea, he kept out of sight of land, desired Collingwood to fire no salute and hoist no colors, and wrote to Gibraltar to request that the force of the fleet might not be inserted there in the "Gazette."

His reception in the Mediterranean fleet was as gratifying as the farewell of his countrymen at Portsmouth; the officers who came on board to welcome him, forgot his rank as commander in their joy at seeing him again. On the day of his arrival Villeneuve received orders to put to sea the first opportunity. Villeneuve, however, hesitated when he heard that Nelson had resumed the command. He called a council of war, and their determination was that it would not be expedient to leave Cadiz unless they had reason to believe themselves stronger by one-third than the British force. In the public measures of this country secrecy is seldom practicable and seldom attempted; here, however, by the precautions of Nelson and the wise measures of the Admiralty, the enemy were for once kept in ignorance; for, as the ships appointed to reinforce the Mediterranean fleet were dispatched singly, each as soon as it was ready, their collected number was not stated in the newspapers, and their arrival was not known to the enemy. But the enemy knew that Admiral Louis, with six sail, had been detached for stores and water to Gibraltar. Accident also contributed to make the French admiral doubt whether Nelson himself had actually taken the command. An

American, lately arrived from England, maintained that it was impossible, for he had seen him only a few days before in London, and at that time there was no rumor of his going again to sea.

The station which Nelson had chosen was some fifty or sixty miles to the west of Cadiz, near Cape St. Mary's. At this distance he hoped to decoy the enemy out, while he guarded against the danger of being caught with a westerly wind near Cadiz, and driven within the Straits. The blockade of the port was rigorously enforced, in hopes that the combined fleet might be forced to sea by want. The Danish vessels, therefore, which were carrying provisions from the French ports in the bay, under the name of Danish property, to all the little ports from Ayamonte to Algeziras, from whence they were conveyed in coasting boats to Cadiz, were seized. Without this proper exertion of power the blockade would have been rendered nugatory by the advantage thus taken of the neutral flag. The supplies from France were thus effectually cut off. There was now every indication that the enemy would speedily venture out; officers and men were in the highest spirits at the prospect of giving them a decisive blow — such, indeed, as would put an end to all further contest upon the seas.

Theatrical amusements were performed every evening in most of the ships, and "God save the King" was the hymn with which the sports concluded. "I verily believe," said Nelson, writing on the 6th of October, "that the country will soon be put to some expense on my account, either a monument or a new pension and honors; for I have not the smallest doubt but that a very few days, almost hours, will put us in battle. The success no man can insure, but for the fighting them, if they can be got at, I pledge myself. The sooner the better; I don't like to have these things upon my mind."

At this time he was not without some cause of anxiety; he was in want of frigates, — the eyes of the fleet, as he always

called them, — to the want of which the enemy before were indebted for their escape, and Bonaparte for his arrival in Egypt. He had only twenty-three ships; others were on the way, but they might come too late; and though Nelson never doubted of victory, mere victory was not what he looked to; he wanted to annihilate the enemy's fleet. The Carthagena squadron might effect a junction with this fleet on the one side, and on the other it was to be expected that a similar attempt would be made by the French from Brest; in either case a formidable contingency to be apprehended by the blockading force. The Rochefort squadron did push out, and had nearly caught the *Agamemnon* and *L'Aimable* in their way to reinforce the British admiral. Yet Nelson at this time weakened his own fleet. He had the unpleasant task to perform of sending home Sir Robert Calder, whose conduct was to be made the subject of a court-martial in consequence of the general dissatisfaction which had been felt and expressed at his imperfect victory.

Sir Robert Calder and Sir John Orde, Nelson believed to be the only two enemies whom he had ever had in his profession; and, from that sensitive delicacy which distinguished him, this made him the more scrupulously anxious to show every possible mark of respect and kindness to Sir Robert. He wished to detain him till after the expected action, when the services which he might perform, and the triumphant joy which would be excited, would lead nothing to be apprehended from an inquiry into the previous engagement. Sir Robert, however, whose situation was very painful, did not choose to delay a trial from the result of which he confidently expected a complete justification; and Nelson, instead of sending him home in a frigate, insisted on his returning in his own ninety-gun ship, ill as such a ship could at that time be spared. Nothing could be more honorable than the feeling by which Nelson was influenced, but at such a crisis it ought not to have been indulged,

On the 9th Nelson sent Collingwood what he called in his diary "the Nelson-touch." "I send you," said he, "my plan of attack, as far as a man dare venture to guess at the very uncertain position the enemy may be found in; but it is to place you perfectly at ease respecting my intentions, and to give full scope to your judgment for carrying them into effect. We can, my dear Coll, have no little jealousies. We have only one great object in view, that of annihilating our enemies, and getting a glorious peace for our country. No man has more confidence in another than I have in you, and no man will render your services more justice than your very old friend, Nelson and Bronte."

The order of sailing was to be the order of battle — the fleet in two lines, with an advanced squadron of eight of the fastest sailing two-deckers. The second in command, having the entire direction of his line, was to break through the enemy, about the twelfth ship from their rear; he would lead through the center, and the advanced squadron was to cut off three or four ahead of the center. This plan was to be adapted to the strength of the enemy, so that they should always be one-fourth superior to those whom they cut off. Nelson said that "his admirals and captains, knowing his precise object to be that of a close and decisive action, would supply any deficiency of signals and act accordingly. In case signals cannot be seen or clearly understood, no captain can do wrong if he places his ship alongside that of an enemy." One of the last orders of this admirable man was that the name and family of every officer, seaman, and marine, who might be killed or wounded in action, should be as soon as possible returned to him, in order to be transmitted to the chairman of the patriotic fund, that the case might be taken into consideration for the benefit of the sufferer or his family.

About half-past nine in the morning of the 19th the *Mars*, being the nearest to the fleet of the ships which formed the

line of communication with the frigates inshore, repeated the signal that the enemy were coming out of port. The wind was at this time very light, with partial breezes, mostly from the S.S.W. Nelson ordered the signal to be made for a chase in the southeast quarter. About two, the repeating ships announced that the enemy were at sea. All night the British fleet continued under all sail, steering to the southeast. At daybreak they were in the entrance of the Straits, but the enemy were not in sight. About seven, one of the frigates made signal that the enemy were bearing north. Upon this the *Victory* hove to, and shortly afterwards Nelson made sail again to the northward. In the afternoon the wind blew fresh from the southwest, and the English began to fear that the foe might be forced to return to port.

A little before sunset, however, Blackwood, in the *Euryalus*, telegraphed that they appeared determined to go to the westward. "And that," said the admiral in his diary, "they shall not do, if it is in the power of Nelson and Bronte to prevent them." Nelson had signified to Blackwood that he depended upon him to keep sight of the enemy. They were observed so well that all their motions were made known to him, and as they wore twice, he inferred that they were aiming to keep the port of Cadiz open, and would retreat there as soon as they saw the British fleet; for this reason he was very careful not to approach near enough to be seen by them during the night. At daybreak the combined fleets were distinctly seen from the *Victory's* deck, formed in a close line-of-battle ahead, on the starboard tack, about twelve miles to leeward, and standing to the south. Our fleet consisted of twenty-seven sail of the line and four frigates; theirs of thirty-three and seven large frigates. Their superiority was greater in size and weight of metal than in numbers. They had four thousand troops on board, and the best riflemen that could be procured, many of them Tyrolese, were dispersed through the ships. Little did the Tyrolese and

little did the Spaniards at that day imagine what horrors the wicked tyrant whom they served was preparing for their country.

Soon after daylight Nelson came upon deck. The 21st of October was a festival in his family, because on that day his uncle, Captain Suckling, in the *Dreadnought*, with two other line-of-battle ships, had beaten off a French squadron of four sail of the line and three frigates. Nelson, with that sort of superstition from which few persons are entirely exempt, had more than once expressed his persuasion that this was to be the day of his battle also, and he was well pleased at seeing his prediction about to be verified. The wind was now from the west, — light breezes, with a long heavy swell. Signal was made to bear down upon the enemy in two lines, and the fleet set all sail. Collingwood, in the *Royal Sovereign*, led the lee line of thirteen ships; the *Victory* led the weather line of fourteen. Having seen that all was as it should be, Nelson retired to his cabin and wrote the following prayer:[1]

"May the great God whom I worship grant to my country, and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory, and may no misconduct in any one tarnish it, and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British fleet! For myself individually, I commit my life to Him that made me, and may His blessing alight on my endeavors for serving my country faithfully! To Him I resign myself,

[1] **Wrote the following prayer.** — About eleven A.M. of the 21st of October, Lieutenant Pasco had to make a report to Lord Nelson, and intended at the same time to have represented to him that he considered himself very unfortunate, on so glorious an occasion, to be doing duty in an inferior station, instead of that to which his seniority entitled him. "On entering the cabin," says Captain Pasco, "I discovered his lordship on his knees writing. He was then penning that beautiful prayer. I waited until he rose, and communicated what I had to report, but could not at such a moment disturb his mind with any grievances of mine." — NELSON'S *Dispatches*, vii. 140.

and the just cause which is entrusted to me to defend. Amen, Amen, Amen."

Having thus discharged his devotional duties, he annexed, in the same diary, the following remarkable writing:

"*October 21, 1805. — Then in sight of the combined fleets of France and Spain, distant about ten miles.*

"Whereas, the eminent services of Emma Hamilton, widow of the Right Honorable Sir William Hamilton, have been of the very greatest service to my King and my country, to my knowledge, without ever receiving any reward from either our King or country:

"First, that she obtained the King of Spain's letter, in 1796, to his brother, the King of Naples, acquainting him of his intention to declare war against England; from which letter the Ministry sent out orders to the then Sir John Jervis to strike a stroke, if opportunity offered, against either the arsenals of Spain or her fleets. That neither of these was done is not the fault of Lady Hamilton; the opportunity might have been offered.

"Secondly, the British fleet under my command could never have returned the second time to Egypt had not Lady Hamilton's influence with the Queen of Naples caused letters to be wrote to the governor of Syracuse, that he was to encourage the fleet's being supplied with everything, should they put into any port in Sicily. We put into Syracuse, and received every supply, went to Egypt, and destroyed the French fleet.

"Could I have rewarded these services, I would not now call upon my country; but as that has not been in my power, I leave Emma Lady Hamilton therefore a legacy to my King and country, that they will give her an ample provision to maintain her rank in life.

"These are the only favors I ask of my King and country at this moment when I am going to fight their battle. May

God bless my King and country, and all those I hold dear! My relations it is needless to mention; they will, of course, be amply provided for.

"NELSON AND BRONTE.

"Witness { HENRY BLACKWOOD, T. M. HARDY."

Blackwood went on board the *Victory* about six. He found him in good spirits, but very calm, not in that exhilaration which he felt upon entering into battle at Aboukir and Copenhagen; he knew that his own life would be particularly aimed at, and seems to have looked for death with almost as sure an expectation as for victory. His whole attention was fixed upon the enemy. They tacked to the northward, and formed their line on the larboard tack; thus bringing the shoals of Trafalgar and St. Pedro under the lee of the British, and keeping the port of Cadiz open for themselves. This was judiciously done; and Nelson, aware of all the advantages which he gave them, made signal to prepare to anchor.

Villeneuve was a skilful seaman, worthy of serving a better master and a better cause. His plan of defense was as well conceived and as original as the plan of attack. He formed the fleet in a double line, every alternate ship being about a cable's length to windward of her second ahead and astern. Nelson, certain of a triumphant issue to the day, asked Blackwood what he should consider as a victory. That officer answered, that, considering the handsome way in which battle was offered by the enemy, their apparent determination for a fair trial of strength, and the situation of the land, he thought it would be a glorious result if fourteen were captured. He replied: "I shall not be satisfied with less than twenty." Soon afterwards he asked him if he did not think there was a signal wanting. Captain Blackwood made answer that he thought the whole fleet seemed very clearly to understand what

they were about. These words were scarcely spoken before that signal was made which will be remembered as long as the language or even the memory of England shall endure, — Nelson's last signal: "ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY!" It was received throughout the fleet with a shout of answering acclamation, made sublime by the spirit which it breathed and the feeling which it expressed. "Now," said Lord Nelson, "I can do no more. We must trust to the great Disposer of all events and the justice of our cause. I thank God for this great opportunity of doing my duty."

He wore that day, as usual, his admiral's frock-coat, bearing on the left breast four stars of the different orders with which he was invested.[1] Ornaments which rendered him so conspicuous a mark for the enemy were beheld with ominous apprehension by his officers. It was known that there were riflemen on board the French ships, and it could not be doubted but that his life would be particularly aimed at. They communicated their fears to each other, and the surgeon, Mr. Beatty,[2] spoke to the chaplain, Dr. Scott, and to Mr. Scott, the public secretary, desiring that some person would entreat him to change his dress or cover the stars; but they knew that such a request would highly displease him. "In honor I gained them," he

[1] The stars of the different orders were the Order of the Bath, of the Sicilian Order of St. Ferdinand and Merit, of the Turkish Order of the Crescent, and of the Order of St. Joachim, conferred by the Emperor Paul as Grand Master of the Knights of Malta, which, according to the custom of the time, were embroidered on his coat. It has been claimed that Nelson put on a special coat for the battle, and that he put on all his decorations specially for the occasion. But it is clear from the testimony of eye-witnesses as stated in Nicolas's "Letters" that he wore in the battle the same coat that he always wore, to which the embroidered stars were permanently attached. This coat may be seen in Greenwich Hospital.

[2] Nelson's surgeon in the *Victory*, afterwards Sir William Beatty. He wrote an "Authentic Narrative" of Nelson's death, and kept the fatal bullet, which was afterward presented to the Queen, and is now at Windsor Castle.

had said when such a thing had been hinted to him formerly, "and in honor I will die with them." Mr. Beatty, however, would not have been deterred by any fear of exciting his displeasure from speaking to him himself upon a subject in which the weal of England, as well as the life of Nelson, was concerned; but he was ordered from the deck before he could find an opportunity. This was a point upon which Nelson's officers knew that it was hopeless to remonstrate or reason with him; but both Blackwood and his own captain, Hardy, represented to him how advantageous to the fleet it would be for him to keep out of action as long as possible, and he consented at last to let the *Leviathan* and the *Téméraire*, which were sailing abreast of the *Victory*, be ordered to pass ahead.

Yet even here the last infirmity of this noble mind was indulged, for these ships could not pass ahead if the *Victory* continued to carry all her sail; and so far was Nelson from shortening sail, that it was evident he took pleasure in pressing on, and rendering it impossible for them to obey his own orders. A long swell was setting into the Bay of Cadiz. Our ships, crowding all sail, moved majestically before it, with light winds from the southwest. The sun shone on the sails of the enemy, and their well-formed line, with their numerous three-deckers, made an appearance which any other assailants would have thought formidable, but the British sailors only admired the beauty and the splendor of the spectacle, and in full confidence of winning what they saw, remarked to each other what a fine sight yonder ships would make at Spithead!

The French admiral, from the *Bucentaure*, beheld the new manner in which his enemy was advancing, — Nelson and Collingwood each leading his line; and pointing them out to his officers, he is said to have exclaimed that such conduct could not fail to be successful. Yet Villeneuve had made his own dispositions with the utmost skill, and the fleets under his

command waited for the attack with perfect coolness. Ten minutes before twelve they opened their fire. Eight or nine of the ships immediately ahead of the *Victory*, and across her bows, fired single guns at her to ascertain whether she was yet within their range. As soon as Nelson perceived that their shot passed over him, he desired Blackwood and Captain Prowse, of the *Sirius*, to repair to their respective frigates, and on their way to tell all the captains of the line-of-battle ships that he depended on their exertions, and that, if by the prescribed mode of attack they found it impracticable to get into action immediately, they might adopt whatever they thought best, provided it led them quickly and closely alongside an enemy. As they were standing on the front poop, Blackwood took him by the hand, saying he hoped soon to return and find him in possession of twenty prizes. He replied, "God bless you, Blackwood; I shall never see you again."

Nelson's column was steered about two points more to the north than Collingwood's, in order to cut off the enemy's escape into Cadiz. The lee line, therefore, was first engaged. "See," cried Nelson, pointing to the *Royal Sovereign*, as she steered right for the center of the enemy's line, cut through it astern of the *Santa Anna*, three-decker, and engaged her at the muzzle of her guns on the starboard side; "see how that noble fellow Collingwood carries his ship into action!" Collingwood, delighted at being first in the heat of the fire, and knowing the feelings of his commander and old friend, turned to his captain and exclaimed: "Rotherham, what would Nelson give to be here!" Both these brave officers, perhaps, at this moment thought of Nelson with gratitude for a circumstance which had occurred on the preceding day. Admiral Collingwood, with some of the captains, having gone on board the *Victory* to receive instructions, Nelson inquired of him where his captain was, and was told in reply that they were not upon good terms with each other. "Terms!" said Nelson; "good terms with

each other!" Immediately he sent a boat for Captain Rotherham, led him, as soon as he arrived, to Collingwood, and saying, "Look, yonder are the enemy!" bade them shake hands like Englishmen.

The enemy continued to fire a gun at a time at the *Victory*, till they saw that a shot had passed through her main-topgallant sail; then they opened her broadsides, aiming chiefly at her rigging, in the hope of disabling her before she could close with them. Nelson as usual had hoisted several flags, lest one should be shot away. The enemy showed no colors till late in the action, when they began to feel the necessity of having them to strike. For this reason the *Santissima Trinidad*, Nelson's old acquaintance, as he used to call her, was distinguishable only by her four decks, and to the bow of this opponent he ordered the *Victory* to be steered. Meantime an incessant raking fire was kept up upon the *Victory*. The admiral's secretary was one of the first who fell; he was killed by a cannon shot while conversing with Hardy. Captain Adair, of the marines, with the help of a sailor, endeavored to remove the body from Nelson's sight, who had a great regard for Mr. Scott; but he anxiously asked, "Is that poor Scott that 's gone?" and being informed that it was indeed so, exclaimed, "Poor fellow!"

Presently a double-headed shot struck a party of marines who were drawn up on the poop, and killed eight of them, upon which Nelson immediately desired Captain Adair to disperse his men around the ship, that they might not suffer so much from being together. A few minutes afterwards a shot struck the fore-brace bits on the quarter-deck, and passed between Nelson and Hardy, a splinter from the bit tearing off Hardy's buckle and bruising his foot. Both stopped, and looked anxiously at each other; each supposed the other to be wounded. Nelson then smiled, and said: "This is too warm work, Hardy, to last long."

The *Victory* had not yet returned a single gun; fifty of her men had been by this time killed or wounded, and her main-topmast, with all her studding sails and their booms, shot away. Nelson declared that in all his battles he had seen nothing which surpassed the cool courage of his crew on this occasion. At four minutes after twelve she opened her fire from both sides of her deck. It was not possible to break the enemy's lines without running on board one of their ships; Hardy informed him of this, and asked him which he would prefer. Nelson replied: "Take your choice, Hardy; it does not signify much." The master was ordered to put the helm to port, and the *Victory* ran on board the *Redoubtable* just as her tiller-ropes were shot away. The French ship received her with a broadside, then instantly let down her lower deck ports for fear of being boarded through them, and never afterwards fired a great gun during the action. Her tops, like those of all the enemy's ships, were filled with riflemen. Nelson never placed musketry in his tops; he had a strong dislike to the practice, not merely because it endangers setting fire to the sails, but also because it is a murderous sort of warfare, by which individuals may suffer and a commander now and then picked off, but which can never decide the fate of a general engagement.

Captain Harvey, in the *Téméraire*, fell on board the *Redoubtable* on the other side; another enemy was in like manner on board the *Téméraire;* so that these four ships formed as compact a tier as if they had been moored together, their heads all lying the same way. The lieutenants of the *Victory* seeing this, depressed their guns of the middle and lower decks, and fired with a diminished charge, lest the shot should pass through and injure the *Téméraire;* and because there was danger that the *Redoubtable* might take fire from the lower deck guns, the muzzles of which touched her side when they were run out, the fireman of each gun stood ready with a bucket of water,

which, as soon as the gun was discharged, he dashed into the hole made by the shot. An incessant fire was kept up from the *Victory* from both sides, her larboard guns playing upon the *Bucentaure* and the huge *Santissima Trinidad.*

It had been part of Nelson's prayer that the British fleet might be distinguished by humanity in the victory he expected. Setting an example himself, he twice gave orders to cease firing upon the *Redoubtable*, supposing that she had struck, because her great guns were silent; for, as she carried no flag, there was no means of instantly ascertaining the fact. From this ship, which he had thus twice spared, he received his death. A ball fired from her mizzen-top, which in the then situation of the two vessels was not more than fifteen yards from that part of the deck where he was standing, struck the epaulette on his left shoulder, about a quarter after one, just in the heat of action. He fell upon his face, on the spot which was covered with his poor secretary's blood. Hardy, who was a few steps from him, turning round, saw three men raising him up. "They have done for me at last, Hardy!" said he. "I hope not!" cried Hardy. "Yes," he replied, "my back-bone is shot through!"

Yet even now, not for a moment losing his presence of mind, he observed as they were carrying him down the ladder that the tiller-ropes, which had been shot away, were not yet replaced, and ordered that new ones should be rove immediately. Then, that he might not be seen by the crew, he took out his handkerchief and covered his face and his stars. Had he but concealed these badges of honor from the enemy, England perhaps would not have had cause to receive with sorrow the news of the battle of Trafalgar. The cockpit was crowded with wounded and dying men, over whose bodies he was with some difficulty conveyed, and laid upon a pallet in the midshipmen's berth. It was soon perceived, upon examination, that the wound was mortal. This, however, was concealed from all except Captain Hardy, the chaplain, and the medical attendants.

He himself being certain, from the sensation in his back and the gush of blood he felt momently within his breast, that no human care could avail him, insisted that the surgeon should leave him, and attend to those to whom he might be useful, "for," said he, "you can do nothing for me."

All that could be done was to fan him with paper, and frequently give him lemonade to alleviate his intense thirst. He was in great pain, and expressed much anxiety for the event of the action, which now began to declare itself. As often as a ship struck, the crew of the *Victory* hurrahed, and at every hurrah a visible expression of joy gleamed in his eyes and marked the countenance of the dying hero. But he became impatient to see Captain Hardy; and as that officer, though often sent for, could not leave the deck, Nelson feared that some fatal cause prevented him, and repeatedly cried, "Will no one bring Hardy to me? He must be killed! He is surely dead!"

An hour and ten minutes elapsed from the time when Nelson received his wound before Hardy could come to him. They shook hands in silence; Hardy in vain struggling to express the feelings of that most painful and yet sublimest moment. "Well, Hardy," said Nelson, "how goes the day with us?"—"Very well," replied Hardy; "ten ships have struck, but five of the van have tacked, and show an intention to bear down upon the *Victory*. I have called two or three of our fresh ships round, and have no doubt of giving them a drubbing."—"I hope," said Nelson, "none of our ships have struck?" Hardy answered, "There was no fear of that." Then, and not till then, Nelson spoke of himself. "I am a dead man, Hardy," said he; "I am going fast; it will be all over with me soon. Come nearer to me." Hardy observed that he hoped Mr. Beatty could yet hold out some prospect of life. "Oh no!" he replied, "it is impossible; my back is shot through. Beatty will tell you so." Captain Hardy then once

more shook hands with him, and with a heart almost bursting hastened upon deck.

By this time all feeling below the breast was gone; and Nelson, having made the surgeon ascertain this, said to him: "You know I am gone. I know it. I feel something rising in my breast" — putting his hand on his left side — "which tells me so." And upon Beatty's inquiring whether his pain was very great, he replied, "So great that he wished he was dead. Yet," said he in a lower voice, "one would like to live a little longer, too!" Captain Hardy, some fifty minutes after he had left the cockpit, returned, and again taking the hand of his dying friend and commander, congratulated him on having gained a complete victory. How many of the enemy were taken he did not know, as it was impossible to perceive them distinctly; but fourteen or fifteen at least. "That 's well!" cried Nelson; "but I bargained for twenty." And then in a stronger voice he said: "Anchor, Hardy, anchor." Hardy upon this hinted that Admiral Collingwood would take upon himself the direction of affairs. "Not while I live, Hardy," said the dying Nelson, ineffectually endeavoring to raise himself from the bed; "do you anchor."

His previous order for preparing to anchor had shown how clearly he foresaw the necessity of this. Presently calling Hardy back, he said to him in a low voice: "Don't throw me overboard;" and he desired that he might be buried by his parents, unless it should please the King to order otherwise. Then turning to Hardy: "Kiss me, Hardy," said he. Hardy knelt down and kissed his cheek, and Nelson said: "Now I am satisfied. Thank God, I have done my duty!" Hardy stood over him in silence for a moment or two, then knelt again and kissed his forehead. "Who is that?" said Nelson; and being informed, he replied: "God bless you, Hardy." And Hardy then left him forever.

Nelson now desired to be turned upon his right side, and said: "I wish I had not left the deck, for I shall soon be gone." Death was indeed rapidly approaching. He said to the chaplain: "Doctor, I have *not* been a *great* sinner." His articulation now became difficult, but he was distinctly heard to say: "Thank God, I have done my duty!" These words he repeatedly pronounced, and they were the last words that he uttered. He expired at thirty minutes after four, three hours and a quarter after he had received his wound.[1]

Within a quarter of an hour after Nelson was wounded about fifty of the *Victory's* men fell by the enemy's musketry. They, however, on their part were not idle; and it was not long before there were only two Frenchmen left alive in the mizzen-top of the *Redoubtable*. One of them was the man who had given the fatal wound, — he did not live to boast of what he had done. An old quartermaster had seen him fire, and easily recognized him because he wore a glazed cocked hat and a

[1] "It is eighty-four years since Nelson died; yet still his name is the one of all earthly names to work most magically in the thoughts of Englishmen. His example as a strategist is of no use now; it would be the idlest waste of time to enter, in this iron-enamored age, into a discourse upon his proceedings. It can profit us nothing, in a material sense, to know that his great theory of warfare consisted in swiftness of resolution, in dashing at the enemy, in getting alongside of him, as close as channels or yard-arms would permit, and in firing until he struck or was annihilated. There are no longer channels; there are no longer yard-arms; lines ahead may be formed, but if they are to be broken no hints of the manœuvres to be employed are likely to be found in the most voluminous and minute accounts of the Nelson victories. But if his genius as an admiral of the days of tacks and sheets can no longer be serviceable in suggestion to posterity whose hopes are lodged in steel plates of twenty inches in thickness, in engines of ten thousand horse-power, in ordnance big enough to berth the crew of a brig of Nelson's day, his example as an English sailor must, whilst there remains a British keel afloat, be as potent in all seafaring aspirations and resolutions as ever it was at any moment in his devoted and glorious life." — W. Clark Russell's *Life of Nelson*.

white frock. This quartermaster and two midshipmen, Mr. Collingwood and Mr. Pollard, were the only persons left in the *Victory's* poop; the two midshipmen kept firing at the top, and he supplied them with cartridges. One of the Frenchmen, attempting to make his escape down the rigging, was shot by Mr. Pollard, and fell on the poop. But the old quartermaster, as he cried out, "That 's he, that 's he!" and pointed at the other, who was coming forward to fire again, received a shot in his mouth and fell dead. Both the midshipmen then fired at the same time, and the fellow dropped in the top. When they took possession of the prize they went into the mizzen-top and found him dead, with one ball through his head and another through his breast.[1]

The *Redoubtable* struck within twenty minutes after the fatal shot had been fired from her. During that time she had been twice on fire, — in her forechains and in her forecastle. The French, as they had done in other battles, made use in this of fireballs and other combustibles: implements of destruction which other nations, from a sense of honor and humanity,

[1] There is some reason to think that the man who fired the fatal shot at Nelson did live to tell the story and that his name was Robert Guillemard. He claimed that he was stationed in the rigging of the *Redoubtable*, and busied himself in picking off the men on the *Victory*. He says in his Memoirs: "In the stern of the *Victory* stood an officer covered with decorations, who had only one arm. From what I had heard of Nelson, I had no doubt that it was he. As I had received no command to come down out of the rigging, and found myself forgotten in the top, I deemed it my duty to fire into the stern of the English ship, which I saw unprotected and quite near. I might have aimed at particular individuals, but I preferred to fire into the separate groups which surrounded the different officers. All at once I perceived a great commotion on board the *Victory*. The people crowded around the officer in whom I believed I had recognized Lord Nelson. He had fallen to the deck, and they carried him away at once, covered with a mantle. The excitement among the *Victory's* crew confirmed me in the belief that I had not been deceived, and it was indeed the English admiral. A moment later the *Victory* ceased firing."

have laid aside, which add to the sufferings of the wounded without determining the issue of the combat, which none but the cruel would employ, and which never can be successful against the brave. Once they succeeded in setting fire, from the *Redoubtable*, to some ropes and canvas on the *Victory's* booms. The cry ran through the ship and reached the cock-pit, but even this dreadful cry produced no confusion: the men displayed that perfect self-possession in danger by which English seamen are characterized; they extinguished the flames on board their own ship, and then hastened to extinguish them in the enemy by throwing buckets of water from the gangway. When the *Redoubtable* had struck it was not practicable to board her from the *Victory;* for though the two ships touched, the upper works of both fell in so much that there was a great space between their gangways, and she could not be boarded from the lower or middle decks because her ports were down. Some of our men went to Lieutenant Quilliam and offered to swim under her bows, and get up there, but it was thought unfit to hazard brave lives in this manner.

What our men would have done from gallantry some of the crew of the *Santissima Trinidad* did to save themselves. Unable to stand the tremendous fire of the *Victory*, whose larboard guns played against this great four-decker, and not knowing how else to escape them, nor where else to betake themselves for protection, many of them leapt overboard and swam to the *Victory*, and were actually helped up her sides by the English during the action. The Spaniards began the battle with less vivacity than their unworthy allies, but continued it with greater firmness. The *Argonauta* and *Bahama* were defended till they had each lost about 400 men; the *San Juan Nepomuceno* lost 350. Often as the superiority of British courage has been proved against France upon the seas, it was never more conspicuous than in this decisive conflict. Five of our ships were engaged muzzle to muzzle with five of the French. In all five

the Frenchmen lowered their lower-deck ports and deserted their guns, while our men continued deliberately to load and fire till they had made the victory secure.

Once, amidst his sufferings, Nelson had expressed a wish that he were dead; but immediately the spirit subdued the pains of death, and he wished to live a little longer — doubtless that he might hear the completion of the victory which he had seen so gloriously begun. That consolation, that joy, that triumph was afforded him. He lived to know that the victory was decisive, and the last guns which were fired at the flying enemy were heard a minute or two before he expired. The ships which were thus flying were four of the enemy's van, all French, under Rear-admiral Dumanoir. They had borne no part in the action; and now, when they were seeking safety in flight, they fired not only into the *Victory* and *Royal Sovereign* as they passed, but poured their broadsides into the Spanish captured ships, and they were seen to back their topsails for the purpose of firing with more precision.

The indignation of the Spaniards at this detestable cruelty from their allies, for whom they had fought so bravely and so profusely bled, may well be conceived. It was such that when, two days after the action, seven of the ships which had escaped into Cadiz came out, in hopes of retaking some of the disabled prizes, the prisoners in the *Argonauta* in a body offered their services to the British prize-master to man the guns against any of the French ships; saying, that if a Spanish ship came alongside they would quietly go below, but they requested that they might be allowed to fight the French in resentment for the murderous usage which they had suffered at their hands. Such was their earnestness, and such the implicit confidence which could be placed in Spanish honor, that the offer was accepted, and they were actually stationed at the lower-deck guns. Dumanoir and his squadron were not more fortunate than the fleet from whose destruction they fled;

they fell in with Sir Richard Strachan, who was cruising for the Rochefort squadron, and were all taken.

In the better days of France, if such a crime could then have been committed, it would have received an exemplary punishment from the French government; under Bonaparte it was sure of impunity, and perhaps might be thought deserving of reward. But if the Spanish Court had been independent, it would have become us to have delivered Dumanoir and his captains up to Spain, that they might have been brought to trial, and hanged in sight of the remains of the Spanish fleet.

The total British loss in the battle of Trafalgar amounted to 1587. Twenty of the enemy struck; unhappily, the fleet did not anchor, as Nelson, almost with his dying breath, had enjoined. A gale came on from the southwest: some of the prizes went down, some went on shore; one effected its escape into Cadiz; others were destroyed; four only were saved, and those by the greatest exertions. The wounded Spaniards were sent ashore, an assurance being given that they should not serve till regularly exchanged; and the Spaniards, with a generous feeling, which would not perhaps have been found in any other people, offered the use of their hospitals for our wounded, pledging the honor of Spain that they should be carefully attended there. When the storm, after the action, drove some of the prizes upon the coast, they declared that the English, who were thus thrown into their hands, should not be considered as prisoners of war; and the Spanish soldiers gave up their own beds to their shipwrecked enemies. The Spanish vice-admiral, Alva, died of his wounds. Villeneuve was sent to England, and permitted to return to France. The French government say that he destroyed himself on the way to Paris, dreading the consequences of a court-martial; but there is every reason to believe that the tyrant, who never acknowledged the loss of the battle of Trafalgar, added Villeneuve to the numerous victims of his murderous policy.

It is almost superfluous to add that all the honors which a grateful country could bestow were heaped upon the memory of Nelson. His brother was made an earl, with a grant of £6000 a year; £10,000 were voted to each of his sisters, and £100,000 for the purchase of an estate.[1] A public funeral was decreed, and a public monument. Statues and monuments also were voted by most of our principal cities. The leaden coffin in which he was brought home was cut in pieces, which were distributed as relics of St. Nelson — so the gunner of the *Victory* called them; and when at his interment his flag was about to be lowered into the grave, the sailors who assisted at the ceremony with one accord rent it in pieces, that each might preserve a fragment while he lived.

The death of Nelson was felt in England as something more than a public calamity; men started at the intelligence and turned pale, as if they had heard of the loss of a dear friend. An object of our admiration and affection, of our pride and of our hopes, was suddenly taken from us; and it seemed as if we had never till then known how deeply we loved and reverenced him. What the country has lost in its great naval hero — the greatest of our own and of all former times — was scarcely taken into the account of grief. So perfectly indeed had he performed his part, that the maritime war after the battle of Trafalgar was considered at an end; the fleets of the enemy were not merely defeated, but destroyed; new navies must be built, and a new race of seamen reared for them, before the possibility of their invading our shores could again be contemplated. It was not, therefore, from any selfish reflection upon

[1] "The total sums granted were £2,000 per annum to his widow for her life; £5,000 per annum to the person who might succeed to the earldom of Nelson; £99,000 for the purchase of an estate; and £15,000 to each of his sisters." — SIR N. H. NICOLAS. No attention was paid to Nelson's last bequest, in which he left Lady Hamilton and his daughter as a legacy to the nation.

the magnitude of our loss that we mourned for him; the general sorrow was of a higher character.

The people of England grieved that funeral ceremonies and public monuments and posthumous rewards were all which they could now bestow upon him whom the King, the legislature, and the nation would have alike delighted to honor; whom every tongue would have blessed; whose presence in every village through which he might have passed would have wakened the church bells, have given schoolboys a holiday, have drawn children from their sports to gaze upon him, and "old men from the chimney corner" to look upon Nelson ere they died. The victory of Trafalgar was celebrated, indeed, with the usual forms of rejoicing, but they were without joy; for such already was the glory of the British navy through Nelson's surpassing genius, that it scarcely seemed to receive any addition from the most signal victory that ever was achieved upon the seas; and the destruction of this mighty fleet, by which all the maritime schemes of France were totally frustrated, hardly appeared to add to our security or strength, for while Nelson was living to watch the combined squadrons of the enemy we felt ourselves as secure as now, when they were no longer in existence.

"Nelson's funeral was one of great magnificence. The Scots Greys led the procession, other regiments followed, their bands playing solemn music, and the military array was closed by eleven pieces of cannon and some companies of Grenadiers. Then came lines of carriages of commoners and of peers; pensioners of Greenwich Hospital; seamen and marines of the *Victory* bearing the admiral's flag, whose folds were sieve-like with the balls which had passed through it; heralds in gauntlet and spur, in helm and crest, and target and sword; naval lieutenants and admirals bearing the canopy and supporting the pall, with the coffin on a car formed of four columns resembling palm-trees, and having on its front and back a carved representation of the head and stern of the *Victory*. The expense of this public funeral amounted to £14,000."—W. Clark Russell's *Life of Nelson*.

There was reason to suppose, from the appearances upon opening the body, that in the course of nature he might have attained, like his father, to a good old age. Yet he cannot be said to have fallen prematurely whose work was done, nor ought he to be lamented who died so full of honors and at the height of human fame. The most triumphant death is that of the martyr; the most awful that of the martyred patriot; the most splendid that of the hero in the hour of victory; and if the chariot and the horses of fire had been vouchsafed for Nelson's translation, he could scarcely have departed in a brighter blaze of glory. He has left us, not indeed his mantle of inspiration, but a name and an example which are at this hour inspiring thousands of the youth of England, — a name which is our pride, and an example which will continue to be our shield and our strength. Thus it is that the spirits of the great and the wise continue to live and to act after them, verifying in this sense the language of the old mythologist:[1]

Τοί μεν δαίμονες εἰσὶ, Διὸς μεγάλου διὰ βουλὰς
Ἐσθλοὶ, ἐπιχθόνιοι, φύλακες θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων.

[1] **Old mythologist.** — A quotation from Hesiod's "Works and Days":

"Aerial spirits by great Jove designed
To be on earth the guardians of mankind;
Invisible to mortal eyes they go,
And mark our actions, good or bad, below."

Cooke's Translation (Bohn's edition).

ADDITIONAL NOTES.[1]

Nelson was a little, spare, active man, brisk-tempered and generous. His secretary, who knew him best, says he was noted for "penetration, quick judgment, clear wisdom, great and correct decision;" all of which is abundantly confirmed by this "Life." In company, he was cheerful and pleasant, without appearing to have any weight on his mind. At sea, he rose at four or five; breakfasted never later than seven, a midshipman being always of the party. "He entered into their boyish jokes, and could be merry with the youngest." The business of the fleet was dispatched before eight, so that he had the whole day before him for correspondence, etc. He walked the deck several hours for exercise. At dinner he had every officer in turn. He ate and drank sparingly, not using salt (says Dr. Beatty), as he believed it to be the "sole cause of scurvy." He retired at 10 P.M. His hatred to the French of that day, which breaks out now and then in so strong and amusing a manner, was justified by the conduct of the ferocious revolutionary banditti who swarmed everywhere in defiance of their neighbors' rights; and by the policy of the Imperial Robber, whom the Duke of Wellington (in the "Croker Papers") pronounced to be the "Jonathan Wild of Europe," and whose great object was the conquest or destruction of England. "This," said Sheridan, "is his last prayer at night, to whatever deity he may address it, whether to Jupiter or Mahomet, to the goddess of Battles or the goddess of Reason."

Lady Hamilton. — The habits of this clever and beautiful woman were so extravagant, that she was obliged to sell Merton House, which Nelson had left her, to pay her debts, after selling the Trafalgar coat and other relics to Mrs. Smith of Twickenham, the wife of Mr. Alderman Smith, her chief creditor. From Mrs. Smith the coat was bought by the Prince Consort, and presented to Greenwich Hospital.

Lady Hamilton, after going through the King's Bench, went to Calais, and died there in great distress, of dropsy, Jan. 15, 1815. She was buried in a cemetery in Rue Française, now a timber yard.

[1] Compiled from Southey's "Life of Nelson," published in "Bohn's Illustrated Library."

Horatia Nelson Thompson, afterwards Horatia Nelson, was born about the 29th–31st of January, 1801, the daughter of Nelson and Lady Hamilton, and baptized 1803. She remained with Lady Hamilton till her death, 1815; then went to live with her relations. In 1828 she married the Reverend P. Ward, afterwards Vicar of Tenterden, where she died, the mother of eight children.

Portraits of Nelson. — By Rigaud, 1781, done for Captain Locker. By L. F. Abbott, 1798, unfinished; and his finished portrait of the same date, bequeathed by Sir W. Davison; both at Greenwich Hospital. Another, by Abbott, in the National Portrait Gallery, Bethnal Green. One of Abbott's portraits is engraved for Sir H. Nicolas's "Dispatches and Letters," and has an autograph by Lady Nelson, stating that the likeness is great, and that "our good father is delighted with the likeness." By H. Füger, 1800; a head, done at Vienna. By Guzzardi, 1799, at the Admiralty; done for Sir W. Hamilton, and engraved in Pettigrew's "Memoirs." It is a picturesque work, with blue eyes, a pale wasted face (from fever), and a cocked hat, ornamented with the Grand Signior's diamond aigrette. By Hoppner, engraved for the edition of Southey's "Life," in Bohn's Standard Library. By Sir W. Beechey, at Draper's Hall; and another at Norwich City Hall. By A. W. Devis, 1805, just before Trafalgar; done for Admiral Sir Bladen Capel, and engraved in Pettigrew's "Memoirs." It is the last one painted from life.

Portrait of Lady Hamilton, by Romney, at the National Portrait Gallery, Bethnal Green. Of Sir William Hamilton, two portraits, by Reynolds and Allan; also, in the National Portrait Gallery. Romney, an enthusiastic admirer of Lady Hamilton, painted above twenty portraits of her in different characters. One, a Bacchante, is at the National Gallery.

Busts of Nelson. — A Bust at Guildhall, in marble, by the Hon. Mrs. Damer, the only one for which he sat, in the coat worn by him at the Nile, which he then gave her, and which is now at Greenwich Hospital. She gave a bronze copy of this bust to the Duke of Clarence, who placed it on a stump of the *Victory's* foremast, which is now at Windsor, between busts of Marlborough and Wellington.

A large bronze bust in the upper quadrangle at Greenwich, is by Sir F. Chantrey, 1834, the gift of Lady Chantrey.

Monuments. — In St. Paul's, by Flaxman; and another at Guildhall, with an inscription by Sheridan. At Norwich, a statue (near the Cathedral), apparently a good likeness. At Bristol; at Birmingham, in the Bull Ring; Liverpool, on the Exchange; Edinburgh, on Carlton Hill; Glasgow, a column in the Park; and Dublin, a column in Sackville Street. Column at Trafalgar Square, London, with a statue by Baily, R.A., bas-reliefs of

his four chief actions, and Lions by Landseer. A pillar, or sea-mark, near the Nelson Fort, in Portsmouth ; and a pillar at Yarmouth.

His brother gave out that he hoped to build a monument to Nelson at Burnham Thorpe, but he never had the heart to do it, though he lived down to 1835. Nelson always remembered the poor there, sending New Year's gifts of blankets ; and he left them a sum in his will.

Nelson Relics. — At Greenwich Hospital, in the Nelson Room of the Painted Hall, and in the Naval Museum there. Among the Relics kept there with as much pious regard as if he were a saint, are the Nile coat, given by the Duke of Clarence ; the Trafalgar coat and waistcoat, given by the Prince Consort ; his Nile medal; his dress sword ; the Grand Signior's gun, sabre, and canteen, all richly ornamented; pieces of embroidery from his sleeping cot. Also, a small enamel portrait, his watch and seal, snuff-box made of a bit of the *Orient*, stock and pig-tail as then worn, and the drinking-glasses used by him and Lady Hamilton, all bequeathed by his daughter, Mrs. Ward.

The Victory, Nelson's ship, lies in Portsmouth harbor, an almost unique specimen of a wooden sailing-ship of her day, but of course much altered; indeed, almost rebuilt from stem to stern to keep her afloat. The spots where Nelson fell and died, on deck and below, are marked. A bit of the deck, taken from the place where he fell, is at the United Service Institution ; and at the Junior United Service Club are models of all the ships at Trafalgar, on a table made from the *Victory's* timbers. She was visited by the Queen on Trafalgar Day, 1844. "Everybody" (says De Quincey) "must remember the immortal scene on board the *Victory*, at 4 P.M. of Oct. 21, 1805; and the farewell 'Kiss me, Hardy' of the mighty admiral."

She carried Earl St. Vincent's flag in the battle of 1798, and is one of a succession of ships so named, and used as flag-ships. Her predecessor of the name was lost in 1744 near the Channel Islands, with 1200 of her crew.

The *Dreadnought*, one of the Trafalgar ships, was used as a hospital ship at Greenwich till broken up, 1857; but her name is perpetuated in the Infirmary for Seamen ashore.

The *San Joseph* was for many years in Plymouth harbor.

Among the latest survivors of the Trafalgar men were Admirals Sir E. Codrington, Sir T. B. Capel, and Sir C. Bullen (died 1853). Admiral Sir C. Sartorius (born 1790, died 1881), was a midshipman in the *Tonnant*. Admiral Sir G. A. Westphal (born 1786, died 1874) was a midshipman in the *Victory*, where he was wounded in the head, and lay next to his great chief in the cockpit. He was younger brother to Admiral Sir P. Westphal (born 1782, died 1880), who was a midshipman at Copenhagen, 1801.

The Earldom, conferred by George III., went by patent to Nelson's elder brother, William, a mean, avaricious man, who kept the important codicil in his pocket till it could be of no use to Lady Hamilton. He owed his title, property, social standing, everything, to his generous brother. His line ended with himself, 1835. The English title was carried on by his sister's son, Thomas Bolton; but the title of Duke of Bronte, went, in consequence of a Chancery suit, to his niece Charlotte, Lady Bridport, together with the estate, the Grand Signior's plume, and the sword of the King of Naples, which are held by the Bridport family.

Nelson's wife, Viscountess Nelson, died 1831.

MEMOIR OF NELSON'S SERVICES.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

October 15th, 1799. PORT MAHON.

HORATIO NELSON, son of the Reverend Edmund Nelson, Rector of Burnham Thorpe, in the county of Norfolk, and Catherine his wife, daughter of Doctor Suckling, Prebendary of Westminster, whose grandmother was sister to Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford.

I was born September 29th, 1758, in the parsonage-house, was sent to the high-school at Norwich, and afterwards removed to North Walsham; from whence, on the disturbance with Spain relative to the Falkland Islands, I went to sea with my uncle, Captain Maurice Suckling, in the *Raisonnable*, of 64 guns. But the business with Spain being accommodated, I was sent in a West-India ship belonging to the house of Hibbert, Purrier, Horton, with Mr. John Rathbone, who had formerly been in the Navy, in the *Dreadnought*, with Captain Suckling. From this voyage I returned to the *Triumph*, at Chatham, in July, 1772; and, if I did not improve in my education, I returned a practical seaman, with a horror of the royal Navy, and with a saying then constant with the seamen, "Aft the most honor; forward the better man!" It was many weeks before I got in the least reconciled to a man-of-war, so deep was the prejudice rooted; and what pains were taken to instil this erroneous principle in a young mind! However, as my ambition was to

be a seaman, it was always held out as a reward, that if I attended well to my navigation, I should go in the cutter and decked long-boat, which was attached to the commanding officer's ship at Chatham. Thus by degrees I became a good pilot, for vessels of that description, from Chatham to the Tower of London, down the Swin and the North Foreland; and confident of myself amongst rocks and sands, which has many times since been of great comfort to me. In this way I was trained, till the expedition towards the North Pole was fitted out; when although no boys were allowed to go in the ships (as of no use), yet nothing could prevent my using every interest to go with Captain Lutwidge, in the *Carcass;* and as I fancied I was to fill a man's place, I begged I might be his cockswain: which, finding my ardent desire for going with him, Captain Lutwidge complied with, and has continued the strictest friendship to this moment. Lord Mulgrave, whom I then first knew, maintained his kindest friendship and regard to the last moment of his life. When the boats were fitting out to quit the two ships blocked up in the ice, I exerted myself to have the command of a four-oared cutter raised upon, which was given me, with twelve men; and I prided myself in fancying I could navigate her better than any other boat in the ship.

On our arrival in England, being paid off, October 15th, I found that a squadron was fitting out for the East Indies; and nothing less than such a distant voyage could in the least satisfy my desire of maritime knowledge. I was placed in the *Seahorse*, of 20 guns, with Captain Farmer, and watched in the fore-top; from whence in time I was placed on the quarter-deck: having, in the time I was in this ship, visited almost every part of the East Indies, from Bengal to Bussorah. Ill health induced Sir Edward Hughes, who had always shown me the greatest kindness, to send me to England in the *Dolphin*, of 20 guns, with Captain James Pigot, whose kindness at that

time saved my life. This ship was paid off at Woolwich, on the 24th September, 1776. On the 26th, I received an order from Sir James Douglass, who commanded at Portsmouth, to act as lieutenant of the *Worcester*, 64, Captain Mark Robinson, who was ordered to Gibraltar with a convoy. In this ship I was at sea with convoys till April 2d, 1777, and in very bad weather; but although my age might have been a sufficient cause for not entrusting me with the charge of a watch, yet Captain Robinson used to say, "he felt as easy when I was upon deck, as any officer in the ship."

On the 8th of April, 1777, I passed my examination as a lieutenant, and received my commission the next day, as second lieutenant of the *Lowestoffe* frigate, of 32 guns, Captain (afterwards Lieutenant-governor of Greenwich Hospital) William Locker. In this ship I went to Jamaica; but even a frigate was not sufficiently active for my mind, and I got into a schooner, tender to the *Lowestoffe*. In this vessel I made myself a complete pilot for all the passages through the Keys (islands) situated on the north side of Hispaniola. Whilst in this frigate, an event happened which presaged my character; and as it conveys no dishonor to the officer alluded to, I shall relate it.

Blowing a gale of wind, and very heavy sea, the frigate captured an American letter-of-marque. The first lieutenant was ordered to board her, which he did not do, owing to the very high sea. On his return, the captain said, "Have I no officer in the ship who can board the prize?" On which the master ran to the gangway, to get into the boat: when I stopped him, saying, "It is my turn now; and if I come back it is yours." This little incident has often occurred to my mind; and I know it is my disposition, that difficulties and dangers do but increase my desire of attempting them.

Sir Peter Parker, soon after his arrival at Jamaica, 1778, took me into his own flag-ship, the *Bristol*, as third lieu-

tenant; from which I rose by succession to be the first. Nothing particular happened whilst I was in this ship, which was actively employed off Cape François, it being the commencement of the French war.

On the 8th of December, 1778, I was appointed commander of the *Badger* brig; and was first sent to protect the Mosquito shore, and the Bay of Honduras, from the depredations of the American privateers. Whilst on this service, I gained so much on the affections of the settlers, that they unanimously voted me their thanks, and expressed their regret on my leaving them; entrusting me to describe to Sir Peter Parker and Sir John Dalling their situation, should a war with Spain break out. Whilst I commanded this brig, H.M.S. *Glasgow*, Captain Thomas Lloyd, came into Montego Bay, Jamaica, where the *Badger* was lying: in two hours afterwards she took fire by a cask of rum; and Captain Lloyd will tell you, that it was owing to my exertions, joined to his, that her whole crew were rescued from the flames.

On the 11th of June, 1779, I was made post into the *Hinchinbrook:* when, being at sea, and Count d'Estaing arriving at Hispaniola with a very large fleet and army from Martinico, an attack on Jamaica was expected. In this critical state, I was by both admiral and general intrusted with the command of the batteries at Port Royal; and I need not say, as this place was the key to the whole naval force, the town of Kingston, and Spanish Town, the defense of it was the most important post in the whole island.

In January, 1780, an expedition being resolved on against St. Juan's, I was chosen to direct the sea part of it. Major Polson, who commanded, will tell you of my exertions; how I quitted my ship, carried troops in boats an hundred miles up a river which none but Spaniards, since the time of the buccaneers, had ever ascended. It will then be told how I boarded, if I may be allowed the expression, an outpost of the

enemy, situated on an island in the river; that I made batteries and afterwards fought them, and was a principal cause of our success. From this scene I was appointed to the *Janus*, 44, at Jamaica, and went to Port Royal in the *Victor* Sloop.

My state of health was now so bad, that I was obliged to go to England in the *Lion*, the Honorable William Cornwallis, Captain; whose care and attention again saved my life. In August, 1781, I was commissioned for the *Albemarle;* and, it would almost be supposed to try my constitution, was kept the whole winter in the North Sea. In April, 1782, I sailed with a convoy for Newfoundland and Quebec, under the orders of Captain Thomas Pringle. From Quebec, during a cruise off Boston, I was chased by three French ships of the line, and the *Iris* frigate; as they all beat me in sailing very much, I had no chance left, but running them amongst the shoals of St. George's bank. This alarmed the line-of-battle ships, and they quitted the pursuit; but the frigate continued, and at sunset was little more than gunshot distant: when, the line-of-battle ships being out of sight, I ordered the main-topsail to be laid to the mast; on this the frigate tacked and stood to rejoin her consorts.

In October I sailed from Quebec with a convoy to New York, where I joined the fleet under the command of Lord Hood; and in November I sailed with him to the West Indies, where I remained till the peace, when I came to England, — being directed in my way to attend H.R.H. the Duke of Clarence, on his visit to the Havannah, and was paid off at Portsmouth, on July 3d, 1783. In the autumn I went to France, and remained there till the spring of the year 1784; when I was appointed to the *Boreas* frigate, of 28 guns, and ordered to the Leeward Islands station.

This station opened a new scene to the officers of the British Navy. The Americans, when colonists, possessed almost all

the trade from America to our West India Islands, and on the return of peace they forgot, on this occasion, that they became foreigners, and of course had no right to trade in the British colonies. Our governors and custom-house officers pretended that by the Navigation Act they had a right to trade; and all the West Indians wished what was so much for their interest.

Having given governors, custom-house officers, and Americans notice of what I would do, I seized many of their vessels, which brought all parties upon me; and I was persecuted from one island to another, so that I could not leave my ship. But conscious rectitude bore me through it; and I was supported, when the business came to be understood, from home; and I proved (and an act of parliament has since established it) that a captain of a man-of-war is in duty bound to support all the maritime laws, by his Admiralty commission alone, without becoming a custom-house officer.

In July, 1786, I was left with the command till June, 1787, when I sailed for England. During the winter H.R.H. the Duke of Clarence visited the Leeward Islands in the *Pegasus* frigate, of which he was captain. And in March this year I married Frances Herbert Nisbet, widow of Dr. Nisbet, of the island of Nevis; by whom I have no children.

The *Boreas* being paid off at Sheerness, on November the 30th, I lived at Burnham Thorpe, county of Norfolk, in the parsonage-house. In 1790, when the affair with Spain, relative to Nootka Sound, had nearly involved us in a war, I made use of every interest to get a ship, *ay*, even a boat, to serve my country, but in vain; there was a prejudice at the Admiralty evidently against me, which I can neither guess at, nor in the least account for . . .[1]

[1] "Some words evidently occurred here, which Dr. Clarke and Mr. M'Arthur thought fit to suppress (a proceeding which they adopted on many occasions), and as the *original* MS. has not been found, it is

On the 30th of January, 1793, I was commissioned in the handsomest way for the *Agamemnon*, 64 guns, and was put under the command of that great man and excellent officer, Lord Hood, appointed to the command in the Mediterranean. The unbounded confidence on all occasions placed in me by his lordship, will show his opinions of my abilities; having served in the command of the seamen landed for the sieges of Bastia and Calvi.

His lordship in October, 1794, left the Mediterranean to Admiral Hotham, who also honored me with the same confidence. I was in the actions of the 13th and 14th of March, 1795, and 13th of July in the same year. For the share I had in them, I refer to the Admiralty letters. I was then appointed by Admiral Hotham to coöperate with the Austrian General De Vins, which I did all the time Admiral Hotham retained the command, till November; when he was superseded by Sir John Jervis, now Earl Vincent.

In April, 1796, the commander-in-chief so much approved my conduct, that he directed me to wear a distinguishing pendant. In June I was removed from the *Agamemnon* to the *Captain*, and on the 11th of August had appointed a captain under me. Between April and October, 1796, I was employed in the blockade of Leghorn, taking Porto Ferrajo, the island of Caprea, and finally in the evacuation of Bastia; when, having seen the troops in safety to Porto Ferrajo, I joined the admiral in St. Fiorenzo Bay, and proceeded with him to Gibraltar; whence in December I was sent in *La Minerve* frigate, Captain George Cockburn, to Porto Ferrajo, to bring down our naval stores, &c. On the passage we captured a Spanish frigate, *La Sabina*, of 40 guns, 28 eighteen-pounders on her main deck, as will appear by my letter.

impossible to supply the omission. Nelson's letters at this period leave no doubt that a prejudice existed against him at the Admiralty, if not in higher quarters." — NELSON'S *Dispatches*.

For an account of what passed from our sailing from Porto Ferrajo on the 29th of January, 1797, to the finish of the action on the 14th of February, I refer to the account published by Colonel Drinkwater. The King, for my conduct, gave me a gold medal, and the city of London a gold box.

In April, 1797, I hoisted my flag as Rear-Admiral of the Blue, and was sent to bring down the garrison of Porto Ferrajo; which service performed, I shifted my flag from the *Captain* to the *Theseus* on May the 27th, and was employed in the command of the inner squadron at the blockade of Cadiz. It was during this period that perhaps my personal courage was more conspicuous than at any other period of my life. In an attack of the Spanish gunboats I was boarded, in my barge, with its common crew of ten men, cockswain, Captain Fremantle, and myself, by the commander of the gunboats. The Spanish barge rowed twenty-six oars, besides officers — thirty men in the whole: this was a service hand-to-hand with swords, in which my cockswain, John Sykes (now no more), saved twice my life. Eighteen of the Spaniards being killed, and several wounded, we succeeded in taking their commander. On the 15th of July, 1797, I sailed for Teneriffe; for the event, I refer to my letter on that expedition. Having then lost my right arm, for this loss and my former services his Majesty was pleased to settle on me a pension of £1000 a-year; by some unlucky mismanagement of my arm I was obliged to go to England; and it was the 13th of December, 1797, before the surgeons pronounced me fit for service. On the 19th of December the *Vanguard* was commissioned for my flag-ship.

On the 1st of April, 1798, I sailed with a convoy from Spithead; at the back of the Wight, the wind coming to the westward, I was forced to return to St. Helen's, and finally sailed on the 9th of April, carrying a convoy to Oporto and

Lisbon. I joined Earl St. Vincent off Cadiz, on April 29th; on the 30th I was ordered into the Mediterranean. I refer to the printed narrative of my proceedings to the close of the Battle of the Nile.

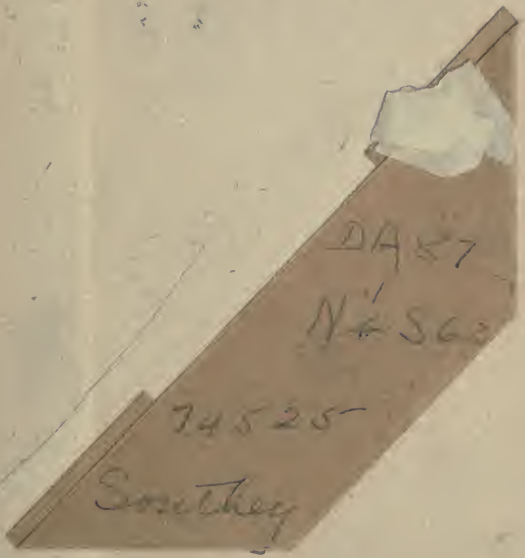
On the 22d of September, 1798, I arrived at Naples, and was received as a deliverer by the King, Queen, and the whole Kingdom. October 12th, the blockade of Malta took place, which has continued without intermission to this day. On the 21st of December, 1798, his Sicilian Majesty and family embarked in the *Vanguard*, and were carried to Palermo in Sicily. In March, 1799, I arranged a plan for taking the islands in the Bay of Naples, and for supporting the Royalists, who were making head in the kingdom. This plan succeeded in every part. In May I shifted my flag, being promoted to be Rear-Admiral of the Red, to the *Foudroyant*, and was obliged to be on my guard against the French fleets. In June and July, 1799, I went to Naples, and, as his Sicilian Majesty is pleased to say, reconquered his kingdom, and placed him on his throne. On the 9th of August I brought his Sicilian Majesty back to Palermo, having been upwards of four weeks on board the *Foudroyant.*

On the 13th, his Sicilian Majesty presented me with a sword magnificently enriched with diamonds, the title of Duke of Bronte, and annexed to it the fief of Bronte, supposed to be worth £3000 per annum. On the arrival of the Russian squadron at Naples, I directed Commodore Trowbridge to go with the squadron, and blockade closely Civita Vecchia, and to offer the French most favorable conditions, if they would evacuate Rome and Civita Vecchia; which terms the French general Grenier complied with, and they were signed on board the *Culloden;* when a prophecy made to me on my arrival at Naples was fulfilled, viz., *That I should take Rome with my ships.*

Thus may be exemplified by my life, that perseverance in any profession will most probably meet its reward. Without having any inheritance, or having been fortunate in prize-money, I have received all the honors of my profession, been created a peer of Great Britain, &c. And I may say to the reader,

"GO THOU AND DO LIKEWISE."

NELSON.



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