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# LIVES

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NAVAL OFFICERS.

BY

J. FENIMORE COOPER,

AUTHOR OF "THE SPY," "THE PILOT," &c. &c.

VOL. I.

BAINBRIDGE,  
SOMERS,

SHAW,  
SHUBRICK,  
PREBLE.

PHILADELPHIA:  
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## P R E F A C E .

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THESE brief biographies have been entitled "Sketches of Naval Men" in preference to adopting a more ambitious term, for the two following reasons: In the first place, the narratives are confined principally to public events; while, in the second, it may be questioned if any naval man of this country has, as yet, become so far identified with history as to render his personal qualities and private life of sufficient national interest to be properly laid before the world. There may, possibly, be one or two exceptions to this rule, but, as a whole, the country has little to do with the careers of this class of its servants beyond their public services. Whenever it has been in our power, we have included in these sketches, notwithstanding, such leading personal facts and traits as may answer the purpose of

giving to our labours the general characters of biographies.

These sketches originally appeared in Graham's Magazine, a periodical for which they were expressly written. The present opportunity for enlarging, correcting, and, it is hoped, for improving them, has not been neglected. Many errors of the press, and some mistakes in facts, have been attended to, while new matter is occasionally introduced, as authentic materials have been obtained, through the attention that has been drawn to the subject by means of the former publication. In the cases of Paul Jones and Oliver Hazard Perry, in particular, the first appearance of the respective sketches brought into our hands a considerable amount of additional documents that have thrown new light on the several careers of those two officers. In the case of Paul Jones, it is true that our testimony is derived from relatives, and to a certain point is to be received with caution; all experience proving that the opinions of near friends are not to be accepted, in such cases, as guides for the world. Proof is proof, nevertheless, when all its conditions are fulfilled, let it come from what quarter it may.

The appearance of the original sketch on Perry was the cause of very ample documents and proofs

having been sent to us by a perfectly impartial witness. These proofs go to show that we had fallen into some errors. The errors alluded to are of no great moment, however, as they relate to public events; our account of the battle of Lake Erie, being, in all essentials, fully sustained by the evidence of this new witness.

These sketches will be continued, certainly so far as to include all that may have been previously published in Graham, and possibly still farther.

Every writer has his own scale of greatness and his own degrees of eulogium. It has been our aim to do justice to the different subjects as they have been presented to us, while we have endeavoured to avoid the exaggeration that, in some measure, may be said to have corrupted the public taste, rendering it insatiate of the impossible rather than of the true. The degree of knowledge that has been brought to the execution of this task must be judged of by the sketches themselves. But on one point we feel ourselves strong; and that is, the certainty we have written equally without undue prejudices or partialities. Mistakes we have doubtless made; they are inseparable from history in every shape; but the errors into which we may have fallen are such as belong to the difficulty of

obtaining unadulterated truth rather than to design or negligence. We feel great confidence in saying, that no publicly controverted point has been neglected by us, and that we feel the honest conviction of having treated every one of them fairly, if not intelligently.

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# NAVAL BIOGRAPHY.

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## BAINBRIDGE.

DR. HARRIS, in his "Life and Services" of this distinguished officer, says that "The ancestor of Commodore Bainbridge, who, in the year 1600, settled in the province of New Jersey, was the son of Sir Arthur Bainbridge, of Durham county, England." As no portion of the old United States was settled as early as 1600, and the province of New Jersey, in particular, was organized only about the middle of the seventeenth century, the date, in this instance, is an oversight, or a misprint; though the account of the ancestor is probably accurate. The family of the late Commodore Bainbridge was of respectable standing, beyond a question, both in the colony and state of New Jersey, and its connections were principally among persons of the higher classes of society. His father was a physician of local eminence, in the early part of his life, who removed to New York about the commencement of the Revolution, where he left a fair professional and personal reputation.

The fourth son of Dr. Bainbridge was William, the subject of our memoir. He was born at Princeton, New Jersey, then the residence of his father, May 7th,

1774. His birth must have occurred but a short time before the removal of the family to New York. The maiden name of Mrs. Bainbridge, the mother of William, was Taylor; a lady of Monmouth county, in the same colony; and her father, a man of considerable estate, undertook to superintend the education of the child.

Young Bainbridge was of an athletic, manly frame, and early showed a bold spirit, and a love of enterprise. This temperament was likely to interfere with studies directed toward a liberal education, and, at the early age of fifteen, his importunities prevailed on his friends to allow him to go to sea. This must have been about the time when the present form of government went first into operation, and the trade and navigation of the country began to revive. In that day the republic had no marine; the old Alliance frigate, the favourite ship of the Revolution, then sailing out of the port at which young Bainbridge first embarked, as an Indiaman.

Philadelphia, for many years after the peace of 1783, produced the best seamen of America. Other ports, doubtless, had as hardy and as adventurous mariners, but the nicety of the art was better taught and practised in the Delaware-river vessels than in any other portion of the country. This advantage was thought to be owing to the length of the river and bay, which required more elaborate evolutions to take a ship successfully through, than ports that lay contiguous to the sea. The same superiority has long been claimed for London, and for the same reason, each place having a long and intricate navigation, among shoals, and in a tide's way, before its wharves can be reached. The comparative



decline of the navigation of these two towns is to be attributed to the very difficulties which made expert seamen, though the vast amount of supplies required by the English capital, for its own consumption, causes great bodies of shipping still to frequent the Thames. It is also probable that the superiority formerly claimed for the seamen of these two towns, was in part owing to the circumstances that, being the capitals of their respective countries, they were then in advance of other ports, both as to the arts, generally, and as to the wealth necessary to exhibit them.

Young Bainbridge, consequently, enjoyed the advantage of being trained, as a seaman, in what was then the highest American school. Singularly handsome and prepossessing in his appearance, of a vigorous, and commanding frame, with the foundation of a good education, all aided by respectable connections, he was made an officer in the third year of his service. When eighteen, he sailed as chief mate of a ship in the Dutch trade, and on his first voyage, in this capacity, he recovered the vessel from the hands of mutineers, by his personal intrepidity and physical activity. In the following year, when barely nineteen, the owners gave him command of the same ship. From this time down to the period of his joining the navy, Bainbridge continued in command of different merchant vessels, all of which were employed in the European trade, which was then carried on, by this country, in the height and excitement of the war that succeeded the French revolution.

Occasions were not wanting, by which Bainbridge could prove his dauntless resolution, even in command

of a peaceful and slightly armed merchantman. In 1796, whilst in command of the *Hope*, of Philadelphia, he was lying in the Garonne, and was hailed by another American to come and aid in quelling a mutiny. This he did in person; though his life had nearly been the sacrifice, owing to an explosion of gunpowder. The same season, while shaping his course for one of the West India islands, the *Hope* was attacked by a small British privateer, of eight guns and thirty men, being herself armed with four nines, and having a crew of only eleven souls before the mast—an equipment then permitted, by the laws, for the purposes of defence only. The privateer commenced the engagement without showing any colors; but receiving a broadside from the *Hope*, she hoisted English, in the expectation of intimidating her antagonist. In this, however, the assailant was mistaken; Bainbridge, who had his colors flying from the first, continued his fire until he actually compelled the privateer to lower her flag. The latter was much cut up, and lost several men. The *Hope* escaped with but little injury. Although he had compelled his assailant to submit, it would not have been legal for Bainbridge to take possession of the prize. He even declined boarding her, most probably keeping in view the feebleness of his own complement; but, hailing the privateer, he told her commander to go to his employers and let them know they must send some one else to capture the *Hope* if they had occasion for that ship. It was probably owing to this little affair, as well as to his general standing as a ship-master, that Bainbridge subsequently entered the navy with the rank he obtained.

Not long after the action with the privateer, while homeward bound again, a man was impressed from Bainbridge's ship, by an English cruiser. The boarding officer commenced by taking the first mate, on account of his name, Allen M'Kinsey, insisting that the man must be a Scotchman! This singular species of logic was often applied on such occasions, even historians of a later day claiming such men as M'Donough and Conner, on the supposition that they must be Irish, from their family appellations. Mr. M'Kinsey, who was a native Philadelphian, on a hint from Bainbridge, armed himself, and refused to quit his own ship; whereupon the English lieutenant seized a foremast hand and bore him off, in spite of his protestations of being an American, and the evidence of his commander. Bainbridge was indignant at this outrage—then, however, of almost daily occurrence on the high seas—and, finding his own remonstrances disregarded, he solemnly assured the boarding officer that, if he fell in with an English vessel, of a force that would allow of such a retaliation, he would take a man out of her to supply the place of the seaman who was then carried away. This threat was treated with contempt, but it was put in execution within a week; Bainbridge actually seizing a man on board an English merchant-man, and that, too, of a force quite equal to his own, and carrying him into an American port. The ship which impressed the man belonging to the Hope, was the Indefatigable, Sir Edward Pellew.

All these little affairs contributed to give Bainbridge a merited reputation for spirit; for, however illegal may have been his course in impressing the English-

man, the sailor himself was quite content to receive higher wages, and there was a natural justice in the measure that looked down the policy of nations and the provisions of law. Shortly after this incident, the aggressions of France induced the establishment of the present navy; and the government, after employing all the old officers of the Revolution who remained, and who were fit for service, was compelled to go into the mercantile marine to find men to fill the subordinate grades. The merchant service of America has ever been relatively much superior to that of most other countries. This has been owing, in part, to the greater diffusion of education; in part, to the character of the institutions, which throws no discredit around any reputable pursuit; and, in part, to the circumstance that the military marine has not been large enough to give employment to all of the maritime enterprise and spirit of the nation. Owing to these united causes, the government of 1798 had much less difficulty in finding proper persons to put into its infant navy than might have been anticipated; although it must be allowed that some of the selections, as usual, betrayed the influence of undue recommendations, as well as of too partial friendships.

The navy offering a field exactly suited to the ambition and character of Bainbridge, he eagerly sought service in it, on his return from a voyage to Europe; his arrival occurring a short time after the first appointments had been made. The third vessel which got to sea, under the new armament, was the Delaware 20, Capt. Stephen Decatur, the father of the illustrious officer of the same name; and this vessel, a few days

out, had captured *le Croyable* 14, a French privateer that she found cruising in the American waters. *Le Croyable* was condemned, and purchased by the navy department; being immediately equipped for a cruiser, under the name of the *Retaliation*. To this vessel Bainbridge was appointed, with the commission of lieutenant-commandant; a rank that was subsequently and unwisely dropped; for the greater the number of gradations in a military service, while they are kept within the limits of practical necessity, the greater is the incentive for exertion, the more frequent the promotions, and the higher the discipline. First lieutenants, lieutenant-commandant, exist, and must exist in fact, in every marine; and it is throwing away the honourable inducement of promotion, as well as some of the influence of a commission, not to have the rank while we have the duties. It would be better for the navy did the station of first lieutenant, or lieutenant-commandant, now exist, those who hold the commissions furnishing officers to command the smallest class of vessels, and the executive officers of ships of the line and frigates.

The *Retaliation* sailed for the West India station, in September, 1798. While cruising off Gaudaloupe, the following November, the *Montezuma* sloop of war, Capt. Murray, and the brig *Norfolk*, Capt. Williams, in company, three sail were made in the eastern board, that were supposed to be English; and two more strangers appearing to the westward, Capt. Murray, who was the senior officer, made sail for the latter, taking the *Norfolk* with him; while the *Retaliation* was directed to examine the vessels to the eastward

This separated the consorts, which parted on nearly opposite tacks. Unfortunately two of the vessels to the eastward proved to be French frigates, le *Volontier* 36, Capt. St. Laurent, and *l'Insurgente* 32, Capt. Barreault. The first of these ships carried 44 guns, French eighteens, and the latter 40, French twelves. *L'Insurgente* was one of the fastest ships that floated, and, getting the *Retaliation* under her guns, Bainbridge was compelled to strike, as resistance would have been madness.

The prisoner was taken on board *l'Volontier*, the two frigates immediately making sail in chase of the *Montezuma* and *Norfolk*. *L'Insurgente* again outstripped her consort, and was soon a long distance ahead of her. Capt. St. Laurent was the senior officer, and, the *Montezuma* being a ship of some size, he felt an uneasiness at permitting the *Insurgente* to engage two adversaries, of whose force he was ignorant, unsupported. In this uncertainty, he determined to inquire the force of the American vessels of his prisoner. Bainbridge answered coolly that the ship was a vessel of 28 long twelves, and the brig a vessel of 20 long nines. This was nearly, if not quite, doubling the force of the two American cruisers, and it induced the French commodore to show a signal of recall to his consort. Capt. Barreault, an exceedingly spirited officer, joined his commander in a very ill-humor, informing his superior that he was on the point of capturing both the chases, when he was so inopportunistly recalled. This induced an explanation, when the *ruse* practised by Bainbridge was exposed. In the moment of disappointment, the French officers felt

much irritated, but, appreciating the conduct of their prisoner more justly, they soon recovered their good humor, and manifested no further displeasure.

The Retaliation and her crew were carried into Basseterre. On board the *Volontier* was Gen. Desfourneaux, who was sent out to supersede Victor Hughes in his government. This functionary was very diplomatic, and he entered into a negotiation with Bainbridge of a somewhat equivocal character, leaving it a matter of doubt whether an exchange of prisoners, an arrangement of the main difficulties between the two countries, or a secret trade with his own island, and for his own particular benefit, was his real object. Ill treatment of the crew of the *Retaliation* followed; whether by accident or design is not known, though the latter has been suspected. It will be remembered that no war had been declared by either country, and that the captures by the Americans were purely retaliatory, and made in self-defence. Gen. Desfourneaux profited by this circumstance to accomplish his purposes, affecting not to consider the officers and people of the *Retaliation* as prisoners at all. To this Bainbridge answered that he regarded himself and his late crew, not only as prisoners of war, but as ill-treated prisoners, and that his powers now extended no farther than to complete an exchange. After a protracted negotiation, Bainbridge and his crew were placed in possession of the *Retaliation* again, all the other American prisoners in Guadaloupe were put on board a cartel, and the two vessels were ordered for America. Accompanying the Americans, went a French gentleman, ostensibly charged with the exchange; but who was

believed to have been a secret diplomatic agent of the French government.

The conduct of Bainbridge, throughout this rude initiation into the public service, was approved by the government, and he was immediately promoted to the rank of master-commandant, and given the *Norfolk* 18, the brig he had saved from capture by his address. In this vessel he joined the squadron under Com. Truxtun, who was cruising in the vicinity of St. Kitts. While on that station, the *Norfolk* fell in with and chased a heavy three-masted schooner, of which she was on the point of getting alongside, when both topmasts were lost by carrying sail, and the enemy escaped. The brig went into St. Kitts to repair damages, and here she collected a convoy of more than a hundred sail, bound home. Bainbridge performed a neat and delicate evolution, while in charge of this large trust. The convoy fell in with an enemy's frigate, when a signal was thrown out for the vessels to disperse. The *Norfolk* occupied the frigate, and induced her to chase, taking care to lead her off from the merchantmen. That night the brig gave her enemy the slip, and made sail on her course, overtaking and collecting the whole fleet the following day. It is said not a single vessel, out of one hundred and nineteen sail, failed of the rendezvous!

It was August, 1799, before the *Norfolk* returned to New York. Here Bainbridge found that no less than five lieutenants had been made captains, passing the grades of commanders and lieutenants-commandant altogether. This irregularity could only have occurred in an infant service, though it was of material importance to a young officer in after life. Among the gentlemen



thus promoted, were Capts. Rodgers, and Barron, two names that, for a long time, alone stood between Bainbridge and the head of the service. Still, it is by no means certain that injustice was done, such circumstances frequently occurring in so young a service, to repair an original wrong. At all events, no slight was intended to Bainbridge, or any other officer who was passed; though the former ever maintained that he had not his proper rank in the navy.

After refitting the Norfolk, Bainbridge returned to the West Indies, where he was put under the orders of Capt. Christopher R. Perry, the father of the celebrated Commodore Oliver H. Perry, who sent him to cruise off Cape François. The brig changed her cruising ground, under different orders, no opportunity occurring for meeting an enemy of equal force. Indeed, it was highly creditable to the maritime enterprise of the French that they appeared at all in those seas, which were swarming with English and American cruisers; this country alone seldom employing fewer than thirty sail in the West Indies, that year; toward the close of the season indeed, it had near, if not quite forty, including those who were passing between the islands and the home coast.

On the 31st October, however, the Norfolk succeeded in decoying an armed barge within reach of her guns. The enemy discovered the brig's character in time to escape to the shore, notwithstanding: though he was pursued and the barge was captured. Six dead and dying were found in, or near the boat.

In November, Bainbridge took a small lugger privateer, called le *Républicain*, with a prize in company.

The former was destroyed at sea, and the latter sent in. The prize of the lugger was a sloop. She presented a horrible spectacle when taken possession of by the Americans. Her decks were strewed with mangled bodies, the husbands and parents of eleven women and children, who were found weeping over them at the moment of recapture. The murders had been committed by some brigands in a barge, who slew every man in the sloop, and were proceeding to further outrages when the lugger closed and drove them from their prey. An hour or two later, Bainbridge captured both the vessels. His treatment of the unfortunate females and children was such as ever marked his generous and manly character.

Shortly after, Capt. Bainbridge received an order, direct from the Navy Department, to go off the neutral port of the Havana, to look after the trade in that quarter. Here he was joined by the Warren 18, Capt. Newman, and the Pinckney 18, Capt. Heyward. Bainbridge was the senior officer, and continued to command this force to the great advantage of American commerce, by blockading the enemy's privateers, and giving convoy, until March, 1800, when, his cruise being up, he returned home, anchoring off Philadelphia early in the month of April. His services, especially those before Havana, were fully appreciated, and May 2d, of the same year, he was raised to the rank of captain. Bainbridge had served with credit, and had now reached the highest grade which existed in the navy, when he wanted just five days of being twenty-six years old. He had carried with him into the marine the ideas of a high-class Philadelphia seaman, as to discipline, and

these were doubtless the best which then existed in the country. In every situation he had conducted himself well, and the promise of his early career as a master of a merchantman was likely to be redeemed, whenever occasion should offer, under the pennant of the republic.

Among the vessels purchased into the service during the war of 1798, was an Indiaman called the *George Washington*. This ship was an example of the irregularity in rating which prevailed at that day; being set down in all the lists and registers of the period as a 24, when her tonnage was 624; while the *Adams*, *John Adams*, and *Boston*, all near one sixth smaller, are rated as 32s. The *George Washington* was, in effect, a large 28, carrying the complement and armament of a vessel of that class. To this ship Bainbridge was now appointed, receiving his orders the month he was promoted; or, in May, 1800. The destination of the vessel was to carry tribute to the Dey of Algiers! This was a galling service to a man of her commander's temperament, as, indeed, it would have proved to nearly every other officer in the navy; but it put the ship quite as much in the way of meeting with an enemy as if she had been employed in the West Indies; and it was sending the pennant into the Mediterranean for the first time since the formation of the new navy. Thus the *United States 44*, first carried the pennant of the new marine to Europe, in 1799; the *Essex 32*, first carried it round the Cape of Good Hope, in 1800, and around Cape Horn, in 1813; and this ship, the *George Washington 28*, first carried it into the classical seas of the old world.

Bainbridge did not get the tribute collected and reach

his port of destination, before the month of September. Being entirely without suspicion, and imagining that he came on an errand which should entitle him, at least, to kind treatment, he carried the ship into the mole, for the purpose of discharging with convenience. This duty, however, was hardly performed, when the Dey proposed a service for the *George Washington*, that was as novel in itself as it was astounding to her commander.

It seems that this barbarian prince had got himself into discredit at the Sublime Porte, and he felt the necessity of purchasing favour, and of making his peace, by means of tribute of his part. The Grand Seignor was at war with France, and the Dey, his tributary and dependent, had been guilty of the singular indiscretion of making a separate treaty of peace with that powerful republic, for some private object of his own. This was an offence to be expiated only by a timely offering of certain slaves, various wild beasts, and a round sum in gold. The presents to be sent were valued at more than half a million of our money, and the passengers to be conveyed amounted to between two and three hundred. As the Dey happened to have no vessel fit for such a service, and the *George Washington* lay very conveniently within his mole, and had just been engaged in this very duty, he came to the natural conclusion she would answer his purpose.

The application was first made in the form of a civil request, through the consul. Bainbridge procured an audience, and respectfully, but distinctly, stated that a compliance would be such a departure from his orders as to put it out of the question. Hereupon the Dey re-

minded the American that the ship was in his power, and that what he now asked he might take without asking, if it suited his royal pleasure. A protracted and spirited discussion, in which the consul joined, now followed, but all without effect. The Dey offered the alternatives of compliance, or slavery and capture, for the frigate and her crew, with war on the American trade. One of his arguments is worthy of being recorded, as it fully exposes the feeble policy of submission to any national wrong. He told the two American functionaries, that their country paid him tribute, already, which was an admission of their inferiority, as well as of their duty to obey him; and he chose to order this particular piece of service, in addition to the presents which he had just received.

Bainbridge finally consented to do as desired. He appears to have been influenced in this decision, by the reasoning of Mr. O'Brien, the consul, who had himself been a slave in Algiers, not long before, and probably retained a lively impression of the power of the barbarian, on his own shores. It is not to be concealed, however, that temporizing in all such matters had been the policy of America, and it would have required men of extraordinary moral courage to have opposed the wishes of the Dey, by a stern assertion of those principles, which alone can render a nation great. "To ask for nothing but what is right, and to submit to nothing that is wrong," is an axiom more easily maintained on paper than in practice, where the chameleon-like policy of trade interferes to colour principles; and O'Brien, a merchant in effect, and Bainbridge, who had so lately been in that pursuit himself, were not likely to over-

look the besetting weakness of the nation. Still, it may be questioned if there was a man in the navy who felt a stronger desire to vindicate the true maxims of national independence than the subject of this memoir. He appears to have yielded solely to the arguments of the consul, and to his apprehensions for a trade that certainly had no other protection in that distant sea, than his own ship; and she would be the first sacrifice of the Dey's resentment. It ought to be mentioned, too, that a base and selfish policy prevailed, in that day, on the subject of the Barbary Powers, among the principal maritime states of Europe. England, in particular, was supposed to wink at their irregularities, in the hope that it might have a tendency to throw a monopoly of the foreign navigation of the Mediterranean into the hands of those countries which, by means of their great navies, and their proximity to the African coast, were always ready to correct any serious evil that might affect themselves. English policy had been detected in the hostilities of the Dey, a few years earlier, and it is by no means improbable that Mr. O'Brien foresaw consequences of this nature, that did not lie absolutely on the surface.

Yielding to the various considerations which were urged, Bainbridge finally consented to comply with the Dey's demand. The presents and passengers were received on board, and on the 19th of October, or about a month after her arrival at Algiers, the *George Washington* was ready to sail for Constantinople. When on the very eve of departing a new difficulty arose, and one of a nature to show that the Dey was not entirely governed by rapacity, but that he had rude notions of na-

tional honour, agreeably to opinions of the school in which he had been trained. As the *George Washington* carried his messenger, or ambassador, and was now employed in his service, he insisted that she should carry the Algerine flag at the main, while that of the republic to which the ship belonged, should fly at the fore. An altercation occurred on this point of pure etiquette, the Dey insisting that English, French, and Spanish commanders, whenever they had performed a similar service for him, had not hesitated to give this precedence to his ensign. This was probably true, as well as the fact that vessels of war of those nations had consented to serve him in this manner, in compliance with the selfish policy of their respective governments; though it may be doubted whether English or French ships had been impressed into such a duty. Dr. Harris, whose biography of Bainbridge is much the most full of any written, and to which we are indebted for many of our own details, has cited an instance as recently as 1817, when an English vessel of war conveyed presents to Constantinople for the Dey; though it was improbable that any other inducement for the measure existed, than a desire in the English authorities to maintain their influence in the regency. Bainbridge, without entering into pledges on the subject, and solely with a view to get his ship beyond the reach of the formidable batteries of the mole, hoisted the Algerine ensign, as desired, striking it as soon as he found himself again the commander of his own vessel.

The *George Washington* had a boisterous and weary passage to the mouth of the Dardanelles, the ship being littered with Turks, and the cages of wild beasts. This

voyage was always a source of great uneasiness and mortification to Bainbridge, but he occasionally amused his friends with the relation of anecdotes that occurred during its continuance. Among other things he mentioned that his passengers were greatly puzzled to keep their faces toward Mecca, in their frequent prayers; the ship often tacking during the time thus occupied, more especially after they got into the narrow seas. A man was finally stationed at the compass to give the faithful notice when it was necessary to "go about," in consequence of the evolutions of the frigate.

Bainbridge had great apprehensions of being detained at the Dardanelles, for want of a firman, the United States having no diplomatic agent at the Porte, and commercial jealousies being known to exist, on the subject of introducing the American flag into those waters. A sinister influence up at Constantinople might detain him for weeks, or even prevent his passage altogether; and having come so far, on his unpleasant errand, he was resolved to gather as many of its benefits as possible. In the dilemma, therefore, he decided on a *ruse* of great boldness, and one which proved that personal considerations had little influence, when he thought the interests of his country demanded their sacrifice.

The *George Washington* approached the castles with a strong southerly wind, and she clewed up her light sails, as if about to anchor, just as she began to salute. The works returned gun for gun, and in the smoke sail was again made, and the ship glided out of the range of shot before the deception was discovered; passing on toward the sea of Marmora under a cloud of canvas. As vessels were stopped at only one point, and the pro-



gress of the ship was too rapid to admit of detention, she anchored unmolested under the walls of Constantinople, on the 9th November, 1800; showing the flag of the republic, for the first time, before that ancient town.

Bainbridge was probably right in his anticipation of difficulty in procuring a firman to pass the castles, for when his vessel reported her nation, an answer was sent off that the government of Turkey knew of no such country. An explanation that the ship came from the new world, that which Columbus had discovered, luckily proved satisfactory, when a bunch of flowers and a lamb were sent on board; the latter as a token of amity, and the former as a welcome.

The *George Washington* remained several weeks at Constantinople, where Bainbridge and his officers were well received, though the agents of the Dey fared worse. The Capudan Pacha, in particular, formed a warm friendship for the commander of the *George Washington*, whose fine personal appearance, frank address, and manly bearing were well calculated to obtain favor. This functionary was married to a sister of the Sultan, and had more influence at court than any other subject. He took Bainbridge especially under his own protection, and when they parted, he gave the frigate a passport, which showed that she and her commander enjoyed this particular and high privilege. In fact, the intercourse between this officer and the commander of the *George Washington* was such as to approach nearly to paving the way for a treaty, a step that Bainbridge warmly urged on the government at home, as both possible and desirable. It has been con-

jectured even, that Capt. Bainbridge was instructed on this subject ; and that, in consenting to go to Constantinople at all, he had the probabilities of opening some such negotiation in view. This was not his own account of the matter, although, in weighing the motives for complying with the Dey's demands, it is not impossible he permitted such a consideration to have some weight.

The visit of Clarke, the well known traveler, occurred while the *George Washington* was at Constantinople. The former accompanied Bainbridge to the Black Sea, in the frigate's long-boat, where the American ensign was displayed also, for the first time. It appears that our officer was one of the party in the celebrated visit of the traveler to the seraglio, Bainbridge confirming Dr. Clarke's account of the affair, with the exception that he, himself, looked upon the danger as very trifling.

During the friendly intercourse which existed between Capt. Bainbridge and the Capudan Pacha, the latter incidentally mentioned that the governor of the castles was condemned to die for suffering the *George Washington* to pass without a firman, and that the warrant of execution only waited for his signature, in order to be enforced. Shocked at discovering the terrible strait to which he had unintentionally reduced a perfectly innocent man, Bainbridge frankly admitted his own act, and said if any one had erred it was himself: begging the life of the governor, and offering to meet the consequences in his own person. This generous course was not thrown away on the Capudan Pacha, who appears to have been a liberal and enlightened man. He heard the explanation with interest,

extolled Bainbridge's frankness, promised him his entire protection, and pardoned the governor; sending to the latter a minute statement of the whole affair. It was after this conversation that the high functionary in question delivered to Bainbridge his own especial letter of protection.

At length the Algerine ambassador was ready to return. On the 30th of December, 1800, the ship sailed for Algiers. The messenger of the Dey took back with him a menace of punishment, unless his master declared war against France, and sent more tribute to the Porte; granting to the Algerine government but sixty days to let its course be known. On repassing the Dardanelles, Bainbridge was compelled to anchor. Here he received presents of fruit and provisions, with hospitalities on shore, as an evidence of the governor's gratitude for his generous conduct in exposing his own life, in order to save that of an innocent man. It is shown by a passage in Dr. Clarke's work, that Bainbridge was honorably received in the best circles in Pera, during his stay at Constantinople, while the neatness and order of his ship were the subject of general conversation. An entertainment that was given on board the frigate was much talked of also; the guests and all the viands coming from the four quarters of the earth. Thus there was water, bread, meats, etc., etc., each from Europe, Asia, Africa and America, as well as persons to consume them: certainly a thing of rare occurrence at any one feast.

The *George Washington* arrived at Algiers on the 20th January, 1801, and anchored off the town, beyond the reach of shot. The Dey expressed his apprehen-

sions that the position of the ship would prove inconvenient to her officers, and desired that she might be brought within the mole, or to the place where she had lain during her first visit. This offer was respectfully declined. A day or two later the object of this hospitality became apparent. Bainbridge was asked to return to Constantinople with the Algerine ambassador; a request with which he positively refused to comply. This was the commencement of a new series of cajoleries, arguments, and menaces. But, having his ship where nothing but the barbarian's corsairs could assail her, Bainbridge continued firm. He begged the consul to send him off some old iron for ballast, in order that he might return certain guns he had borrowed for that purpose, previously to sailing for Constantinople, the whole having been rendered necessary in consequence of his ship's having been lightened of the tribute sent in her from America. The Dey commanded the lightermen not to take employment, and, at the same time, he threatened war if his guns were not returned. After a good deal of discussion, Bainbridge exacted a pledge that no further service would be asked of the ship; then he agreed to run into the mole and deliver the cannon, as the only mode that remained of returning property which had been lent to him.

As soon as the frigate was secured in her new birth, Capt. Bainbridge and the consul were admitted to an audience with the Dey. The reception was any thing but friendly, and the despot, a man of furious passions, soon broke out into expressions of anger, that bade fair to lead to personal violence. The attendants were ready, and it was known that a nod or a word might, at a mo-

ment's notice, cost the Americans their lives. At this fearful instant, Bainbridge, who was determined at every hazard to resist the Dey's new demand, fortunately bethought him of the Capudan Pacha's letter of protection, which he carried about him. The letter was produced, and its effect was magical. Bainbridge often spoke of it as even ludicrous, and of being so sudden and marked as to produce glances of surprise among the common soldiers. From a furious tyrant, the sovereign of Algiers was immediately converted into an obedient vassal; his tongue all honey, his face all smiles. He was aware that a disregard of the recommendation of the Capudan Pacha would be punished, as he would visit a similar disregard of one of his own orders; and that there was no choice between respect and despotism. No more was said about the return of the frigate to Constantinople, and every offer of service and every profession of amity were heaped upon the subject of our memoir, who owed his timely deliverance altogether to the friendship of the Turkish dignitary; a friendship obtained through his own frank and generous deportment.

The reader will readily understand that dread of the Grand Seignior's power had produced this sudden change in the deportment of the Dey. The same feeling induced him to order the flag-staff of the French consulate to be cut down the next day; a declaration of war against the country to which the functionary belonged. Exasperated at these humiliations, which were embittered by heavy pecuniary exactions on the part of the Porte, the Dey turned upon the few unfortunate French who happened to be in his power.

These, fifty-six in number, consisting of men, women, and children, he ordered to be seized and to be deemed slaves. Capt. Bainbridge felt himself sufficiently strong, by means of the Capudan Pacha's letter, to mediate; and he actually succeeded, after a long discussion, in obtaining a decree by which all the French who could get out of the regency, within the next eight-and-forty hours, might depart. For those who could not, remained the doom of slavery, or of ransom at a thousand dollars a head. It was thought that this concession was made under the impression that no means of quitting Algiers could be found by the unfortunate French. No one believed that the *George Washington* would be devoted to their service, France and America being then at war; a circumstance which probably increased Bainbridge's influence at Constantinople, as well as at Algiers.

But our officer was not disposed to do things by halves. Finding that no other means remained for extricating the unfortunate French, he determined to carry them off in the *George Washington*. The ship had not yet discharged the guns of the Dey, but every body working with good will, this property was delivered to its right owner, sand ballast was obtained from the country and hoisted in, other necessary preparations were made, and the ship hauled out of the mole and got to sea just in time to escape the barbarian's fangs, with every Frenchman in Algiers on board. It is said that in another hour the time of grace would have expired. The ship landed her passengers at Alicant, a neutral country, and then made the best of her way to America, where she arrived in due season.

This act of Bainbridge's was quite in conformity with the generous tendencies of his nature. He was a man of quick and impetuous feelings, and easily roused to anger; but left to the voluntary guidance of his own heart, no one was more ready to serve his fellow-creatures. It seemed to make little difference with him, whether he assisted an Englishman or a Frenchman; his national antipathies, though decided and strong, never interfering with his humanity. Napoleon had just before attained the First Consulate, and he offered the American officer his personal thanks for this piece of humane and disinterested service to his countrymen. At a later day, when misfortune came upon Bainbridge, he is said to have remembered this act, and to have interested himself in favour of the captive.

On reaching home, Bainbridge had the gratification of finding his conduct, in every particular, approved by the government. It was so much a matter of course, in that day, for the nations of Christendom to submit to exactions from those of Barbary, that little was thought of the voyage to Constantinople, and less said about it. A general feeling must have prevailed that censure, if it fell any where, ought to light on the short-sighted policy of trade, and the misguided opinions of the age. It is more probable, however, that the whole transaction was looked upon as a legitimate consequence of the system of tribute, which then so extensively prevailed.

Bainbridge must have enjoyed another and still more unequivocal evidence that the misfortunes which certainly accompanied his short naval career, had left no injurious impressions on the government, as touching his own conduct. The reduction law, which created a

species of naval peace establishment, was passed during his late absence, and, on his arrival, he found its details nearly completed in practice. Previously to this law's going into effect, there were twenty-eight captains in the navy, of which number he stood himself as low as the twenty-seventh in rank. There was, indeed, but one other officer of that grade below him, and under such circumstances, the chances of being retained would have been very small, for any man who had not the complete confidence of his superiors. He was retained, however, and that, too, in a manner in defiance of the law, for, by its provisions, only nine captains were to be continued in the service in a time of peace ; whereas, his was the eleventh name on the new list, until Dale and Truxtun resigned ; events which did not occur until the succeeding year. The cautious and reluctant manner in which these reductions were made by Mr. Jefferson, under a law that had passed during the administration of his predecessor, is another proof that the former statesman did not deserve all the reproaches of hostility to this branch of the public service that were heaped upon him.\*

Not satisfied with retaining Capt. Bainbridge in the service, after the late occurrences at Algiers, the Depart-

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\* There appears to have been some uncertainty about officers remaining in service, after the peace of 1801, that contributed to rendering the reduction irregular. The resignations of Dale and Truxtun, and the death of Barry, brought the list down to nine ; the number prescribed by law. As the Tripolitan war occurred so soon, a question might arise how far the peace establishment law was binding at all. Certainly, in its *spirit*, it was meant only for a time of peace. On the other hand, Mr. Jefferson, by his public acts, did not seem to think the nation legally at war with Tripoli, even after battles were fought and vessels captured.



ment also gave him immediate employment. For the first time this gallant officer was given a good serviceable ship, that had been regularly constructed for a man-of-war. He was attached to the Essex 32, a fine twelve-pounder frigate, that had just returned from a first cruise to the East Indies, under Preble: an officer who subsequently became so justly celebrated. The orders to this vessel were issued in May, 1801, and the ship was directed to form part of a squadron then about to sail for the Mediterranean.

Capt. Bainbridge joined the Essex at New York. He had Stephen Decatur for his first lieutenant, and was otherwise well officered and manned. The squadron, consisting of the President 44, Philadelphia 38, Essex 32, and Enterprise 12, sailed in company: the President being commanded by Capt. James Barron, the Philadelphia by Capt. Samuel Barron, and the Enterprise by Lieut. Com. Sterrett. The broad pennant of Com. Dale was flying in the President. This force went abroad under very limited instructions. Although the Bashaw of Tripoli was seizing American vessels, and was carrying on an effective war, Mr. Jefferson appeared to think legal enactments at home necessary to authorize the marine to retaliate. As respected ourselves, statutes may have been wanting to prescribe the *forms* under which condemnations could be had, and the other national rights carried out in full practice; but, as respected the enemy, there can be no question his own acts authorized the cruisers of this country to capture their assailants wherever they could be found, even though they rotted in our harbors for the want of a prescribed manner of bringing them under the hammer.

The *mode* of condemnation is dependent on municipal regulations alone, but the right to capture is solely dependent on public law. It was in this singular state of things that the *Enterprise*, after a bloody action, took a Tripolitan, and was then obliged to let her go!

The American squadron reached Gibraltar the 1st day of July, where it found and blockaded two of the largest Tripolitan cruisers, under the orders of a Scotch renegade, who bore the rank of an admiral. The *Philadelphia* watched these vessels, while the *Essex* was sent along the north shore to give convoy. The great object, in that day, appears to have been to carry the trade safely through the Straits, and to prevent the enemy's rovers from getting out into the Atlantic; measures that the peculiar formation of the coasts rendered highly important. It was while employed on this duty, that Capt. Bainbridge had an unpleasant collision with some of the Spanish authorities at Barcelona, in consequence of repeated insults offered to his ship's officers and boats; his own barge having been fired into twice, while he was in it in person. In this affair he showed his usual decision and spirit, and the matter was pushed so far and so vigorously as to induce an order from the Prince of Peace, "to treat all officers of the United States with courtesy and respect, and more particularly those attached to the United States frigate *Essex*." The high and native courtesy of the Spanish character renders it probable that some misunderstandings increased and complicated these difficulties, though there is little doubt that jealousy of the superior order and beauty of the *Essex*, among certain subordinates of the Spanish marine, produced the original aggression. In the dis-

cussions and collisions that followed, the sudden and somewhat *brusque* spirit of the American usages was not likely to be cordially met by the precise and almost oriental school of manners that regulates the intercourse of Spanish society. Bainbridge, however, is admitted to have conducted his part of the dispute with dignity and propriety; though he was not wanting in the promptitude and directness of a man-of-war's man.

On the arrival of the *Essex* below, with a convoy, it was found that the enemy had laid up his ships, and had sent the crews across to Africa in the night; the admiral making the best of his way home in a neutral. Com. Morris had relieved Com. Dale, and the *Essex*, wanting material repairs, was sent home in the summer of 1802, after an absence of rather more than a year. During her short cruise, the *Essex* had been deemed a model ship, as to efficiency and discipline, and extorted admiration wherever she appeared. On her arrival at New York, the frigate was unexpectedly ordered to Washington to be laid up, a measure that excited great discontent in her crew. One of those *quasi* mutinies which, under similar circumstances, were not uncommon in that day, followed; the men insisting that their times were up, and that they ought to be paid off in a seaport, and "not on a tobacco plantation, up in Virginia;" but Bainbridge and Decatur were men unwilling to be controlled in this way. The disaffection was put down, and the ship obeyed her orders.

Bainbridge was now employed in superintending the construction of the *Siren* and *Vixen*; two of the small vessels that had been recently ordered by law. As soon as these vessels were launched, he was again

directed to prepare for service in the Mediterranean, for which station the celebrated squadron of Preble was now fitting. This force consisted of the Constitution 44, Philadelphia 38, Siren 16, Argus 16, Nautilus 14, Vixen 14, and Enterprise 12; the latter vessel being then on the station, under Lieut. Com. Hull. Of these ships, Bainbridge had the Philadelphia, 38, a fine eighteen-pounder frigate that was often, by mistake, called a forty-four, though by no means as large a vessel as some others of her proper class. It was much the practice of that day to attach officers to the ships which were fitting near their places of residence, and thus it followed that a vessel frequently had a sort of local character. Such, in a degree, was the case with the Philadelphia, most of whose sea-officers were Delaware sailors, in one sense; though all the juniors had now been regularly bred in the navy. As these gentlemen are entitled to have their sufferings recorded, we give their names, with the states of which they were natives, viz. :

*Captain.*—William Bainbridge, of New Jersey.

*Lieutenants.*—John T. R. Cox, Jacob Jones, Delaware; Theodore Hunt, New Jersey; Benjamin Smith, Rhode Island.

*Lieutenant of Marines.*—Wm. S. Osborne.

*Surgeon.*—John Ridgely, Maryland.

*Purser.*—Rich. Spence, New Hampshire.

*Sailing-Master.*—Wm. Knight, Pennsylvania.

*Surgeon's Mates.*—Jonathan Cowdery, New York; Nicholas Harwood, Va.

*Midshipmen.*—Bernard Henry, Pa.; James Gibbon, Va.; James Biddle, Pa.; Richard B. Jones, Pa.; D. T.

Patterson, N. Y.; Wm. Cutbush, Pa.; B. F. Reed, Pa.; Thomas M'Donough, Del.; Wallace Wormley, Va.; Robert Gamble, Va.; Simon Smith, Pa.; James Renshaw, Pa.

The Philadelphia had a crew a little exceeding three hundred souls on board, including her officers. One or two changes occurred among the latter, however, when the ship reached Gibraltar, which will be mentioned in their proper places.

The vessels of Com. Preble did not sail in squadron, but left home as each ship got ready. Bainbridge, being equipped, was ordered to sail in July, and he entered the Straits on the 24th of August, after a passage down the Delaware and across the Atlantic of some length. Understanding at Gibraltar that certain cruisers of the enemy were in the neighborhood of Cape de Gatte, he proceeded off that well-known headland the very next day; and, in the night of the 26th, it blowing fresh, he fell in with a ship under nothing but a fore-sail, with a brig in company, also under very short canvas. These suspicious circumstances induced him to run alongside of the ship, and to demand her character. After a good deal of hailing, and some evasion on the part of the stranger, it was ascertained that he was a cruiser from Morocco, called the Meshboha 22, commanded by Ibrahim Lubarez, and having a crew of one hundred and twenty men. The Philadelphia had concealed her own nation, and a boat coming from the Meshboha, the fact was extracted from its crew that the brig in company was an American, bound into Spain, and that they had boarded but had not detained her. Bainbridge's suspicions were aroused by all the circum-

stances ; particularly by the little sail the brig carried ; so unlike an American, who is ever in a hurry. He accordingly directed Mr. Cox, his first lieutenant, to board the Meshboha, and to ascertain if any Americans were in her, as prisoners. In attempting to execute this order, Mr. Cox was resisted, and it was necessary to send an armed boat. The master and crew of the brig, the *Celia* of Boston, were actually found in the Meshboha, which ship had captured them, nine days before, in the vicinity of Malaga, the port to which they were bound.

Bainbridge took possession of the Moorish ship. The next day he recovered the brig, which was standing in for the bay of Almeria, to the westward of Cape de Gatte. On inquiry he discovered that Ibrahim Lubarez was cruising for Americans under an order issued by the governor of Mogadore. Although Morocco was ostensibly at peace with the United States, Bainbridge did not hesitate, now, about taking his prize to Gibraltar. Here he left the Meshboha in charge of Mr. M'Donough, under the superintendence of the consul, and then went off Cape St. Vincent in pursuit of a Moorish frigate, which was understood to be in that neighborhood. Failing in his search, he returned within the Straits, and went aloft, in obedience to his original orders. At Gibraltar, the *Philadelphia* met the homeward bound vessels, under Com. Rodgers, which were waiting the arrival of Preble, in the *Constitution*. As this force was sufficient to watch the Moors, it left the *Philadelphia* the greater liberty to proceed on her cruise. While together, however, Lieut. Porter, the first of the *New York 36*, exchanged with

Lieut. Cox, the latter gentleman wishing to return home, where he soon after resigned; while the former preferred active service.

The Philadelphia found nothing but the Vixen before Tripoli. A Neapolitan had given information that a corsair had just sailed on a cruise, and this induced Capt. Bainbridge to despatch Lieut. Com. Smith in chase. In consequence of this unfortunate but perfectly justifiable decision, the frigate was left alone off the town. A vigorous blockade having been determined on, the ship maintained her station as close in as her draught of water would allow until near the close of October, when, it coming on to blow fresh from the westward, she was driven some distance to leeward, as often occurred to vessels on that station. As soon as it moderated, sail was made to recover the lost ground, and, by the morning of the 31st, the wind had become fair, from the eastward. At 8, A. M., a sail was made ahead, standing like themselves to the westward. This vessel proved to be a small cruiser of the Bashaw's, and was probably the very vessel of which the Vixen had gone in pursuit. The Philadelphia now crowded every thing that would draw, and was soon so near the chase as to induce the latter to hug the land. There is an extensive reef to the eastward of Tripoli, called Kaliusa, that was not laid down in the charts of the ship, and which runs nearly parallel to the coast for some miles. There is abundance of water inside of it, as was doubtless known to those on board the chase, and there is a wide opening through it, by which six and seven fathoms can be carried out to sea; but all these facts were then profound mysteries to the officers of the

Philadelphia. Agreeably to the chart of Capt. Smyth, of the British navy, the latest and best in existence, the eastern division of this reef lies about a mile and a half from the coast, and its western about a mile. According to the same chart, one of authority, and made from accurate surveys, the latter portion of the reef is distant from the town of Tripoli about two and a half miles, and the former something like a mile and a half more. There is an interval of quite half a mile in length between these two main divisions of the reef, through which it is possible to carry six and seven fathoms, provided three or four detached fragments of reef, of no great extent, be avoided. The channels among these rocks afforded great facilities to the Turks in getting in and out of their port during the blockade, since a vessel of moderate draught, that knew the land-marks, might run through them with great confidence by daylight. It is probable the chase, in this instance, led in among these reefs as much to induce the frigate to follow as to cover her own escape, either of which motives showed a knowledge of the coast, and a familiarity with his duties in her commander.

In coming down from the eastward, and bringing with her a plenty of water, the Philadelphia must have passed two or three hundred yards to the southward of the northeastern extremity of the most easterly of the two great divisions of the reef in question. This position agrees with the soundings found at the time, and with those laid down in the chart. She had the chase some distance inshore of her; so much so, indeed, as to have been firing into her from the two forward divisions of the larboard guns, in the hope of cutting something



away. Coming from the eastward, the ship brought into this pass, between the reef and the shore, from fourteen to ten fathoms of water, which gradually shoaled to eight, when Capt. Bainbridge, seeing no prospect of overhauling the chase, then beginning to open the harbour of Tripoli, from which the frigate herself was distant but some three or four miles, ordered the helm a-port, and the yards braced forward, in the natural expectation of hauling directly off the land into deep water. The leads were going at the time, and, to the surprise of all on board, the water shoaled, as the frigate run off, instead of deepening. The yards were immediately ordered to be braced sharp up, and the ship brought close on a wind, in the hope of beating out of this seeming *cul de sac*, by the way in which she had entered. The command was hardly given, however, before the ship struck forward, and, having eight knots way on her, she shot up on the rocks until she had only fourteen and a half feet of water under her fore-chains. Under the bowsprit there were but twelve. Aft she floated, having, it is said, come directly out of six or seven fathoms of water into twelve and fifteen feet; all of which strictly corresponds with the soundings of the modern charts.\*

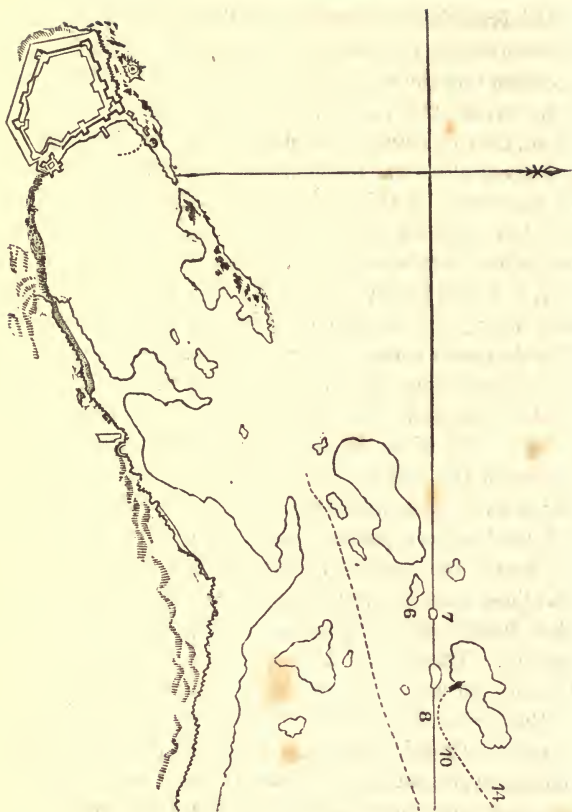
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\* There already exists some disagreement as to the question on which of the two principal portions of this reef, the eastern or the western, the Philadelphia ran. Captain Bainbridge, in his official letter, says that the *harbour* of Tripoli was distant three or four miles, when his ship struck. But the *harbour* of Tripoli extends more than a mile to the eastward of the *town*. Fort English lies properly near the mouth of the harbour, and it is considerably more than a mile east of the castle; which, itself, stands at the southeastern angle of the town. Commodore Porter, in his testi-

There was much of the hard fortune which attended a good deal of Bainbridge's professional career, in the circumstances of this accident. Had the prospects of the chase induced him to continue it, the frigate might have passed ahead, and the chances were that she would have hauled off, directly before the mouth of the harbour of Tripoli, and gone clear; carrying through nowhere less than five fathoms of water. Had she stood directly on, after first hauling up, she might have passed through the opening between the two portions of the reef, carrying with her six, seven, nine and ten fathoms, out to sea. But, in pursuing the very course which prudence and a sound discretion dictated to one who was ignorant of the existence of this reef, he ran his ship upon the very danger he was endeavouring to avoid. It is by making provision for war, in a time of peace, and, in expending its money freely, to further

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mony before the court of inquiry, thought the ship struck about three miles and a half from the *town* of Tripoli, and one and a half from the nearest point of land, which bore *south*. By the chart, the *western* margin of the *western* reef is about 4000 yards from the nearest point in the town, and the western margin of the *eastern* reef, about 6000. Three miles and a half would be just 6110 yards. This reef, too, lies as near as may be, a mile and a half north of the nearest land; thus agreeing perfectly with Commodore Porter's testimony. In addition, the western portion of the reef could not have been reached without passing into five fathoms water, and Capt. Bainbridge deemed it prudent to haul off when he found himself in eight. All the soundings show, as well as the distances, that the frigate struck as stated in the text, on the eastern half of the Kaliusa Reef; which might well be named the Philadelphia Reef. It may be added, that the nearest land would bear nearer southeast, than south, from the western half of these shoals. The following sketch will explain the text more fully.



the objects of general science, in the way of surveys and other similar precautions, that a great maritime state, in particular, economizes, by means of a present expenditure, for the moments of necessity and danger that may await it, an age ahead.

Bainbridge's first recourse, was the natural expedient of attempting to force the ship over the obstacle, in the expectation that the deep water lay to seaward. As soon, however, as the boats were lowered, and soundings taken, the true nature of the disaster was comprehended, and every effort was made to back the Philadelphia off, by the stern. A ship of the size of a frigate, that goes seven or eight knots, unavoidably piles a mass of water under her bows, and this, aided by the shelving of the reef, and possibly by a ground swell, had carried the ship up too far, to be got off by any ordinary efforts. The desperate nature of her situation was soon seen by the circumstance of her falling over so much, as to render it impossible to use any of her starboard guns.

The firing of the chase had set several gun-boats in motion in the harbor, and a division of nine was turning to windward, in order to assist the xebec the Philadelphia had been pursuing, even before the last struck. Of course the nature of the accident was understood, and these enemies soon began to come within reach of shot, though at a respectful distance on the larboard quarter. Their fire did some injury aloft, but neither the hull nor any of the crew of the frigate were hit.

Every expedient which could be resorted to, in order to get the Philadelphia off, was put in practice. The anchors were cut from the bows; water was pumped out, and other heavy articles were thrown overboard, including all the guns, but those aft. Finally the foremast was cut away. It would seem that the frigate had no boat strong enough to carry out an anchor, a serious oversight in the equipment of a vessel of any sort. After exerting himself, with great coolness and

discretion, until sunset, Bainbridge consulted his officers, and the hard necessity of hauling down the colors was admitted. By this time, the gun-boats had ventured to cross the frigate's stern, and had got upon her weather quarter, where, as she had fallen over several feet to leeward, it was utterly impossible to do them any harm. Other boats, too, were coming out of the harbour to the assistance of the division which had first appeared.

The Tripolitans got on board the Philadelphia, just as night was setting in, on the last day of October. They came tumbling in at the ports, in a crowd, and then followed a scene of indiscriminate plunder and confusion. Swords, epaulettes, watches, jewels, money, and no small portion of the clothing of the officers even, disappeared, the person of Bainbridge himself being respected little more than those of the common men. He submitted to be robbed, until they undertook to force from him a miniature of his young and beautiful wife, when he successfully resisted. The manly determination he showed in withstanding this last violence, had the effect to check the aggression, so far as he was concerned, and about ten at night, the prisoners reached the shore, near the castle of the bashaw.

Jussuf Caramelli received his prisoners, late as was the hour, in full divan; feeling a curiosity, no doubt, to ascertain what sort of beings the chances of war had thrown into his power. There was a barbarous courtesy in his deportment, nor was the reception one of which the Americans had any right to complain. After a short interview, he dismissed the officers to an excellent supper which had been prepared for them in the castle itself, and to this hour, the gentlemen who sat

down to that feast with the appetites of midshipmen, speak of its merits with an affection which proves that it was got up in the spirit of true hospitality. When all had supped, they were carried back to the divan, where the Pacha and his ministers had patiently awaited their return; when the former put them in charge of Sidi Mohammed D'Ghies, one of the highest functionaries of the regency, who conducted the officers, with the necessary attendants, to the building that had lately been the American consular residence.

This was the commencement of a long and irksome captivity, which terminated only with the war. The feelings of Bainbridge were most painful, as we know from his letters, his private admissions, and the peculiar nature of his case. He had been unfortunate throughout most of his public service. The *Retaliation* was the only American cruiser taken in the war of 1798, and down to that moment, she was the only vessel of the new marine that had been taken at all. Here, then, was the second ship that had fallen into the enemy's hands, also under his orders. Then the affair of the *George Washington* was one likely to wound the feelings of a high-spirited and sensitive mind, to which explanations, however satisfactory, are of themselves painful and humiliating. These were circumstances that might have destroyed the buoyancy of some men; and there is no question, that Bainbridge felt them acutely, and with a lively desire to be justified before his country. At this moment, his officers stepped in to relieve him, by sending a generous letter, signed by every man in the ship whose testimony could at all influence the opinion of a court of inquiry. Care was

taken to say, in this letter, that the charts and soundings justified the ship in approaching the shore, as near as she had, which was the material point, as connected with his conduct as a commander ; his personal deportment after the accident being beyond censure. Bainbridge was greatly relieved by the receipt of this letter, the writing of which was generously and kindly conceived, though doubts may exist as to its propriety, in a military point of view. The commander of a ship, to a certain extent, is properly responsible for its loss, and his subordinates are the witnesses by whose testimony the court, which is finally to exonerate, or to condemn, is guided ; to anticipate their evidence, by a joint letter, therefore, is opening the door to management and influence which may sometimes shield a real delinquent. So tender are military tribunals, strictly courts of honour, that one witness is not allowed to hear the testimony of another, and the utmost caution should ever be shown about the expression of opinions even, until the moment arrives to give them in the presence of the judges, and under the solemnities of oaths. This is said without direct reference to the case before us, however ; for, if ever an instance occurred in which a departure from severe principles is justifiable, it was this ; and no one can regret that Bainbridge, in the long captivity which followed, had the consolation of possessing such a letter. It may be well, here, to mention that all the officers whose names are given already in this biography, shared his prison, with the exception of Messrs. Cox and M'Donough : the former of whom had exchanged with Lieutenant Porter, now a captive, while the latter had been left at Gibraltar, in charge of the *Meshboha*,

to come aloft with Decatur, and to share in all the gallant deeds of that distinguished officer, before Tripoli.

Much exaggeration has prevailed on the subject of the treatment the American prisoners received from the Turks. It was not regulated by the rules of a more civilized warfare, certainly, and the common men were compelled to labour under the restrictions of African slavery; but the officers, on the whole, were kindly treated, and the young men were even indulged in many of the wild expressions of their humors. There were moments of irritation, and perhaps of policy, it is true, in which changes of treatment occurred, but confinement was the principal grievance. Books were obtained, and the studies of the midshipmen were not neglected. Sidi Mohammed D'Ghies proved their friend, though the Danish consul, M. Nissen, was the individual to whom the gratitude of the prisoners was principally due. This benevolent man commenced his acts of kindness the day after the Americans were taken, and he continued them, with unwearying philanthropy, down to the hour of their liberation. By means of this gentleman, Bainbridge was enabled to communicate with Commodore Preble, who received many useful suggestions from the prisoner, concerning his own operations before the town.

The Turks were so fortunate as to be favored with good weather, for several days after the Philadelphia fell into their hands. Surrounding the ship with their gunboats, and carrying out the necessary anchors, they soon hove her off the reef into deep water; where she floated, though it was necessary to use the pumps freely, and to stop some bad leaks. The guns, anchors, &c.,



had unavoidably been thrown on the rocks ; and they were also recovered with little difficulty. The prisoners, therefore, in a day or two, had the mortification to see their late ship anchored between the reef and the town ; and, ere long, she was brought into the harbor and partially repaired.

It is said, on good authority, that Bainbridge suggested to Preble the plan for the destruction of the Philadelphia, which was subsequently adopted. His correspondence was active, and there is no question that it contained many useful suggestions. A few weeks after he was captured, he received a manly, sensible letter from Preble, which, no doubt, had a cheering influence on his feelings.

It will be remembered that the Philadelphia went ashore on the morning of the 31st October, 1803. On the 15th of the succeeding February, the captives were awaked about midnight by the firing of guns. A bright light gleamed upon the windows, and they had the pleasure to see the frigate enveloped in flames. Decatur had just quitted the ship, and his ketch was then sweeping down the harbor towards the Siren, which awaited her in the offing !

This exploit caused a sensible change in the treatment of the officers, who were then captives in Tripoli. On the first of March, they were all removed to the castle, where they continued for the remainder of the time they were prisoners, or more than a twelvemonth. Several attempts at escape were made, but they all failed ; principally for the want of means. In this manner passed month after month, until the spring had advanced into the summer. One day the cheering in-

telligence spread among the captives that a numerous force was visible in the offing, but it disappeared in consequence of a gale of wind. This was about the 1st of August, 1804. A day or two later this force re-appeared, a heavy firing followed, and the gentlemen clambered up to the windows which commanded a partial view of the offing. There they saw a flotilla of gunboats, brigs, and schooners, gathering towards the rocks, where lay a strong division of the Turks, the shot from the batteries and shipping dashing the spray about, and a canopy of smoke collecting over the sea. In the back-ground was the Constitution—that glorious frigate!—coming down into the fray, with the men on her top-gallant-yards gathering in the canvas, as coolly as if she were about to anchor. This was a sight to warm a sailor's heart, even within the walls of a prison! Then they got a glimpse of the desperate assault led by Decatur—the position of their windows permitting no more—and they were left to imagine what was going on, amid the roar of cannon, to leeward. This was the celebrated attack of the 3d August; or that with which Preble began his own warfare, and little intermission followed for the next six weeks. On the night of the 4th of September, a few guns were fired—a heavy explosion was heard—and this terminated the din of war. It was the catastrophe in which Somers perished. A day or two later, Bainbridge was taken to see some of the dead of that affair, but he found the bodies so much mutilated as to render recognition impossible.

Bainbridge kept a journal of the leading events that occurred during his captivity. Its meagerness, however, supplies proof of the sameness of his life; little

occurring to give it interest, except an occasional difficulty with the Turks, and these attacks. In this journal he speaks of the explosion of the *Intrepid*, as an enterprise that entirely failed; injuring nothing. It was thought in the squadron that a part of the wall of the castle had fallen, on this occasion, but it was a mistake. Not a man, house, or vessel of Tripoli, so far as can now be ascertained, suffered, in the least, by the explosion. Bainbridge also mentions, what other information corroborates, that the shells seldom burst. Many fell within the town, but none blew up. Two or three even struck the house of the worthy Nissen, but the injury was slight, comparatively, in consequence of this circumstance.

At length the moment of liberation arrived. An American negotiator appeared in the person of the consul-general for Barbary, and matters drew towards a happy termination. Some obstacles, however, occurred, and, to get rid of them, Sidi Mohammed D'Ghies, a judge of human nature, and a man superior to most around him, proposed to the Bashaw to let Bainbridge go on board the *Constitution*, then commanded by Com. Rodgers. The proposal appeared preposterous to the wily and treacherous Jussuf, who insisted that his prisoner would never be fool enough to come back, if once at liberty. The minister understood the notions of military honor that prevailed amongst Christian nations better, and he finally succeeded in persuading his master to consent that Bainbridge might depart; but not until he had placed his own son in the Bashaw's hands, as a hostage.\*

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\* It is pleasing to know that this son has since had his life most probably saved, by the timely intervention of the American au-

The 1st of June, 1805, was a happy hour for the subject of our memoir, for then, after a captivity of nineteen months, to a day, was he permitted again to tread the deck of an American man-of-war. The entire day was spent in the squadron, and Bainbridge returned in the night, greatly discouraged as to the success of the negotiation. Finding Sidi Mohammed D'Ghies, they repaired to the palace together, where the Bashaw received them with wonder. He had given up the slight expectation he ever had of seeing his captive again, and had been sharply rebuking his minister for the weakness he had manifested by his credulity. Bainbridge stated to the prince the only terms on which the Americans would treat, and these Jussuf immediately rejected. The friendly offices of M. Nissen were employed next day, however, and on the third, a council of state was convened, at which the treaty, drawn up in form, was laid before the members for approval or rejection.

At this council, Bainbridge was invited to be present. When he entered, he was told by the Bashaw, himself, that no prisoner in Barbary had ever before been admitted to a similar honor, and that the discussions should be carried on in French, in order that he might understand them. The question of "peace or war" was then solemnly proposed. There were eight members of the council, and six were for war. Sidi Mohammed D'Ghies

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thorities. A man-of-war was sent to Tripoli, and brought him off at a most critical moment, when he was about to fall a sacrifice to his enemies. He is dead; having been an enlightened statesman, like his father, and a firm friend of this country; though much vilified and persecuted toward the close of his brief career.

and the commandant of the marine alone maintained the doctrine of peace. There may have been concert and artifice in all this; if so, it was well acted. The speeches were grave and dignified, and seemingly sincere, and, after a time, two of the dissentients were converted to the side of peace; leaving the cabinet equally divided. "How shall I act?" demanded the Bashaw. "Which party shall I satisfy?—you are four for peace, and four for war!" Here Sidi Mohammed D'Ghies arose and said it was for the sovereign to decide—they were but councillors, whereas he was their prince: though he entreated him, for his own interests and for those of his people, to make peace. The Bashaw drew his signet from his bosom, deliberately affixed it to the treaty, and said, with dignity and emphasis, "*It is peace.*"

The salutes followed, and the war ceased. The principal officers of the squadron visited the captives that evening; and the next day the latter were taken on board ship. A generous trait of the seamen and marines, on this occasion, merits notice. A Neapolitan slave had been much employed about them, and had shown them great kindness. They sent a deputation to Bainbridge, to request he would authorize the purser to advance them \$700, of their joint pay; it was done, and, with the money, they bought the liberty of the Neapolitan; carrying him off with them—finally landing him on his own shores.

At Syracuse, a court of inquiry was held, for the loss of the Philadelphia. This court consisted of Capts. James Barron, Hugh G. Campbell and Stephen Decatur, jun. Gen. Eaton was the judge advocate. The

result was an honorable acquittal. The finding of this court was dated June 29, 1805.

The country dealt generously and fairly by Bainbridge and his officers. The loss of the Philadelphia was viewed as being, precisely what it was, an unavoidable accident, that was met by men engaged in the zealous service of their country, in a distant sea, on an inhospitable shore, and at an inclement season of the year; and an accident that entailed on the sufferers a long and irksome captivity. To have been one of the Philadelphia's crew has ever been rightly deemed a strong claim on the gratitude of the republic, and from the hour at which the ill-fated ship lowered her ensign, down to the present moment, a syllable of reproach has never been whispered. Bainbridge, himself, was brought prominently into notice by the affair, and the sympathy his misfortunes produced in the public mind, made him a favorite with the nation. The advantage thus obtained, was supported and perpetuated by that frank and sincere earnestness which marked his public service, and which was so well adapted to embellish the manly career of a sailor.

The officers and crew of the Philadelphia reached home in the autumn of 1805, and were welcomed with the warmth that their privations entitled them to receive.

Capt. Bainbridge had married, when a young man, and he now found himself embarrassed in his circumstances, with an increasing family. But few ships were employed, and there were officers senior to himself to command them. The half-pay of his rank was then only \$600 a year, and he determined to get leave to

make a voyage or two in the merchant service, in order to repair his fortunes. He had been appointed to the navy-yard at New York, however, previously to this determination, but prudence pointed out the course on which he had decided. A voyage to the Havana, in which he was part owner, turned out well, and he continued in this pursuit for two years; or from the summer of 1806, until the spring of 1808. In March of the latter year, he was ordered to Portland, and, in December following, he was transferred to the command of the *President* 44, then considered the finest ship in the navy. Owing to deaths, resignations, and promotions, the list of captains had undergone some changes since the passage of the reduction-law. It now contained thirteen names, a number determined by an act passed in 1806, among which that of Bainbridge stood the sixth in rank.\* The difficulties with England, which had produced the armament, seemed on the point of adjustment, and immediate war was no longer expected. Bainbridge hoisted his first broad pennant in the *President*, having the command on the southern division of the coast; Com. Rodgers commanding at the north. In the summer of 1809, the *President* sailed on the coast service, and continued under Bainbridge's orders, until May, 1810, when he left her, again to return to a merchant vessel.

On this occasion Bainbridge went into the Baltic. On his way to St. Petersburg, a Danish cruiser took him, and carried him into Copenhagen. Here, his first thought was of his old friend Nissen. Within half an hour, the latter was with him, and it is a coincidence worthy of being mentioned, that at the very moment

the benevolent ex-consul heard of Bainbridge's arrival, he was actually engaged in unpacking a handsome silver urn, which had been sent to him, as a memorial of his own kindness to them, by the late officers of the Philadelphia.

Through the exertions of this constant friend, Bainbridge soon obtained justice, and his ship was released. He then went up the Baltic. In this trade Capt. Bainbridge was induced to continue, until the rencontre occurred, between his late ship, the *President*, and the British vessel of war, the *Little Belt*. As soon as apprized of this event, he left St. Petersburg, and made the best of his way to the Atlantic coast, over-land. In February, 1812, he reached Washington, and reported himself for service. But no consequences ever followed the action mentioned, and a period of brief but delusive calm succeeded, during which few, if any, believed that war was near. Still it had been seriously contemplated; and, it is understood, the question of the disposition of the navy, in the event of a struggle so serious as one with Great Britain's occurring, had been gravely agitated in the cabinet. To his great mortification, Bainbridge learned the opinion prevailed that it would be expedient to lay up all the vessels; or, at most, to use them only for harbor defence. Fortunately, the present Com. Stewart, an officer several years the junior of Bainbridge in rank, but one of high moral courage and of great decision of character, happened to be also at the seat of government. After a consultation, these two captains had interviews with the Secretary and President, and, at the request of the latter, addressed to him such a letter as finally induced a change



of policy. Had Bainbridge and Stewart never served their country but in this one act, they would be entitled to receive its lasting gratitude. Their remonstrances against belonging to a *peace-navy* were particularly pungent; but their main arguments were solid and convincing. After aiding in performing this act of vital service to the corps to which he belonged, Bainbridge proceeded to Charlestown, Massachusetts, and assumed the command of the yard.

War was declared on the 18th June, 1812; or shortly after Bainbridge was established at his new post. By this time death had cleared the list of captains of most of his superiors. Murray was at the head of the navy, but too old and infirm for active service. Next to him stood Rodgers; James Barron came third, but he was abroad; and Bainbridge was the fourth. This circumstance entitled him to a command afloat, and he got the *Constellation* 38, a lucky ship, though not the one he would have chosen, or the one he might justly have claimed in virtue of his commission. But the three best frigates had all gone to sea, in quest of the enemy, and he was glad to get any thing. A few weeks later, Hull came in with the *Constitution*, after performing two handsome exploits in her, and very generously consented to give her up, in order that some one else might have a chance. To this ship Bainbridge was immediately transferred, and on board her he hoisted his broad pennant on the 15th September, 1812.

The *Essex* 32, Capt. Porter, and *Hornet* 18, Capt. Lawrence, were joined to Bainbridge's orders, and his instructions were to cruise for the English East India trade, in the South Atlantic. The *Essex* was in the Delaware;

she was directed to rendezvous at the Cape de Verdes, or on the coast of South America. The Constitution and Hornet sailed in company, from Boston, on the 26th October. The events of the cruise prevented the Essex, which ship was commanded by Porter, his old first lieutenant in the Philadelphia, from joining the commodore.

The Constitution and Hornet arrived off St. Salvador on the 13th of December. The latter ship went in, and found the Bonne Citoyenne, an enemy's cruiser of equal force, lying in the harbor. This discovery led to a correspondence which will be mentioned in the life of Lawrence, and which induced Bainbridge to quit the offing, leaving the Hornet on the look-out for her enemy. On the 26th, accordingly, he steered to the southward, intending to stand along the coast as low as  $12^{\circ} 20'$  S., when, about 9, A. M., on the 29th, the ship then being in  $13^{\circ} 6'$  S. latitude, and  $31^{\circ}$  W. longitude, or about thirty miles from the land, she made two strange sail, inshore and to windward. After a little manœuvring, one of the ships closing, while the other stood on towards St. Salvador, Bainbridge was satisfied he had an enemy's frigate fairly within his reach. This was a fortunate meeting to occur in a sea where there was little hazard of finding himself environed by hostile cruisers, and only sixty-four days out himself from Boston.

In receiving the Constitution from Hull, Bainbridge found her with only a portion of her old officers in her, though the crew remained essentially the same. Morris, her late first lieutenant, had been promoted, and was succeeded by George Parker, a gentleman of

Virginia, and a man of spirit and determination. John Shubrick and Beekman Hoffman, the first of South Carolina and the last of New York, two officers who stood second to none of their rank in the service, were still in the ship, however, and Alwyn, her late master, had been promoted, and was now the junior lieutenant.\* In a word, their commander could rely on his officers and people, and he prepared for action with confidence and alacrity. A similar spirit seemed to prevail in the other vessel, which was exceedingly well officered, and, as it appeared in the end, was extra manned.

At a quarter past meridian, the enemy showed English colors. Soon after, the Constitution, which had stood to the southward to draw the stranger off the land, hauled up her mainsail, took in her royals, and tacked toward the stranger. As the wind was light and the water smooth, the Constitution kept every thing aloft, ready for use, closing with her enemy with royal yards across. At 2 P. M. the stranger was about half a mile to windward of the Constitution, and showed no colors, except a jack. Bainbridge now ordered a shot fired at him, to induce him to set an ensign. This order being misunderstood, produced a whole broadside from the Constitution, when the stranger showed English colors again and returned the fire.

This was the commencement of a furious cannon-

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\* Alas! how few of the gallant spirits of the late war remain! Bainbridge is gone. Parker died in command of the Siren, the next year. John Shubrick was lost in the Epervier, a twelve-month later; and Beekman Hoffman died a captain in 1834; while Alwyn survived the wounds received in this action but a few days.

ading, both ships manœuvring to rake and to avoid being raked. Very soon after the action commenced, Bainbridge was hit by a musket ball in the hip; and, a minute or two later, a shot came in and carried away the wheel, and drove a small bolt with considerable violence into his thigh. Neither injury, however, induced him even to sit down; he kept walking the quarter-deck, and attending to the ship, greatly adding to the subsequent inflammation, as these foreign substances were lodged in the muscles of his leg, and, in the end, threatened tetanus. The last injury was received about twenty minutes after the firing commenced, and was even of more importance to the ship than the wound it produced was to her captain. The wheel was knocked into splinters, and it became necessary to steer below.\* This was a serious evil in the midst of a battle, and more particularly in an action in which there was an unusual amount of manœuvring. The English vessel, being very strong manned, was

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\* Some time after the peace of 1815, a distinguished officer of the English navy visited the Constitution, then just fitted anew at Boston, for a Mediterranean cruise. He went through the ship accompanied by Capt. —, of our service. “Well, what do you think of her?” asked the latter, after the two had gone through the vessel and reached the quarter-deck again. “She is *one* of the finest frigates, if not the very finest frigate, I ever put my foot on board of,” returned the Englishman; “but as I must find *some* fault, I’ll just say that your wheel is one of the clumsiest things I ever saw, and is unworthy of the vessel.” Capt. — laughed, and then explained the appearance of the wheel to the other, as follows: “When the Constitution took the Java, the former’s wheel was shot out of her. The Java’s wheel was fitted on the Constitution to steer with, and, although we think it as ugly as you do, we keep it as a trophy!”

actively handled, and, sailing better than the Constitution in light winds, her efforts to rake produced a succession of evolutions, which caused both ships to ware so often, that the battle terminated several miles to leeward of the point on the ocean where it commenced.

After the action had lasted some time, Bainbridge determined to close with his enemy at every hazard. He set his courses accordingly, and luffed up close to the wind. This brought matters to a crisis, and the Englishman, finding the Constitution's fire too heavy, attempted to run her aboard. His jib-boom did get foul of the American frigate's mizen rigging, but the end of his bowsprit being shot away, and his foremast soon after following, the ships passed clear of each other, making a lucky escape for the assailants.\* The battle

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\* On the part of the enemy, in the war of words which succeeded the war of 1812, it was pretended that the Constitution kept off in this engagement. Bainbridge, in his official letter, says he endeavoured to close, at the risk of being raked; the early loss of the Constitution's wheel prevented her from manœuvring as she might otherwise have done. When a frigate's wheel is gone, the tiller is worked by tackles, below two decks, and this makes awkward work; first, as to the transmission of orders, and next, and principally, as to the degree of change, the men who do the work not being able to see the sails. There are two modes of transmitting the orders; one by a tube fitted for that express purpose, and the other by a line of midshipmen.

But the absurd part of the argument was an attempt to show that the Constitution captured the Java by her great superiority in small-arms-men; Kentucky riflemen, of course, of whom, by the way, there probably was never one in an American ship. This attempt was made, in connection with a battle in which the defeated party, too, had every spar, even to her bowsprit, shot out of her! All the witnesses on the subsequent court of inquiry ap-

continued some time longer, the Constitution throwing in several effective raking broadsides, and then falling alongside of her enemy to leeward. At length, finding her adversary's guns silenced and his ensign down, Bainbridge boarded his tacks again, luffed up athwart the Englishman's bows, and got a position ahead and to windward, in order to repair damages; actually coming out of the battle as he had gone into it, with royal yards across, and every spar, from the highest to the lowest, in its place! The enemy presented a singular contrast. Stick after stick had been shot out of him, as it might be, inch by inch too, until nothing, but a few stumps, was left. All her masts were gone, the foremast having been shot away twice, once near the cat-harpings, and again much nearer to the deck; the main-topmast had come down some time before the mainmast fell. The bowsprit, as has been said, was shot away at the cap. After receiving these damages, the enemy did not wait for a new attack, but as soon as the Constitution came round, with an intention to cross

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pear to have been asked about this musketry, and the answer of the boatswain is amusing.

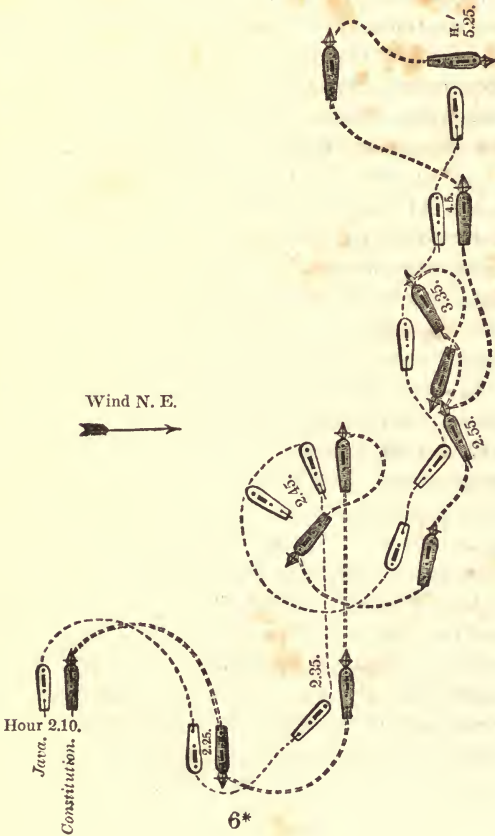
*Question.* "Did you suffer much from musketry on the fore-castle?"

*Answer.* "Yes; and likewise from round and grape."

Another absurdity was an attempt to show (see James, Ap. p. 12) that the Java would have carried the Constitution had her men boarded. The Constitution's upper deck was said to be deserted, as if her people had left it in apprehension of their enemies. Not a man left his station in the ship, that day, except under orders, and so far from caring about the attempt to board, they ridiculed it. The Java was very bravely fought, beyond a question, but the Constitution took her, and came out of the action with royal yards across!

her fore-foot, he lowered a jack which had been flying at the stump of his mizenmast.\*

\* The following diagram will aid the reader in his view of the movements of the two vessels, during the engagement.



The ship Bainbridge captured was the Java 38, Capt. Lambert. The Java was a French built ship that had been captured some time previously, under the name of *La Renommée*, in those seas where lies the island after which she was subsequently called. She mounted 49 carriage guns, and had a sufficient number of supernumeraries on board to raise her complement at quarters to something like 400 souls. Of these the English accounts admit that 124 were killed and wounded; though Bainbridge thought her loss was materially greater. It is said a muster-list was found in the ship, that was dated five days after the Java left England, and which contained 446 names. From these, however, was to be deducted the crew for a prize she had taken; the ship in company when made the day of the action. Capt. Lambert died of his wounds; but there was a master and commander on board, among the passengers, and the surviving first lieutenant was an officer of merit.

In addition to the officers and seamen who were in the Java, as passengers, were Lieutenant-General Hislop and his staff, the former of whom was going to Bombay as governor. Bainbridge treated these captives with great liberality and kindness, and after destroying his prize for want of means to refit her, he landed all his prisoners, on parole, at St. Salvador.

In this action the Constitution had nine men killed and twenty-five men wounded. She was a good deal cut up in the rigging, and had a few spars injured, but considering the vigour of the engagement and the smoothness of the water, she escaped with but little injury. There is no doubt that she was a heavier ship than her adversary, but the difference in the batteries



was less than appeared by the nominal calibres of the guns; the American shot, in that war, being generally of light weight, while those of the Java, by some accounts, were French.

It has been said that Bainbridge disregarded his own wounds until the irritation endangered his life. His last injury must have been received about half-past two, and he remained actively engaged on deck until 11 o'clock at night; thus adding the irritation of eight hours of exertion to the original injuries. The consequences were some exceedingly threatening symptoms, but skilful treatment subdued them, when his recovery was rapid.

An interesting interview took place between Bainbridge and Lambert, on the quarter-deck of the Constitution, after the arrival of the ship at St. Salvador. The English captain was in his cot, and Bainbridge approached, supported by two of his own officers, to take his leave, and to restore the dying man his sword. This interview has been described as touching, and as leaving kind feelings between the parting officers. Poor Lambert, an officer of great merit, died a day or two afterwards.

The Constitution now returned home for repairs, being very rotten. She reached Boston, February 27, 1813, after a cruise of only four months and one day. Bainbridge returned in triumph, this time, and, if his countrymen had previously manifested a generous sympathy in his misfortunes, they now showed as strong a feeling in his success. The victor was not more esteemed for his courage and skill than for the high

and chivalrous courtesy and liberality with which he had treated his prisoners.

Bainbridge gave up the Constitution on his return home, and resumed the command of the yard at Charlestown, where the Independence 74 was building, a vessel he intended to take, when launched. Here he remained until the peace, that ship not being quite ready to go out when the treaty was signed. In the spring of 1815, a squadron was sent to the Mediterranean, under Decatur, to act against the Dey of Algiers, and Bainbridge followed, as commander-in-chief, in the Independence, though he did not arrive until his active predecessor had brought the war to a successful close. On this occasion, Bainbridge had under his orders the largest naval force that had then ever been assembled under the American flag; from eighteen to twenty sail of efficient cruisers being included in his command. In November, after a cruise of about five months, he returned to Newport, having one ship of the line, two frigates, seven brigs, and three schooners in company. Thus he carried to sea the first two-decker that ever sailed under the American flag; the present Capt. Bolton being his first lieutenant. During this cruise, Com. Bainbridge arranged several difficulties with the Barbary powers, and in all his service, he maintained the honor and dignity of his flag and of his command.

Bainbridge now continued at Boston several years, with his pennant flying in the Independence, as a guard ship. In the autumn of 1819, however, he was detached once more, for the purpose of again commanding in the Mediterranean. This was the fifth time in which

he had been sent into that sea ; three times in command of frigates, and twice at the head of squadrons. The Columbus 80, an entirely new ship, was selected for his pennant, and he did not sail until April, 1820, in consequence of the work that it was necessary to do on board her. The Columbus reached Gibraltar early in June. This was an easy and a pleasant cruise, one of the objects being to show the squadron in the ports of the Mediterranean, in order to impress the different nations on its coast with the importance of respecting the maritime rights of the republic. Bainbridge had a strong desire to show his present force, the Columbus in particular, before Constantinople, whither he had been sent twenty years before, against his wishes, but a firman could not be procured to pass the castles with so heavy a ship. After remaining out about a year, Bainbridge was relieved, and returned home, the principal objects of his cruise having been effected.

This was Bainbridge's last service afloat. He had now made ten cruises in the public service, had commanded a schooner, a brig, five frigates and two line-of-battle ships, besides being at the head of three different squadrons, and it was thought expedient to let younger officers gain some experience. Age did not induce him to retire, for he was not yet fifty ; but others had claims on the country, and his family had claims on himself.

Although unemployed afloat, Bainbridge continued diligently engaged in the service, generally of the republic and of the navy. He was at Charlestown—a favourite station with him—for some time, and then was placed at the head of the board of navy commissioners.

at Washington. After serving his three years in the latter station, he had the Philadelphia yard. Bainbridge had removed his family twenty-six times, in the course of his different changes, and considering himself as a Delaware seaman, he now determined to establish himself permanently in the ancient capital of the country. An unpleasant collision with the head of the department, however, forced him from his command in 1831; but, the next year, he was restored to the station at Charlestown. His health compelled him to give up this station in a few months, and his constitution being broken, he returned to his family in Philadelphia, in the month of March, 1832, only to die. His disease was pneumonia, connected with great irritation of the bowels and a wasting diarrhœa. As early as in January, 1833, he was told that his case was hopeless, when he manifested a calm and manly resignation to his fate. He lived, however, until the 28th of July, when he breathed his last, aged fifty-nine years, two months and twenty-one days. An hour or two previously to his death, his mind began to wander, and not long before he yielded up his breath, he raised all that was left of his once noble frame, demanded his arms, and ordered all hands called to board the enemy!

Bainbridge married, in the early part of his career, a lady of the West Indies, of the name Hyleger. She was the grand-daughter of a former governor of St. Eustatia, of the same name. By this lady he had five children who grew up; a son and four daughters. The son was educated to the bar; was a young man of much promise, but he died a short time previously to his father. Of the daughters, one married a gentleman of





WILLIAM BURDETTE,

*10th of March, 1811, Nassau, N.Y.*

the name of Hayes, formerly of the navy; another married Mr. A. G. Jaudon, of Philadelphia, and a third is now the wife of Henry K. Hoff, a native of Pennsylvania, and a sea-lieutenant in the service, of eleven years' standing. He left his family in easy circumstances, principally the result of his own prudence, forethought, gallantry, and enterprise.

At the time of his death, Commodore Bainbridge stood third in rank, in the American navy; having a long list of captains beneath him. Had justice been done to this gallant officer, to the service to which he belonged, or even to the country, whose interests are alone to be efficiently protected by a powerful marine, he would have worn a flag some years before the termination of his career. Quite recently a brig of war has received his name, in that service which he so much loved, and in which he passed the best of his days.

Com. Bainbridge was a man of fine and commanding personal appearance. His stature was about six feet, and his frame was muscular and of unusually good proportions. His face was handsome, particularly in youth, and his eye uncommonly animated and piercing. In temperament he was ardent and sanguine; but cool in danger, and of a courage of proof. His feelings were vehement, and he was quickly roused; but, generous and brave, he was easily appeased. Like most men who are excitable, but who are firm at bottom, he was the calmest in moments of the greatest responsibility.\* He was hospitable, chivalrous, magnanimous,

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\* A singular proof how far the resolution of Bainbridge could overcome his natural infirmities, was connected with a very melancholy affair. When Decatur fought the duel in which he fell, he

and a firm friend. His discipline was severe, but he tempered it with much consideration for the wants and health of his crews. Few served with him who did not love him, for the conviction that his heart was right, was general among all who knew him. There was a cordiality and warmth in his manner, that gained him friends, and those who knew him best, say he had the art of keeping them.

A shade was thrown over the last years of the life of this noble-spirited man by disease. His sufferings drove him to the use of antispasmodics, to an extent which deranged the nerves. This altered his mood so much as to induce those who did not know him well to imagine that his character had undergone the change. This was not the case, however; to his dying hour Bainbridge continued the warm-hearted friend, the chivalrous gentleman, and the devoted lover of his country's honor and interests.

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selected his old commander and friend, Bainbridge, to accompany him to the field. Bainbridge had a slight natural impediment in his speech, which sometimes embarrassed his utterance; especially when any thing excited him. On such occasions, he usually began a sentence—"un-ter"—"un-ter," or "un-to," and then he managed to get out the beginning of what he had to say. On the sad occasion alluded to, the word of command was to be "Fire—*one, two, three*;" the parties firing between "Fire" and "*three*." Bainbridge won the toss, and was to give the word. It then occurred to one of the gentlemen of the other side that some accident might arise from this peculiarity of Bainbridge's—"one *two*" sounding so much like "un-ter," and he desired that the whole order might be rehearsed before it was finally acted. This was done; but Bainbridge was perfectly cool, and no mistake was made.



## RICHARD SOMERS.

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FEW men in this country have left names as distinguished as that of Somers, around whose personal history there remains so much doubt. Had he not given up his life in the service of his country, he would most probably have now been living, in a green old age. While many of his friends and shipmates still survive to bear testimony to his bravery and his virtues, yet no one seems to possess the precise information that is necessary to a full and accurate biographical sketch of more than his public services. The same mystery that has so long clothed the incidents of his death, appears to have gathered about those of his early life, veiling the beginning and the end equally in a sad and uncertain interest.

The family of Somers emigrated from England to America in the early part of the eighteenth century, establishing itself at Great Egg Harbor, Gloucester county, New Jersey. Here the emigrant became the proprietor of a considerable landed property, most of which still remains in the hands of his descendants, the place bearing the name of Somers' Point. This Point forms the southeastern extremity of the county, being separated from that of Cape May merely by the Harbor. Gordon, in his Gazetteer of New Jersey, thus describes the spot, viz.:—"Somers' Point, post-office and port of

entry for Great Egg Harbor district, upon the Great Egg Harbor bay, about 43 miles S. E. from Woodbury, 88 from Trenton, and, by post-route, 196 from Washington. There is a tavern and boarding-house here, and several farm-houses. It is much resorted to for sea-bathing in summer, and gunning in the fall season."

It is believed that the Christian name of the emigrant was John, and as this was also the baptismal designation of the celebrated jurist, who came from the middle class of society, the circumstances, taken in connection with the fact that the family was known to have been respectable in England, leaves the strong probability that the parties had a common origin. At all events, this John Somers, by his possessions, and position, must have been of a condition in life much superior to the great body of the emigrants to the American colonies. Report makes him a man of strong English habits and character, while there is a tradition among his descendants of the existence of a mother, or of a mother-in-law, who was of French extraction, and a native of Acadie. This person may have been the mother of the wife of the emigrant, however; but the circumstance is not without interest, when it is remembered that the regretted Somers himself, like his intimate friend Decatur, had more of the physical appearance of one descended from a French stock, than of one who was derived from a purely Anglo-Saxon ancestry.

The property at Somers' Point descended principally, if not entirely, to the two sons of the emigrant, John and Richard. John, the eldest, lived and died on the estate, where his descendants are still to be found. Richard, the youngest, married Sophia Stillwell, of the

same part of his native province, by whom he had three children, Constant, Sarah, and Richard.

Constant Somers married Miss Leaming, of Cape May county, and died young, leaving a son and a daughter. The former, who bore his father's name, was accidentally killed at Cronstadt, in Russia, while yet a youth, and the daughter married a gentleman of the name of Corsen, also of Cape May county, and has issue. These children are the only descendants, in the third generation, of Richard Somers, the second son of the emigrant.

Sarah Somers married Captain Keen, of Philadelphia, and still survives as his widow, but has no children. Richard, the youngest child, is the subject of our memoir.

Richard Somers, the elder, would seem to have been a man of considerable local note. He was a colonel of the militia, a judge of the county court, and his name appears among those of the members from his native county in the Provincial Congress, for the year 1775; though it would seem that he did not take his seat. Col. Somers was an active whig in the Revolution, and was much employed, in the field and otherwise, more especially during the first years of the great struggle for national existence. His influence, in the part of New Jersey where he resided, was of sufficient importance to render him particularly obnoxious to the attacks of the tories, who were in the practice of seizing prominent whigs, and of carrying them within the British lines; and Great Egg Harbor being much exposed to descents from the side of the sea, Col. Somers was induced to remove to Philadelphia with his family, for

protection. As this removal must have been made after the town was evacuated by Sir Henry Clinton, it could not have taken place earlier than the summer of 1778; and there is good reason for thinking it occurred two or three seasons later. Here Col. Somers remained for several years, or nearly down to the period of his death.

Richard Somers, the son of Richard, and the grandson of the emigrant, it is believed was born in 1779, and it is known that his birth took place prior to the removal of his parents to Philadelphia. As his father was born November 24, 1737, it determines two facts: first, that the family must have emigrated at least as early as 1730, if not some years earlier; and, secondly, that Col. Somers had reached middle age when his distinguished and youngest child drew his earliest breath. Somers first went to school in Philadelphia, and was subsequently sent to Burlington, where there was an academy of some merit for the period. At the latter place the boy continued until near the time of the death of his father, if not quite down to the day of that event.

Col. Somers died in 1793 or 1794; two records of his death existing, one of which places it in the former, and the other in the latter year.

There is even some uncertainty thrown around the precise period when Somers first went to sea. His nearest surviving relative is of opinion that he had never entered upon the profession when he joined the navy; but this opinion is met by the more precise knowledge of one of his shipmates in the frigate in which he first served, who affirms that the young man was a very respectable seaman on coming on board

The result of our inquiries is to convince us that Somers must have gone to sea somewhere about the year 1794, or shortly after the death of his father, and when he himself was probably between fifteen and sixteen years of age. The latter period, indeed, agrees with that named by the relative mentioned, as his age when he went to sea, though it is irreconcilable with the date of the equipment of the man-of-war he first joined, and that of his own warrant in the navy. From the best information in our possession, therefore, we are led to believe that the boy sailed, first as a hand and then as a mate, if not as master, on board a coaster, owned by some one of his own family, of which more than one plied between Great Egg Harbor and the ports of New York and Philadelphia. This accords, too, with his known love of adventure and native resolution, as well as with his orphan condition; though he inherited from his father a respectable property, including a portion of the original family estate, as well as of lands in the interior of Pennsylvania.

In his boyhood and youth, Somers was remarkable for a chivalrous sense of honor, great mildness of manner and disposition, all mingled with singular firmness of purpose. His uncle, John Somers, who was the head of the family, and as such maintained an authority that was more usual in the last century than it is to-day, is described as an austere man, who was held in great awe by his relatives, and who was accustomed to meet with the greatest deference amongst his kindred, not only for all his commands, but for most of his opinions. The firmness and decision shown by his nephew, Richard, however, in a controversy about a dog, in

which the uncle was wrong and the boy right, are said to have astonished the whole family, and to have created a profound respect in the senior for the junior, that continued as long as the two lived. Richard could not have been more than twelve when this little incident occurred.

Somers received his warrant as a midshipman in the spring of 1798. This was, virtually, at the commencement of the present navy, the *Ganges* 24, Capt. Dale, the first vessel that got out, being ordered to sea May 22d of that year. The *Ganges* was soon followed by the *Constellation* 38, and *Delaware* 20, the three ships cruising on the coast to prevent the depredations committed by French privateers. The next vessel out was the *United States* 44, bearing the broad pennant of Com. John Barry, the senior officer of the service. To this vessel Somers was attached, making his first cruise in her.

The *United States* was then, as now, one of the finest frigates that floats. Equipped in Philadelphia, then the capital of the country, and the centre of American civilization, and commanded by an experienced and excellent officer, no young man could have commenced his professional career under more favorable auspices than was the case with Somers. The ship had for lieutenants, Ross 1st, Mullowney 2d, Barron 3d, and Stewart 4th. The two latter are now the senior officers of the service. Among his messmates in the steerage, Somers had for friends and associates Decatur and Caldwell, both Philadelphians. It is a proof that Somers had been previously to sea, that, on joining this ship, he was named as master's mate of the hold, a situation uniformly given, in

that day, to the most experienced and trust-worthy of the midshipmen. It was while thus associated, that the close connection was generated between Somers and Decatur, which, for the remainder of their joint lives, rendered them generous professional rivals and fast personal friends.

The United States sailed on her first cruise early in July, 1798, going to the eastward, where she collected a small squadron, that had come out of the ports of New England, and with which she soon after proceeded to the West Indies. She remained cruising in those seas for the remainder of the year, as the commanding vessel; Com. Barry having collected a force of some twenty sail under his orders by the commencement of winter. Shortly after Mr. Ross left the ship, and Messrs. Mallowney and Barron were promoted. This occurred in the spring of 1799, when Mr. Stewart became 1st lieutenant of the frigate, Mr. Edward Meade 2d, Somers 3d, and Decatur 4th. Thus the service of Somers, as a midshipman, could not have exceeded a twelvemonth: conclusive evidence of his having been at sea previously to joining the navy, were any other testimony required than that of his shipmates. In the autumn of 1799, the United States sailed from Newport, Rhode Island, for Lisbon, having on board, as commissioners to the French Republic, the gentlemen who subsequently arranged the terms of peace. It is probable that Somers, whose previous experience had been in the American seas, crossed the Atlantic for the first time in this cruise. Mr. Stewart being placed in command of the Experiment 12, in the year 1800, Somers ended the war as second lieutenant of the ship

he had joined as a midshipman about three years before.

The war of 1798 allowed but few opportunities for officers to distinguish themselves. But two frigate actions were fought, and, singularly enough, on the side of the Americans, both fell to the share of the same commander and the same ship, *Truxtun* and the *Constellation*; leaving nothing but vigilant watchfulness and activity to the lot of most of the other officers and vessels. While the United States had no chance for earning laurels, she was always a model cruiser for discipline and seamanship, and the young men who served in her during the quasi-war, had no grounds of complaint on the score of either precept or example. They had been in an excellent school, and the "Old Wagoner," as this vessel was afterwards called, turned out as many distinguished officers as any vessel of the day.

At the formation of the peace establishment, in 1801, Somers was retained as the twelfth lieutenant, in a list that then presented only thirty-six officers of that rank. The rapid promotion which marked the first few years of the existence of the present marine, belongs to the history of the day, and must be ascribed to the occurrence of two wars in quick succession, and to the wants of an infant service. The list alluded to forms a subject of melancholy and yet proud interest to every American who is familiar with this branch of the republic's annals. It is headed by the name of Charles Stewart, and closes with that of Jacob Jones. Hull, Shaw, Chauncy and Smith precede Somers on this list; Decatur stands next to him; and Dent, Porter, the



elder Cassin, Gordon and Caldwell follow. A long list of names that have since become distinguished, including those of M'Donough, Lawrence, the younger Biddle, Perry, the younger Cassin, Trippe, Allen, Burrows, Blakely, Downes, Crane, Morris, Ridgely, Warrington, the elder Wadsworth, &c. &c., was then to be found among the midshipmen. Not a name below that of the seventeenth captain of the present day (Woodhouse) was then to be found in the navy register at all; that of Sloat, now the thirty-third captain, having lost its place in consequence of a resignation. When Commodores Stewart and Hull examine the present register, they find on it but eleven names, besides their own, that were there even when they were made commanders. They both remain captains themselves to this hour!

The United States was laid up in ordinary at the peace of 1801, and there was this noble frigate suffered to remain, until she was again commissioned for the coast service, a few months previously to the war of 1813. Among the vessels that were built to meet the emergency of the French struggle, was a frigate called the Boston, a vessel that it was usual then to rate as a thirty-two, but which was properly a twenty-eight, carrying only twenty-four twelves on her gun-deck. This little ship had fought a spirited action with a heavy French corvette called the Bercean, in the war that had just terminated, and had brought in her antagonist. This circumstance rendered her a favourite, and she was kept in commission at the termination of hostilities, under the command of Captain Daniel M'Niell, an officer of whose eccentricities there will be

occasion to speak, when we come to the record of his extraordinary career. Somers, on quitting the United States, was transferred to the *Boston* as her first lieutenant. The ship sailed from New York in the summer of 1801, for L'Orient, in France, having on board Chancellor Livingston and suite, the newly appointed legation to that country. After landing the minister, the *Boston* proceeded to the Mediterranean. The cruise of this ship was remarkable for its entire independence. Capt. M'Niell had been ordered to join the Mediterranean squadron, then under the pennant of Com. Dale; and, although he was in that sea during parts of the commands of that officer and his successor, Com. Morris, he so successfully eluded both as never to fall in with them; or if he met the latter at all, it was only for a moment, and near the end of his own cruise. Capt. M'Niell, notwithstanding, wanted for neither courage nor activity. He visited many ports, gave frequent convoys, and even went off Tripoli, the scene of the war; but, from accident or design, all this was so timed as to destroy every thing like concert and combination. In this cruise Somers had an opportunity of seeing many of the ports of Italy, Spain, and the islands, and doubtless he acquired much of that self-reliance and experience which are so necessary to a seaman, in his responsible station of a first lieutenant. He was then a very young man, not more than twenty-three; and this was a period of life when such opportunities were of importance. Nor does he seem to have neglected them, as all of his contemporaries speak of his steadiness of character, good sense, and amiable, correct deportment, with affection and respect. The

Boston returned home at the close of 1802, when Capt. M'Niell retired from the service, under the reduction law, and the ship was laid up, never to be employed again. The commander subsequently returned to the seas, in the revenue service, but the frigate lay rotting at Washington, until she was burned at the inroad of the enemy, in 1814, a worthless hulk.

At the reduction of the navy in 1801, but one vessel below the rate of a frigate, the *Enterprise 12*, was retained in the marine. Most of the sloops that had been used in the French war were clumsy vessels with gun-decks, that had been bought into the service. They were not fit to be preserved, and the department was not sorry to get rid of them. By this time, however, the want of small vessels was much felt in carrying on the Tripolitan war, and a law providing for the construction of four vessels of not more than sixteen guns, passed in the session of 1802-3. These vessels were the *Siren 16*, *Argus 16*, *Nautilus 12*, and *Vixen 12*. As the country at that day had no proper yards, it was customary to assign certain officers to superintend the building and equipment of vessels on the stocks, the selections being commonly made from those who it was intended should subsequently serve in them. On this occasion Decatur was attached to the *Argus*, it being understood he was to take her to the Mediterranean and give her up to Hull, receiving the *Enterprise* from the latter in exchange, as the junior officer. Stewart was given the *Siren*, as his due; Smith got the *Vixen*; and Somers the *Nautilus*. By this time, or in the spring of 1803, owing to resignations, the latter stood seventh on the list of lieutenants, Smith

being one before him, and Decatur one his junior. Stewart and Hull headed the register. Of the thirty-six officers of this rank retained under the reduction law, but twenty-five then remained in service. To-day their number is lowered to three, viz., Stewart, Hull and Jacob Jones !

The Nautilus, the first and only command of Somers, was a beautiful schooner of about 160 or 170 tons, and mounted twelve 18lb. carronades, with two sixes, having a crew of from 75 to 95 souls. This was a handsome situation for a young sailor of twenty-four, who had then followed his profession but about nine years, and who had been in the navy but five, having commenced a midshipman. In that day, however, no one envied Somers, or believed him unduly favoured, for he was thought to be an old officer, though he had not been half the time in the service which is now employed in the subordinate situations of midshipman and passed midshipman.

The Mediterranean squadron, which sailed in the summer and autumn of 1803, was that which subsequently became so celebrated under the orders of Preble. It consisted of the Constitution 44, Preble's own ship ; the Philadelphia 38, Capt. Bainbridge ; Argus 16, first Lieut. Com. Decatur, then Lieut. Com. Hull ; Siren 16, Lieut. Com. Stewart ; Vixen 12, Lieut. Com. Smith ; Enterprise 12, first Lieut. Com. Hull, then Lieut. Com. Decatur ; and Nautilus 12, Lieut. Com. Somers. These vessels did not proceed to their station in squadron, but they left home as they got ready. The Enterprise was already out, but, of the ships fitting, the Nautilus was the first equipped, and the first to sail.

Somers left America early in the summer, and anchored in Gibraltar Bay on the 27th July. The remaining vessels arrived at different times, between the last of August and the first of November. After a short stop at Gibraltar, the Nautilus went aloft, giving convoy when required, returning to the Rock in time to meet the commodore in September.

The relief and the homeward-bound squadrons, or at least that part of the former which had then arrived and was below, and the return ships under Com. Rodgers, met at Gibraltar early in September. The state of the relations with Morocco being very precarious, Com. Preble determined to make an effort to avert a new war, and Com. Rodgers handsomely consenting to aid him, the former proceeded to Tangiers with all the force he could assemble. Here he succeeded in awing the Emperor into a treaty, and in putting a stop to a system of depredations which the subjects of that prince had already commenced. The Nautilus formed a part of the force employed on this occasion, and was particularly useful on account of her light draught of water.

After arranging the difficulty with Morocco, Preble made a formal declaration of the blockade of Tripoli, before which town he believed that the Philadelphia and Vixen were then cruising; though, unknown to him, the latter had been temporarily detached, and the Philadelphia was in possession of the enemy. From this time until the succeeding spring, the Nautilus was employed in convoying, or in carrying orders necessary to the preparations that were making for the coming season; but in March she formed a part of the

blockading force in front of Tripoli. In consequence of the captivity of Capt. Bainbridge, Lieut. Com. Stewart was the officer second in rank in the squadron, and he was consequently kept much upon the coast in command, while Preble was carrying on the negotiations by means of which he obtained the gunboats and other supplies necessary to the attacks he contemplated. In March, 1804, while the *Siren* and *Nautilus* were alone maintaining the blockade, the two vessels had been driven to the eastward of their port by a gale, and early in the morning, while returning, they made a warlike looking brig lying to off the place, with which she was evidently in communication. Signal was made to the *Nautilus* to stand close in, and watch the gunboats, while the *Siren* ran alongside of the stranger, who was captured for a violation of the blockade. The prize proved to be a privateer called the *Transfer*, with an English commission. She carried 16 guns and 80 men, and hailed from Malta, but, in fact, belonged to the Bashaw of Tripoli; her papers having been obtained through the Tripolitan consul in Malta, who was a native of that island. This vessel was appraised, equipped by the squadron, and used in the war, having had her name changed to the *Scourge*. Owing to certain scruples of Mr. Jefferson on the subject of blockades, the vessel was not condemned until the war of 1812, nor were the captors paid their prize-money until Somers had been dead nearly eleven years.

Between the time of the capture of the *Transfer* and the month of July, the *Nautilus* was much employed by the commodore, going below and visiting different ports in Sicily. On the 20th of that month, Somers

sailed from Malta, in company with the Constitution, the Enterprise, two bomb ketches and six gunboats that had been obtained from the Neapolitans, bound off Tripoli. On the arrival of the commodore, his whole force was collected, and that series of short but brilliant operations commenced, which has rendered the service of this season so remarkable in the history of the American navy.

A spirit of high emulation existed among the young commanders by whom Preble now found himself supported. Hull was the oldest in years, and he had hardly reached the prime of life, while Stewart, Smith, Somers and Decatur were all under five-and-twenty. With the exception of the commodore, no commanding officer was married, and most of them were bound together by the ties of intimate friendships. In a word, their lives, as yet, had been prosperous; the past left little to complain of, the future was full of hope; and there had been little opportunity for that spirit of selfishness which is so apt to generate quarrels, to get possession of minds so free and temperaments so ardent.

This is the proper place to allude to a private adventure of Somers', about the existence of which there would seem to be no doubt, though, like so much that belongs to this interesting man, its details are involved in obscurity. While at Syracuse, where the American vessels made their principal rendezvous, he was walking in the vicinity of the town in company with two brother officers, when five men carrying swords, who were afterwards ascertained to be soldiers of the garrison, made an attack on the party, with an attempt to rob.

One of the gentlemen was provided with a dirk, but Somers and the other were totally unarmed. The officer with the dirk used the weapon so vigorously as soon to bring down one assailant, while Somers grappled with another. In the struggle Somers seized the blade of his antagonist's sword, and was severely cut in the hand by the efforts of the robber to recover it, but the latter did not succeed, the weapon being wrested from him and plunged into his own body. This decided the matter, the three remaining robbers taking to flight. The dead bodies were carried into the town and recognised. This adventure is believed to have occurred while the *Nautilus* was absent on her last visit to Sicily, though it may have been of older date; possibly as old as the time when Somers was in the Boston. We think the latter improbable, however, as the circumstance seems to be unknown to his nearest relatives in this country, which would hardly have been the case had it taken place previously to his last visit to America. Our information comes from an intimate friend, who received the facts from Somers himself, but who was not at Syracuse at the moment the attempt to rob occurred.

A gale of wind prevented the American vessels from commencing operations before the 3d of August. On that day Com. Preble stood in within a league of Tripoli, with a pleasant breeze from the eastward. Here he wore ship, with his head off the land, and signaled all the vessels to pass within hail of the *Constitution*. As the brigs and schooners passed the frigate each commander was ordered to prepare for an attack. Every thing was previously arranged, and the ardor of the young men under the orders of Preble being of the



highest character, in one hour every man and craft were ready for the contemplated service.

The harbor of Tripoli lies in a shallow indentation of the coast, being tolerably protected against easterly and westerly gales by the formation of the land, while a reef of rocks, which stretches for a mile and a half in a northeasterly course, commencing at the town itself, breaks the seas that roll in from the northward. This reef extends near half a mile from the walls, entirely above water, and is of sufficient height and width to receive water batteries, containing the Lazaretto and one or two forts. It is this commencement of the reef which constitutes what is usually termed the mole, and behind it lies the harbor proper. At its termination is a narrow opening in the reef which is called the western entrance, through which it is possible for a ship to pass, though the channel is not more than two hundred feet in width. Beyond this passage the rocks reappear, with intervals between them, though lying on shoals with from one half to five and a half feet of water on them. The line of rocks and shoals extends more than a mile outside of the western entrance. Beyond its termination is the principal entrance to Tripoli, which is of sufficient width though not altogether free from shoals. The distance across the bay, from the northeastern extremity of the rocks to what is called the English fort, on the main land, is about two thousand yards, or quite within the effective range of heavy guns. In the bottom of the bay, or at the southeastern angle of the town, stands the bashaw's castle, a work of some size and force. It lies rather more than half a mile from the western entrance, and somewhat more than a

mile from the outer extremity of the reef. Thus any thing within the rocks is commanded by all the water defences of the place, while shot from the castle, and more especially from the natural mole, would reach a considerable distance into the offing. Some artificial works aided in rendering the northwestern corner of the harbor still more secure, and this place is usually called the galley mole. Near this is the ordinary landing, and it is the spot that may properly be termed the port.

The Tripolitans fully expected the attack of the 2d of August, though they little anticipated its desperate character, or its results. They had anchored nine of their large, well-manned gunboats just outside of what are called the Harbor Rocks, or the northeastern extremity of the reef, evidently with a view of flanking the expected attack on the town, which, lying on the margin of the sea, is much exposed, though the rocks in its front were well garnished with heavy guns. Accustomed to cannonading at the distance of a mile, these gunboats expected no warmer service, more especially as a nearer approach would bring their assailants within reach of the castle and batteries. In addition to the nine boats to the eastward, there were five others which also lay along the line of rocks nearer to the western entrance, and within pistol shot of the batteries in that part of the defences. Within the reef were five more gunboats and several heavy galleys, ready to protect the outer line of gunboats at need, forming a reserve.

Com. Preble had borrowed only six gunboats from the King of Naples, and these were craft that were much inferior in size and force to the generality of those used by the enemy. Each of these boats had a few

Neapolitans in her to manage her on ordinary occasions, but, for the purposes of action, officers and crews were detailed from the different vessels of the squadron. These six boats were divided into two divisions; to the command of one was assigned Lieut. Com. Somers, while Lieut. Com. Decatur led the other. Somers was thought to be the senior lieutenant of the two, though Decatur was at this time actually a captain, and Somers himself was a master commandant, as well as Stewart, Hull, and Smith, though the intelligence of these promotions had not yet reached the squadron. The three boats commanded by Somers were

No. 1. Lieut. Com. Somers, of the Nautilus.

No. 2. Lieut. James Decatur, of the Nautilus.

No. 3. Lieut. Blake, of the Argus.

Decatur had under his immediate orders,

No. 4. Lieut. Com. Decatur of the Enterprise.

No. 5. Lieut. Joseph Bainbridge, of the Enterprise.

No. 6. Lieut. Trippe, of the Vixen.

Somers had with him in No. 1 a crew from his own schooner, and Messrs. Ridgely and Miller, midshipmen; the former being the present Com. Ridgely. Decatur had the late Lieut. Jonathan Thorn, who was subsequently blown up on the northwest coast of America, and the modest, but lion-hearted M'Donough. Trippe had with him in No. 6 the late Com. J. D. Henley and the late Capt. Deacon, both then midshipmen. Of all these gallant young men Ridgely alone survives!

It was the intention of Preble to attack the eastern division of the enemy's boats with his own flotilla, while the ketches bombarded the town, and the frigate and sloop covered both assaults with their round and grape.

With this object in view, the whole force stood in towards the place at half-past one, the gunboats in tow. Half an hour later the latter were cast off and formed in advance, while the brigs and schooners, six in number, formed a line without them, and the ketches began to throw their shells. The batteries were instantly in a blaze, and the Americans immediately opened from all their shipping in return.

Circumstances had thrown the division of gunboats commanded by Somers to leeward of that commanded by Decatur. It was on the right of the little line, and, under ordinary occurrences, it would have been the most exposed, being nearest to the batteries and the weight of the Tripolitan fire, but Decatur gave a new character to the whole affair by his extraordinary decision and intrepidity. The manner in which this chivalrous officer led on in a hand-to-hand conflict will be related in his own biography, but it may be well to state here that he was sustained only by Trippe, in No. 6, and his brother James, in No. 2; the latter being far enough to windward to fetch into the easternmost division of the Tripolitan boats, though belonging to the division commanded by Somers. No. 5, Lieut. Bainbridge, was disabled in approaching, though she continued to engage, and finally grounded on the rocks. Deprived of the support of No. 2 by the successful effort of her gallant commander to close with the easternmost division, and of that of No. 3, in consequence of a signal of recall that was made from the Constitution, which arrested the movements of that boat, though it was either unseen or disregarded by all the others, Somers found himself alone, within the line of small

vessels, and much exposed to the fire of the leeward division of the enemy's boats, as well as to that of the nearest battery. The struggle to windward was too fierce to last long, and Preble fearing that some of the gunboats might be pushed into extreme peril, made the signal of recall, at least an hour before the firing ceased, No. 1 with Somers and his brave companions being all that time in the very forlorn hope of the affair so far as missiles were concerned. As soon as it had been ascertained that he could not fetch into the most weatherly division of the enemy, Somers had turned like a lion on that to leeward, and engaged the whole of that division, five in number and at least of five times his own force, within pistol shot; one party being sustained by some of the vessels outside, and the other by the batteries and the craft within the rocks. In consequence of the direction of the wind, the only means, short of anchoring, that could be devised to prevent No. 1 from drifting directly down, as it might be, into the enemy's hands, was to keep the sweeps backing astern, while the long gun of the boat delivered bags of musket balls filled with a thousand bullets each. In the end, the enemy was obliged to make off, and Somers was extricated from his perilous position by the approach of the Constitution, which enabled him to obey the commodore's signal and bring out his boat in triumph.

Although the extraordinary nature of the hand-to-hand conflict in which Decatur had been engaged threw a sort of shade over the efforts of the other vessels employed that day, the feeling of admiration for the conduct of Somers, in particular, was very general in the squadron. Apart from the struggles with the pike,

sword and bayonet, his position was much the most critical of any vessel engaged in the attack, and no man could have behaved better than he was admitted to have done. In short, next to Nos. 4 and 6, No. 1, it was conceded, had most distinguished herself, although No. 2, under James Decatur, did as well as the circumstances would allow. One of the best evidences which can be given of the spirit of this attack is to be found in the trifling nature of the loss the Americans suffered. But fourteen men were killed and wounded in all the vessels, and of these thirteen were on board the gunboats. No. 4, notwithstanding her great exposure, had only two casualties.

The Americans employed themselves, between the 3d and 7th of August, in altering the rigs of the three boats they had taken in their first assault, and in equipping them for service. They were all ready by the morning of the last day, and were taken into the line as Nos. 7, 8, and 9. At half-past 2, the ketches began again to throw their shells, and the nine gunboats opened a heavy fire, still in two divisions commanded as before, though the enemy this time kept his small vessels too far within the rocks to be liable to another attempt at boarding. While No. 1 was advancing to her station, on this occasion, Somers stood leaning against her flag-staff. In this position he saw a shot flying directly in a line for him, and bowed his head to avoid it. The shot cut the flag-staff, and on measuring afterwards, it was rendered certain that he escaped death only by the timely removal. The boats were under fire three hours in this attack; one of them, commanded by Lieut. Caldwell, of the *Siren*, having been blown up. Between 5 and 6

P. M., the brigs and schooners took the lighter craft in tow, and carried them beyond the reach of the batteries. In this affair Somers' boat was hulled by a heavy shot, and was much exposed.

A strange sail hove in sight near the close of this attack, and she proved to be the *John Adams* 28, Capt. Chauncy, last from home. This ship brought out the commission already mentioned, as having been issued some time previously. By this promotion, Somers became a master commandant, or a commander, as the grade is now termed; a rank in the navy which corresponds to that of a major in the army, and which entitles its possessor to the command of a sloop of war. Several of these commanders were made at this time, of whom Somers ranked as the seventh, which was precisely the number he had previously occupied on the list of lieutenants. There was a peculiarity about this promotion which is worthy of comment, and which goes to show the irregularities that have been practised in a service which is generally understood to be governed and protected by the most precise principles and enactments.

Certainly some, and it is believed that *all* the commissions of commanders, bestowed upon the service in 1804, were issued without referring the nominations to the Senate for confirmation. We have examined one of these commissions, and find that it contains no allusion to that body, as is always done in those cases in which a confirmation has been had; and the omission raises a curious question as to the legality of the appointments. As the rank of commander in the navy has never been declared by law to be one of those

offices in which the appointing power is exclusively bestowed on the president, or a head of a department, it follows that it comes within the ordinary provision of the constitution. Now, in all the latter cases, the power of the executive to appoint is confined to that of filling vacancies which occur in the recess of the Senate, and the commission issued, even under this strictly constitutional authority, is valid only until the expiration of the succeeding session of that body. Thus three questions present themselves as to the legality of these commissions. First, that the grade of masters and commanders had been indirectly, if not directly, abolished by the reduction law of 1801; and, such being the fact, the constitution giving to Congress full powers to pass laws for the government of the army and navy, it may well be questioned if the president and Senate united had any legal right to re-establish the grade by the mere use of the appointing power. Second, whether such a vacancy existed as to authorize the president to fill it in the recess of the Senate, had Congress renewed the rank by law, which, however, is believed not to have been the fact; and, third, whether the commissions actually granted, being without the advice and consent of the Senate, could be legal, after the close of the succeeding session of that body, under any circumstances. As to the last objection, it is understood all the gentlemen who received these commissions continued to serve under them until they died, resigned, or were promoted.

The grave considerations connected with courts martial, commands, and other legal consequences, which unavoidably offer themselves when we are made ac-



quainted with so extraordinary a state of facts, are materially lessened by the circumstances that all the gentlemen thus irregularly promoted were officers in the navy under their former commissions, and that no relative rank was disturbed. Thus, if Messrs. Stewart and Hull were not legally the two oldest commanders in the service, they were the two oldest lieutenants, and all the other commanders being in the same dilemma with themselves, their relative rank remained precisely as it would have been had no new commissions been granted. So also as regards courts; the judge having a right to sit as a lieutenant, unless, indeed, the informality of annexing a wrong rank to the orders might raise a legal objection.\*

That so gross an irregularity should have arisen under a government that professes to be one purely of law, excites our wonder; and this so much the more, when we remember that it occurred in a service in which life itself may be the penalty of error. The ex-

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\* There are so many modes for evading the simplest provisions of a written constitution, when power feels itself fettered, that it is not easy to say in what manner the difficulties of this case were got over. The reduction law said that there should be only nine captains, thirty-six lieutenants, and one hundred and fifty midshipmen *during peace*, and as the country was at war with Tripoli in 1804, there was a show of plausibility in getting over the force of this particular enactment. Still the appointments of the commanders were not to fill vacancies under any common-sense construction of their nature; and even admitting that political ingenuity could torture the law of Congress to build four vessels like those actually put into the water, into an obligation to appoint proper persons to command them, these appointments could have no validity after the termination of the next session of the Senate. Of the *facts* of the case we believe there can be no doubt.

planation is to be found in the infancy of the establishments, and in practices in which principles remained to be settled, aided by the known moral courage and exceeding personal popularity of the statesman who then presided in the councils of the republic. While Jefferson affected, and probably felt, a profound respect for legality, he is known to have used the power he wielded with great political fearlessness, and to have considered himself as the head of a new school in the administration of the government, which did not always hesitate about the introduction of new rules of conduct. To these remarks, however, it must in justice be added, that no party or personal views could have influenced the appointments in question, which, apart from the irregularity of their manner, were certainly recognised equally by justice and the wants of the service, and which were made in perfect conformity with the rules of promotion as observed under the severest principles of military preferment. They prove even more in favor of the statesman, as they show that he did not deserve all the accusations of hostility to this branch of the national defences that were heaped upon him ; but rather that he was disposed to stretch his authority to foster and advance it. The introduction of a new class of vessels, too, required the revival of a class of officers of a rank proper to command them ; and, though we wish never to see illegality countenanced in the management of interests as delicate as those of a marine, it is desirable to see the proper authorities of the country imitate this feature of the case, now that the republic has fleets which flag officers alone can ever lead with a proper degree of dignity and authority.

It was the 28th of August before another attack was made on Tripoli, in which Somers participated. The ketches bombarded it on the night of the 24th; but finding little impression made by this mode of assault, Com. Preble determined to renew the cannonading. On this occasion Capt. Somers led one division of the gunboats, as before, while Capt. Decatur led the other; the latter having five of these craft under his orders, and the former three. The approach was made under the cover of darkness, all the boats anchoring near the rocks, where they opened a heavy fire on the shipping, castle, and town. The brigs and schooners assisted in this attack, and at daylight the frigate stood in, and opened her batteries. The Tripolitan galleys and gunboats, thirteen in all, were principally opposed to the eight American gunboats, which did not retire until they had expended their ammunition. One Tripolitan was sunk, two more were run on shore, and all were finally driven into the mole by the frigate.

On the 3d of September, a fourth and last attack was made on Tripoli by the gunboats, aided by all the other vessels. The Turkish boats did not wait, as before, to be assaulted off the town, but, accompanied by the galleys, they placed themselves under Fort English, and a new battery that had been built near it, with an intention to draw the American shot in that direction. This change of disposition induced Preble to send Captains Decatur and Somers, with the gunboats, covered by the brigs and schooners, into the harbor's mouth, while the ketches bombarded more to leeward. On this occasion, Somers was more than an hour hotly engaged, pressing the enemy into his own port.

The season was now drawing near a close, and the arrival of reinforcements from America had been expected, in vain, for several weeks. It was during this interval that a plan for destroying the enemy's flotilla, as it lay anchored in his innermost harbor, was conceived, and preparations were soon made for putting it in execution. The conception of this daring scheme has been claimed for Somers himself, and not without a share of reason. There existed between him and Decatur a singular professional competition, that was never permitted, however, to cool their personal friendships. The great success of the latter, in his daring assaults, stimulated Somers to attempt some exploit equally adventurous, and none better than the one adopted then offered. The five attacks made on Tripoli, with the vigorous blockade, had produced a sensible effect on the tone of the bashaw, and it was hoped that a blow as appalling as that now meditated might at once produce a peace. The delicacy that a commander would naturally feel about proposing a service so desperate to a subordinate, renders it highly probable that the idea originated with Somers himself, who thus secured the office of endeavoring to execute it. It is proper to add, however, that Com. Preble says the project had long been in contemplation, though he does not say who suggested it. The plan was as follows: The ketch that had originally been taken by Decatur in the *Enterprise*, and in which he had subsequently carried the *Philadelphia* frigate, was still in the squadron. She had been named the *Intrepid*, for the brilliant occasion on which she had first been used, but had since fallen from her high estate, having latterly been employed in

bringing water and stores from Malta. This craft had been constructed for a gun vessel by the French, in their expedition against Egypt; from their service she had passed into that of Tripoli; had fallen into the hands of warriors from the new world; by them she had been used in one of the most brilliant exploits of naval warfare, and was now about to terminate her career in another, of the most desperate and daring character. It was proposed to fit up the ketch in the double capacity of fire-ship and infernal, and to send her into the inner harbor of Tripoli, by the western passage, there to explode in the very centre of the vessels of the Turks. As her deck was to be covered with missiles, and a large quantity of powder was to be used, it was hoped that the town and castle would suffer, not less than the shipping. The panic created by such an assault, made in the dead of night, it was fondly hoped would produce an instant peace, and, more especially, the liberation of the crew of the Philadelphia. The latter object was deemed one of high interest to the whole force before Tripoli, and was never lost sight of in all their operations.

Com. Preble having determined upon his plan, Somers received the orders to commence the preparations; a duty in which he had the advice and assistance of Decatur, Stewart, and the other commanders of the squadron, for all these ardent and gallant young men felt a common sympathy in his daring, and an equal interest in his anticipated triumph. The first step was to prepare the ketch for the desperate service in which she was to be engaged. With this object a small apartment was planked up in the broadest part of her hold, or just forward of the principal mast; this

was rendered as secure as was believed necessary against accidents. Into this room a hundred barrels of gunpowder were emptied in bulk. A train was led aft to a cabin window, through a tube, and, by some accounts, another was led into the forepeak. A port-fire, graduated to burn a certain number of minutes, was affixed to the end of the train, and a body of light, splintered wood was collected in another receptacle abaft the magazine, which was to be set on fire, with the double purpose of making certain of the explosion, and of keeping the enemy aloof under the apprehension of its flames. On the deck of the ketch, around the mast and immediately over the magazine, were piled a quantity of shells of different sizes with their fuses prepared, in the expectation that the latter would ignite and produce the usual explosion. The number of these shells has been variously stated at from one hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty, the size ranging from nine to thirteen and a half inches. The best information, however, would seem to place the number below two hundred. Some accounts give the quantity of powder as high as fifteen thousand pounds, which was probably near the truth.

Two boats were to accompany the ketch, one an exceedingly fast rowing four-oared boat, being lent for the purpose by the *Siren*, and the other was a six-oared cutter of the *Constitution*. The service requiring but few men, no more were employed than were necessary to pull the two boats. To have gone in with a single boat would have been unnecessarily hazardous, as a shot might have disabled her, while the chances of escape were nearly doubled by adding a second. at the

same time that the additional men did not more than make an ordinary crew for a Mediterranean craft of the size of the *Intrepid*. A second officer, however, was thought necessary, and Lieut. Henry Wadsworth, of the *Constitution*, volunteering, his offer was accepted. Mr. Joseph Israel, of the same ship, who had just been promoted, was also anxious to be of the party, but Com. Preble deeming his assistance unnecessary, permission to go was refused him. Thus it was intended that the adventurers should be limited to twelve, of whom ten were common seamen, one a lieutenant, and the other a commander, or Somers himself.

It now became necessary to obtain volunteers for the *Siren's* boat, and a call for this purpose was made by Somers on the crew of his own vessel, the *Nautilus*. Notwithstanding the desperate character of the service, when the want was stated to the people of this little vessel every man in her offered himself to go. This compelled their superior to make a selection. The other six seamen were obtained from the *Constitution*, and were chosen, it is believed, by Mr. Wadsworth, under the supervision of the ship's first lieutenant, who at that time was the late Capt. Gordon. The four men belonging to the *Nautilus* were James Simms, Thomas Tompline, James Harris and William Keith; all seamen rated. Mr. Wadsworth took with him from the *Constitution* William Harrison, Robert Clark, Hugh M'Cormick, Jacob Williams, Peter Penner and Isaac W. Downes, all seamen rated also.

Several days were necessary to complete all these arrangements, more especially to equip the ketch in the manner described, and the action of the 3d had taken

place even after the *Intrepid* was ready. Somers made one or two attempts to go in before the night finally selected, but they were abandoned on account of the lightness of the air. At length there were appearances in and about the harbor that induced him to think that the movements of the fire-vessel were distrusted, and, fearful of detection, he decided to go in on the night of the 4th September, if the thing were at all practicable.

Several interviews had taken place between Preble and Somers in the course of the preparations for the attempt. On one occasion the commodore burnt a port-fire in order to ascertain its time, and when it was consumed he asked Somers if he thought the boats could get out of reach of the shells within the few minutes it was burning. "I think we can, sir," answered Somers. Preble looked intently at the young man a moment, and then inquired if he should have the time reduced, or the port-fire made shorter. "I ask for no port-fire at all, sir," was the reply, firmly but quietly expressed.

After this interview, Somers expressed his determination not to allow himself to be captured. The commodore had felt it to be his duty to point out the great importance of not letting so large an amount of powder fall into the enemy's hands, the *Tripolitans* being thought to be short of ammunition, and all the circumstances united had a tendency to increase the feeling of determination in the minds of the two officers who were to go in. Both were singularly quiet men in their ordinary habits, perfectly free from any thing like noisy declarations or empty boastings of what they intended to perform, and their simple announcement of their intentions not to be taken appears to have made a deep



and general impression among their brethren in arms.

On the afternoon of the 4th September, Somers prepared to take his final departure from the *Nautilus*, with a full determination to carry the ketch into Tripoli that night. Previously to quitting his own vessel, however, he felt that it would be proper to point out the desperate nature of the service to the four men he had selected, that their services might be perfectly free and voluntary. He told them he wished no man to accompany him who would not prefer being blown up to being taken; that such was his own determination, and that he wished all who went with him to be of the same way of thinking. The boat's crew gave three cheers in answer, and each man is said to have separately asked to be selected to apply the match. Once assured of the temper of his companions, Somers took leave of his officers, the boat's crew doing the same, shaking hands and expressing their feelings as if they felt assured of their fates in advance. This was done in good faith, and yet cheerfully; and, of all the desperate service undertaken by that devoted squadron, none was ever entered on with so many forebodings of the fatal consequences to those concerned in it. Each of the four men made his will verbally; disposing of his effects among his shipmates like those who are about to die with disease.

It would seem that the *Constitution's* boat did not join the ketch until it was dusk. When the two crews were mustered, it was found that Mr. Israel had managed to get out of the frigate and to join the party; whether by collusion, or not, it is now impossible to say. Finding him on board, and admiring his determination to

make one of the party, Somers consented to his remaining. One account says he was sent by Preble with a final order, but it is hardly probable Somers would have allowed him to remain under such circumstances. He was more likely to be smuggled in by means of the cutter, and to be kept when there was no boat by which he could be sent back. The night of the 4th was not particularly dark, though it could scarcely be accounted clear. The stars were visible, but there was a haze on the water that rendered objects more uncertain than they would otherwise have been. In this respect the light was favourable enough, as the rocks could be seen, while the real character of the ketch would not be so likely to be discovered from the shore. The wind was light, from the eastward, but fair.

Several of Somers' friends visited him on board the *Intrepid* before she got under way. Among them were Stewart and Decatur, with whom he had commenced his naval career in the United States. These three young men, then about twenty-five each, were Philadelphia-bred sailors, and had been intimately associated in service for the last six years. They all knew that the enterprise was one of extreme hazard, and the two who were to remain behind felt a deep interest in the fate of him who was to go in. Somers was grave, and entirely without any affectation of levity or indifference, but he maintained his usual tranquil and quiet manner. After some conversation, he took a ring from his finger, and breaking it into three pieces, gave each of his companions one, while he retained the third himself. As the night shut in, three gunboats were seen at anchor a short distance within the western entrance, by which

the Intrepid was to pass, and Decatur, who felt a strong anxiety for the success of his friend, admonished Somers to take care they did not board him, as it was the intention to carry the ketch some distance within them. To this Somers quietly replied that the Turks had got to be so shy that he thought they would be more likely to cut and run on his approach than to advance and meet him.

It was eight o'clock in the evening before the Intrepid lifted her anchor; the Argus, Vixen, and Nautilus weighing and standing in, in company. The night was sufficiently advanced to cover this movement, and all four vessels stood down towards the rocks under their canvas. The last person who left the ketch was Lieut. Washington Reed, then first of the Nautilus. This officer did not quit his commander until it was thought necessary for him to rejoin the vessel of which he was now in charge. When he went over the side of the Intrepid, all communication between the gallant spirits she contained and the rest of the world ceased. At that time every thing seemed propitious; Somers was cheerful, though calm; and perfect order and method prevailed in the little craft. The leave-taking was affectionate and serious with the officers, though the common men appeared to be in high spirits. This was about nine o'clock.

The Argus and Vixen lay off at a little distance from the rocks to attack the galleys or gunboats, should either attempt to follow the party out on their retreat, while the Nautilus shortened sail and accompanied the ketch as close in as was deemed prudent, with the especial intention of bringing off the boats. Lieut. Reed directed the present Com. Ridgely, then one of the Nautilus'

midshipmen,\* to watch the ketch's movements with a night-glass; and, as this order was strictly complied with, it is almost certain that this officer was the last person of the American squadron who saw the vessel. It was thought she was advancing slowly to the last moment, though the distance and the obscurity render this fact a little doubtful.

Preble had directed the Siren to weigh and stand in, shortly after the other vessels left him, and, in obeying the orders he received, Capt. Stewart kept more in the offing than the vessels which preceded him. As the direction of the western entrance and the inner harbor were known, every eye in this brig was riveted in that quarter in silent suspense. It was not long before the enemy began to fire at the ketch, which, by this time, was quite near the batteries, though the reports were neither rapid nor numerous. At this moment, near ten o'clock, Capt. Stewart and Lieut. Carrol were standing in the Siren's gangway, looking intently towards the place where the ketch was known to be, when the latter exclaimed, "Look! see the light!" At that instant a light was seen passing and waving, as if a lantern were carried by some person in quick motion along a vessel's deck. Then it sunk from view. Half a minute may have elapsed when the whole firmament was lighted with a fiery glow, a burning mast, with its sails, was seen in the air, the whole harbor was momentarily illuminated, the awful explosion came, and a darkness like that of doom succeeded. The whole was over in less than a

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\* Mr. Ridgely signed a letter to Preble just two months later as a lieutenant. He may possibly have been promoted at the time the Intrepid went in.

minute; the flame, the quaking of towers, the reeling of ships, and even the bursting of shells, of which most fell in the water, though some lodged on the rocks. The firing ceased, and from that instant Tripoli passed the night in a stillness as profound as that in which the victims of this frightful explosion have lain from that fatal hour to this.

The Nautilus showed lights in hopes to guide the retreating boats to her side; all eyes in the squadron looked in vain for the expected signal; a moaning gun occasionally was heard from the frigate, a fitting knell for such a disaster, but in vain. No one ever came back from the ill-fated Intrepid to relate the history of her loss. The Argus, Vixen and Nautilus hovered near the rocks until the sun arose, but nothing was discovered to throw any light on the manner in which the ketch was lost. The gun-boats anchored near the pass had been moved; one, it was thought, had entirely disappeared, and two or three more were hauled ashore as if shattered.

In the American squadron the opinion was general that Somers and his determined companions had blown themselves up to prevent capture. In the absence of certainty, facts were imagined to render such a desperate step probable if not necessary. It was supposed that gunboats had advanced to board the ketch, and that Somers had fired the train in preference to falling into the hands of the Tripolitans, or allowing them to get possession of the powder. Such appears to have been the opinion of Com. Preble, who reported as much to the government; and the country, receiving its impressions from this source, has long entertained the same idea.

A few, however, of the more thoughtful have always doubted, and subsequent discoveries have rendered these doubts more and more probable.

Among the American prisoners in Tripoli was a surgeon's mate of the name of Cowdery, now the oldest surgeon in the navy, who was permitted to go very much at large in the town, his professional services being found useful. From this gentleman, from Capt. Bainbridge's private journal, and from other sources equally credible, the following interesting facts have been obtained, leaving no question of their accuracy.

In the first place, neither the works, the town, nor the Tripolitans themselves, appear to have suffered any injury by the explosion. Captain Bainbridge in his journal, where he speaks of this explosion, says:—"which unfortunate scheme did no damage whatever to the Tripolitans; nor did it appear even to heave them into confusion." The bashaw, being desirous of ascertaining how many Americans had been lost in the explosion, offered a dollar for each body that could be discovered. This produced the desired effect, and by the 6th, the dead were all brought up. The bottom of the ketch had drifted among the rocks, on the north side of the round battery, which is near the western entrance, and there it grounded. In the wreck, two bodies were found. The Constitution's cutter, or the six-oared boat, had drifted on the beach, a short distance to the westward of the town. One body was in it. Six more bodies were found on the shore to the southward, and the remaining four were discovered floating in the harbor. This makes the entire number of the thirteen who were lost in the ketch. Captain Bainbridge de-

scribes the six dead whom he saw as "being so much disfigured, it was impossible to recognise any feature known to us, or even to distinguish an officer from a seaman." Those six bodies were the two found in the wreck, and the four floating in the harbor. But Mr. Cowdery was more successful. He selected three of the bodies as those of officers, being guided by some fragments of dress still remaining on them, and still more by the delicate appearance of their hands. As this was just the number of the officers who were actually lost, and the Americans in Tripoli were then entirely ignorant of the character of the party sent in, it leaves scarcely a doubt that this gentleman decided accurately. Indeed, if the palms of the hands were not much injured, it would not be easy to make a mistake in such a matter; and any portions of the dress would be almost as safe guides. The ten seamen were buried on the beach, outside the town and near the walls: while the three officers were interred in the same grave, on the plain beyond, or a cable's length to the southward and eastward of the castle. Small stones were placed at the four corners of this last grave, to mark its site; but they were shortly after removed by the Turks, who refused to let what they conceived to be a Christian monument, disfigure their land. Here, then, lie the remains of Somers, and his two gallant friends; and it might be well to instruct the commander of some national cruiser to search for their bones, that they may be finally incorporated with the dust of their native land. Their identity would at once be established by the number of the skeletons, and the friends of the deceased might experience a melancholy consolation in being permitted

to drop a tear over the spot in which they would be finally entombed.

The facts related leave little doubt that Com. Preble was mistaken in, at least, a portion of his conjectures. That no Turks suffered, is shown by the direct testimony of Captain Bainbridge's journal, a record made at the time, and that, too, under circumstances which will not well admit of mistakes. This truth is also corroborated by other convincing testimony. Those who saw the explosion, saw no signs of any vessel near the ketch at the time it occurred, nor were the vestiges of any wreck, but that of the *Intrepid*, to be seen in the harbor. The officer who saw the ketch to the last moment, by means of the glass, is not understood to have seen any thing near her, and the thirteen bodies found, the precise number of the Americans known to have been lost, go to confirm the fact. It adds value to the testimony, too, that a written memorial of this very number of the dead was made, before the prisoners in Tripoli had any information concerning the force of the party sent in from the squadron.

Nor is there sufficient reason for supposing that the Americans blew themselves up, on this occasion. That Somers went in with a full determination to put in force this desperate expedient in the event of its becoming necessary to prevent capture, is beyond dispute; but there is no proof of the existence of the necessity. To suppose the *match* would have been applied, except in the last emergency, is to accuse him who did it with a want of coolness; a virtue that Captain Somers possessed in an eminent degree; and this emergency could hardly have existed without some of the enemy having



been near enough to suffer by the explosion. The whole party was accustomed to fire, and it is scarcely possible that they could have been driven to this desperate step, by means of injury received in this manner, as they always had their boats for a flight, when required. There was a vague rumor that most of the bodies found had been perforated by grape-shot, and a conjecture was made that the survivors fired the train, in order to prevent the Turks from getting possession of the powder. But the report can be traced to no sufficient authority, and it is not probable that so many would have suffered in this way as to prevent the unhurt from using the boats and the train in the mode originally contemplated. But one man was found in the Constitution's cutter, and he, doubtless, was the boat-sitter, who lost his life at his post. This indicates any thing but hurry or alarm.

It is also certain that the splinter-room was not lighted, as its flame would have been both quick and bright; and, with a thousand anxious eyes on watch, it could not fail to have been seen. This circumstance goes further to show, that no gunboat or galley could have been approaching the ketch at the time she exploded, one of the purposes of these splinters being to keep the enemy aloof, through the dread of a fire-vessel. To suppose a neglect of using the splinter-room, in a case of necessity, would be to accuse the party of the same want of coolness as is inferred by the supposition of their blowing themselves up when no foe was near. Both were morally impossible, with such a man as Somers. Admitting that no Tripolitan vessel was near the Intrepid, and still insisting that the train was fired

by the Americans, no reason can be given why the preparations for the safety of the latter's crew should not have been used. The Constitution's cutter was found with its keeper alone in it, but of the Siren's boat we have no account. The latter was probably alongside the ketch and destroyed: it may have been sunk by a falling shell; or it may have been privately appropriated to himself by some Turk. That no one was in it, however, is shown by the twelve bodies that were found out of the boats; for, if manned, and a few yards from the ketch, the crew would have been blown into its bottom, and not into the water.

Abandoning the idea that the Intrepid was intentionally blown up, by Somers and his party, we have the alternatives of believing the disaster to have been the result of the fire of the enemy, or the consequences of an accident. The latter is possible, but, the former appears to us to be much the most probable. The light seen by Captain Stewart and Lieutenant Carrol, taken in connection with the circumstance that the explosion occurred immediately after, and apparently at that precise spot, is certainly an incident worthy of our consideration, though it is not easy to see how this light could have produced the calamity. Accidents are much less likely to happen on board such a vessel, than on ordinary occasions, every care being taken to prevent them. As the intention was to fire the splinters, all caution was doubtless used to see that no loose powder was lying about, and that the flames should not communicate with the train, except at the right moment, and in the proper manner. Still an accident from this source *may* have occurred through some unforeseen agency. If this light

was really on board the ketch it was probably carried from aft, where it had been kept under the eye of the officers, to the main-hatch, in order to kindle the splinters, a step that it was about time to take. Commodore Preble, in his official letter, adverts to the circumstance that this splinter-room had not been set on fire when the ketch blew up, as a proof that the party had been induced to act on an emergency ; for he always reasoned as if they blew themselves up ; believing that the Intrepid was surrounded, and that many of the enemy were killed. Reasoning on the same circumstance, with the knowledge we now possess that no Turks were near, or that any suffered, and it goes to show that the explosion occurred at a moment when it was not expected by Somers, who would not have neglected to fire this room, in any ordinary case. If the accident had its rise on board the ketch, it probably occurred in the attempt to take this preliminary step.

But the Intrepid may have been blown up, by means of a shot from the enemy. This is the most probable solution of the catastrophe, and the one which is the most consoling to the friends of the sufferers, and which ought to be the most satisfactory to the nation. Commodore Preble says, "on entering the harbor several shot were fired at her (the Intrepid) from the batteries." The western entrance, in or near which the ketch blew up, is within pistol shot of what is called the Spanish fort, or, indeed, of most of the works on and about the mole. Even the bashaw's castle lies within fair canister range of this spot, and, prepared as the Turks were for any desperate enterprise on the part of the Americans, nothing is more probable than that they jealously

watched the movements of a vessel that was entering their harbor after dark, necessarily passing near, if not coming directly from the American squadron. Their batteries may even have been provided with hot shot, for any emergency like this. Gunboat No. 8, Lieutenant Caldwell, was blown up in the attack of the 7th August, and that very circumstance would probably induce the Turks to make a provision for repeating the injury. A cold shot, however, might very well have caused the explosion. The breaking of one of the shells on deck; the collision with a bolt, a spike or even a nail passing through the hull, may have struck fire. It is possible a shot passed through the splinter-room, and exposed the powder of the train, and that in running below with a lantern to ascertain what damage had been done, the accident may have occurred. The moving light seen by the present Commodore Stewart, would favor such a supposition; though it must be remembered this light may also have been on board some vessel beyond the ketch, or even on the shore.

Only one other supposition has been made concerning this melancholy affair. It has been thought that the ketch grounded on the rocks, in the western entrance, and was blown up there, to prevent the enemy from getting possession of her powder. That the Intrepid may have touched the rocks is not improbable, the pass being laid down in the most accurate chart of the harbor, as less than eighty fathoms wide, with shoal water on each side, the visible rocks being more than double that distance asunder; but grounding does not infer the necessity of blowing up the ketch's crew. To suppose that Somers would have destroyed himself through

mortification, at finding his vessel on shore, is opposed to reason and probability ; while it is doing gross injustice to a character of singular chivalry and generosity to believe he would have sacrificed his companions to any consideration so strictly selfish.

In this case, as in all others, the simplest and most natural solution of the difficulty is the most probable. All the known facts of the case, too, help to sustain this mode of reasoning. Those who saw the ketch, think she was advancing to the last moment, while it is agreed she had not reached, by several hundred yards, the spot to which it was the intention to carry her. By the chart alluded to, one recently made by an English officer of great merit, it is about eleven hundred yards from the western entrance to the bashaw's castle, and about five hundred and fifty to the inner harbor, or galley mole. Here, close to windward of the enemy's vessels, Somers intended to have left the ketch, and there is no doubt she would have drifted into their midst, when the destruction must have been fearful. God disposed of the result differently, for some wise purpose of his own, rendering the assailants the sole victims of the enterprise. It is only by considering the utter insignificance of all temporal measures, as compared with what lies beyond, that we can learn to submit to these dispensations, with a just sense of our own impotency.

All agree that the Intrepid blew up, in or quite near to the western entrance. This was the result of direct observation ; it is proved by the fact that portions of the wreck and some of the shells fell on the rocks, and by the positions in which the Constitution's cutter and the

bottom of the ketch were found. With the wind at the eastward, the wreck could not have "grounded on the *north* side of the rocks near the round battery," as is stated in Commodore Bainbridge's private journal, had the *Intrepid* been any distance *within* the entrance; nor would the *Constitution's* boat have drifted past the intervening objects to the westward. The wind had probably a little northing in it, following the line of coast, as is usual with light airs, and as is shown by the wreck's touching on the *north* side of the rocks, all of which goes to prove, from an examination of the chart, as well as from the evidence of those who were present, that the accident occurred quite near the place stated. Occurring so far out, with nothing near to endanger the party, it leaves the moral certainty that the explosion was the result of accident, and not of design; or, if the latter, of an attempt of the enemy to destroy the *Intrepid*.

Thus perished Richard Somers, the subject of our memoir, and one of the "bravest of the brave." Notwithstanding all our means of reasoning, and the greatest efforts of human ingenuity, there will remain a melancholy interest around the manner of his end, which, by the Almighty will, is for ever veiled from human eyes in a sad and solemn mystery. In whatever way we view the result, the service on which he went was one of exceeding peril. He is known to have volunteered for it, with readiness; to have made his preparations with steadiness and alacrity; and, when last seen, to have been entering on its immediate execution, with a calm and intrepid serenity. There was an ennobling motive, too, for undertaking so great a

risk. In addition to the usual inducements of country and honour, the immediate liberation of Bainbridge and his brave companions was believed to depend on its success. Exaggerated notions of the sufferings of the Philadelphia's crew prevailed in the squadron before Tripoli, as well as in the country, and their brethren in arms fought with the double incentive of duty and friendship. Ten minutes more would probably have realized the fondest hopes of the adventurers, but the providence of God was opposed to their success, and the cause, if it is ever to be known to man, must abide the revolutions that await the end of time, and the commencement of eternity.

In person, Somers was a man of middle stature—rather below than above it—but stout of frame; exceedingly active and muscular. His nose was inclining to the aquiline, his eyes and hair were dark, and his whole face bore marks of the cross of the French blood that was said to run in his veins. It is a remarkable circumstance in the career of this distinguished young officer, that no one has any thing to urge against him. He was mild, amiable and affectionate, both in disposition and deportment, though of singularly chivalrous notions of duty and honor. It has been said by a writer who has had every opportunity of ascertaining the fact, that when a very young man he fought three duels in one day—almost at the same time—being wounded himself in the two first, and fighting the last, seated on the ground, sustained by his friend Decatur. Although such an incident could only have occurred with very young men, and perhaps under the exaggerations of a very young service, it was perfectly charac-

teristic of Somers. There was nothing vindictive in these duels. He fired but once at each adversary—he wounded the last man—and was himself, in a physical sense, the principal sufferer. The quarrels arose from his opponents imputing to him a want of spirit for not resenting some idle expression of Decatur's, who was the last man living to intend to hurt Somers' feelings. They loved each other as brothers, and Decatur proved it, by offering to fight the two last duels for his friend, after the latter had received his first wound. But Somers fought for honor, and was determined that the men who doubted him, should be convinced of their mistake. Apart from the error of continuing the affairs after the first injury, and the general moral mistake of supposing that a moral injury can be repaired in this mode at all, these duels had the chivalrous character that should ever characterize such meetings, if meetings of this nature are really necessary to human civilization.

Although it is scarcely possible that a warm-hearted young man, like Somers, should not have felt a preference for some person of the other sex, it is not known that he had any serious attachment when he lost his life. Glory appears to have been his mistress, for the time being at least, and he left no one of this nature behind him to mourn his early loss. He died possessed of a respectable landed property, and one of increasing value; all of which he bequeathed to the only sister mentioned.

Somers was thought to be an expert seaman, by those who were good judges of such qualifications. As a commander he was mild, but sufficiently firm. His education, without being unusual even in his profession



at that day, had not been neglected, though he would not probably have been classed among the reading men of the service. A chivalrous sense of honor, an un-moved courage, and perfect devotion to the service in which he was engaged, formed the prominent points of his character, and as all were accompanied by great gentleness of manner and amiability of feeling, he appears to have been equally beloved and respected. The attachment which existed between him and Decatur had something romantic about it. They were rivals in professional daring, while they were bosom friends. As we have already said, it is by no means improbable that the exploits of Decatur induced Somers, through a generous competition, to engage in the perilous enterprise in which he perished, and on which he entered with a known intention of yielding up his life, if necessary to prevent the enemy's obtaining the great advantage of demanding ransom for his party, or of seizing the powder in the ketch.

Congress passed a resolution of condolence with the friends of the officers who died in the *Intrepid*, as well as with those of all the officers who fell before Tripoli. Of these brave men, Somers, on account of his rank, the manner of his death, and his previous exploits, has stood foremost with the country and the service. These claims justly entitle him to this high distinction. Among all the gallant young men that this war first made known to the nation, he has always maintained a high place, and, as it is a station sealed with his blood, it has become sacred to the entire republic.

It is a proof of the estimation in which this regretted officer is held, that several small vessels have since been

called after him. Perry had a schooner, which was thus designated, under his orders on the memorable 10th September, 1813; and a beautiful little brig has lately been put into the water on the seaboard, which is called the Somers. In short, his name has passed into a watchword in the American navy; and as they who are first associated with the annals of a nation, whether in connection with its institutions, its arms, its literature, or its arts, form the germs of all its future renown, it is probable it will be handed down to posterity, as one of the bright examples which the aspiring and daring in their country's service will do well to imitate.

## JOHN SHAW.

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AMONG the many brave Irishmen who, first and last, have manifested their courage, and shown how strong is the sympathy between the people of their native island and this country, the subject of this sketch is entitled to occupy a highly honourable place. There was a short period, indeed, when his name and services stood second to none on the list of gallant seamen with which the present navy of the republic commenced its brilliant career. Those whose memories extend so far back as the commencement of the century, and who are familiar with naval events, will readily recall how often they were required to listen to his successes and his deeds.

The family of John Shaw was of English origin. In 1690, however, his grandfather, an officer in the commissariat of King William's army, passed into Ireland, on service, where he appears to have married and established himself. The son, who was the father of our subject, served as an officer in the fourth regiment of heavy horse, on the Irish establishment. He was actively and creditably employed with his regiment in the war of '56, serving no less than four years in Germany. During this time he was present at several battles, including that of Minden. In 1763, this gentleman returned to Ireland, shortly after marrying Eliza-

beth Barton, of Kilkenna. In 1779, he quitted the army altogether, retiring to a farm. The family of Barton, like that of Shaw, was also English, and had come into Ireland with the army with which Cromwell invaded that country, in 1649.

John Shaw was born at Mt. Mellick, Queen's county, Ireland, in the year 1773, or while his father was still in the army. There were several older children, and the family becoming numerous, his studies were necessarily limited to such an education as could be obtained at a country school, of the ordinary character. The means of providing for so many children early occupied the father's thoughts, and, at the proper time, the matter was laid fairly before two of the older sons, for their own consideration. One of these sons was John. This occurred in 1790, when the lad was in his seventeenth year. The father recommended America, as the most promising theatre for their future exertions; and the advice agreeing with the inclinations of the youths, John and an elder brother sailed for New York, which port they reached in December of the same year. After remaining a short time in New York, the subject of our sketch proceeded to Philadelphia, then the political capital and largest town of the infant republic. Here he delivered various letters of introduction, and, after looking about him a little, he determined to push his fortunes on the ocean, of which he had a taste in the passage out.

In March, 1791, young Shaw sailed for the East Indies, being then nearly eighteen years of age. The destination of the ship was, in truth, China, all those distant seas going, in the parlance of seamen, under the

general name of the Indies. The first voyage appears to have produced no event of any particular interest. It served, however, to make the youth familiar with his new profession, and to open the way to preferment. In the intervals between his voyages to Canton, of which he seems to have made four in the next six years, he was occupied in improving himself, and in serving in counting-houses as a clerk. On the second voyage, the ship he was in, the *Sampson*, was attacked by a number of Malay prows, during a calm. This occurred in the Straits of Banca, and in the night. The attack appears to have been vigorous and the situation of the vessel critical. Notwithstanding, she kept up so brisk a fire from six four-pounders, as to compel several of her assailants to haul off, to repair their damages. A breeze coming, the *Sampson* was brought under command, and soon cleared herself from her enemies, who ran for the island of Borneo. This was the first occasion on which Shaw met with real service.

While on shore, young Shaw had joined that well-known body of irregular volunteers, known as the Macpherson Blues. This corps, when its size is considered, was probably the most remarkable, as regards efficiency, discipline, appearance, and the characters of its members, that ever existed in the country. Several hundreds of the most respectable young men of Philadelphia were in its ranks, and many of the more distinguished citizens did not disdain its service. It volunteered, in 1794, to march against the insurgents in western Pennsylvania, young Shaw shouldering his kit and his musket with the rest. The troops did not return to Philadelphia

until the close of the year, having marched early in the autumn.\*

In the third of his voyages to Canton, young Shaw was the third officer of the ship, and the fourth he made as her first officer. This was quick preferment, and furnishes proof in itself that his employers had reason to be satisfied with his application and character.

Four voyages to China gave our young sailor so much professional knowledge and reputation as to procure him a vessel. Near the close of the year 1797, he sailed for the West Indies, as master of a brig, returning to Baltimore the succeeding May. This was at a moment when the American trade was greatly depredated on by

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\* An anecdote is related of one of the "citizen soldiers" in this expedition which is worthy of being recorded. The person referred to was a German by birth, of the name of Koch, and was well known in Philadelphia, in his day, as a large out-door underwriter. He died some ten or twelve years since, in Paris, whither he had gone for the benefit of the climate, leaving a fortune estimated at \$1,200,000. Mr. Koch, like young Shaw, was a private in the Macpherson Blues. It fell to his lot one night to be stationed sentinel over a baggage-wagon. The weather was cold, raw, stormy, and wet. This set the sentinel musing. After remaining on post half an hour, he was heard calling lustily, "Corporal of ter quartz—Corporal of ter quartz." The corporal came, and inquired what was wanting. Koch wished to be relieved for a few minutes, having something to say to Macpherson. He was gratified, and in a few minutes he stood in the presence of the general. "Well, Mr. Koch, what is your pleasure?" asked Macpherson. "Why, yeneral, I wish to know what may be ter value of dat d—d wagon over which I am shentinel!" "How the d—l should I know, Koch?" "Well, somet'ing approximative—not to be barticular." "A thousand dollars, perhaps." "Very well, Yeneral Macpherson, I write a sheck for ter money, and ten I will go to bets."

the French privateers, and Mr. Shaw had much reason to complain of the treatment he received at their hands. The Spring of 1798, or the moment of his return to this country, was precisely that when the armaments against France were in progress, and Mr. Shaw felt strongly disposed, on more accounts than one, to take service in the infant navy. Dale sailed in the *Ganges*, the first vessel out, on the 22d of May, the very month when the brig of Mr. Shaw reached Baltimore.

Soon after this important event, an application was made to the Navy Department in behalf of Mr. Shaw, and being sustained by the late Gen. Samuel Smith, and other men of influence in Baltimore, he was commissioned as a lieutenant. Mr. Shaw's place on the list must have been about the thirtieth, though promotions soon raised him much nearer to the top. Rodgers, Preble, James Barron, Bainbridge, Stewart, Hull, and Sterret were all above him; while he ranked above Chauncy, John Smith, Somers, Decatur, &c. At this time, Mr. Shaw was five and twenty years of age.

Soon after receiving his appointment, our subject was ordered to join the *Montezuma* 20, Capt. Alexander Murray; a ship bought into the service, as one of the hasty equipments of the period. From the date of his commission, there is not much doubt that Mr. Shaw was the senior lieutenant of this vessel; at all events, if he did not hold this rank on joining her, he obtained it before she had been long in service.

The *Montezuma* did not get to sea until November, 1798, when she proceeded to the West Indies, the *Norfolk* 18, Capt. Williams, and *Retaliation* 12, Lieut.

Com. Bainbridge, sailing in company. While cruising off Guadaloupe, the same month, the Americans were chased by two French frigates, le *Volontaire* and *l'Insurgente*. The *Retaliation* was captured, and the ship and brig escaped only by the address of Lieut. Com. Bainbridge, who induced the French commander to recall *l'Insurgente* by signal, by exaggerating the force of the two Americans. The *Montezuma* remained in the West Indies, convoying and cruising, until October, 1799, when she was compelled to come home to get a new crew, and to refit. This year of active service in a vessel of war, added to the seamanship obtained in his voyages to Canton, made Mr. Shaw a good officer; Capt. Murray having come out of the war of the Revolution, though only a lieutenant in rank, with the reputation of being one of the most active and best man-of-war's men of the service.

Our young Irishman had no reason to complain of his luck in the country of his adoption. He had now been at sea but nine years, and in America the same time, when he found himself fairly enlisted in an honorable service, and in the possession of very respectable rank. His good fortune, however, did not stop here. During the late cruise, Mr. Shaw had won the respect and regard of his commander, who was a gentleman of highly respectable family, and who possessed considerable naval influence in particular, being allied to the Nicholsons, and other families of mark. Through the warm recommendations of Capt. Murray, Mr. Shaw was appointed to a separate command, and was at once placed in the way of carving out a name for himself.



The vessel to which Lieut. Com. Shaw was appointed was built on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and was a schooner that was pierced for twelve long sixes, a species of gun that preceded the use of the light carronade. She was called the *Enterprise*, and subsequently became celebrated in the service, for her extraordinary good fortune and many captures. A few years later, Porter had her lengthened at Venice, and pierced for two more guns, and in the end she was converted into a brig, terminating her career, under the late Capt. Galligher, by shipwreck, in the West Indies. In the course of her service, the *Enterprise* fought nine or ten actions, in all of which she was either completely successful, or came off with credit. It was her officers and men, too, in a great measure, that carried the Philadelphia, in the harbor of Tripoli, and Decatur's own boat was manned from her, in the desperate hand-to-hand conflict that occurred under the rocks before that town. In one sense, she was more useful than any other craft that ever sailed under the flag.

Lieut. Com. Shaw got to sea in the *Enterprise*, with a crew of seventy-six men on board, in December, 1799. He proceeded to the Windward Island station. In February, 1800, on his return from Curaçoa, off the east end of Porto Rico, Shaw fell in with the *Constellation* 38, Com. Truxtun, thirty-six hours after her warm engagement with *le Vengeance*, a ship of larger size, heavier, and more guns, and a stronger crew. The *Constellation*, as is well known, had been partly dismasted in the battle, and was now making the best of her way to Jamaica. Com. Truxtun sent the *Enterprise* to Philadelphia with despatches, where she arrived

fifteen days later, having experienced heavy gales on the coast.

Lieut. Com. Shaw left the Delaware again, in March, having orders to proceed off Cape François with despatches for Com. Talbot. Having delivered his despatches, he proceeded on to join Com. Truxtun at Jamaica. Off the eastern end of the island, however, he fell in with an English sloop of war, and ascertained that the *Constellation* had sailed for home, when he immediately hauled up for St. Kitts, the rendezvous of the Windward squadron. While off the Mona Passage, working up towards her station, the *Enterprise* saw a large brig to the southward and eastward, to which she gave chase with the American ensign flying. Gaining on the chase, the latter showed Spanish colors, and opened a fire on the schooner, when about a mile distant. Lieut. Com. Shaw stood on, keeping his luff until he had got well on the brig's quarter, when, determined not to be fired at without resenting it, he poured in a broadside upon the Spaniard. A sharp conflict ensued, the brig mounting eighteen guns, and having heavier metal than her antagonist. After exchanging their fire for twenty minutes the vessels separated, without any explanations, each being seemingly satisfied of the national character of the other. This was the first affair of the gallant little *Enterprise*, and it might be taken as a pledge of the spirit with which she was to be sailed and fought, during the twenty succeeding years. Both vessels suffered materially in this combat, though little was said of it, even at the time, and it appears not to have led to any political dissension. The American went into St. Thomas to refit.

In the port of St. Thomas there happened to be lying, at the time, a large French lugger, that mounted twelve guns, and is said to have had a crew of a hundred souls on board. The commander of this lugger sent a civil message to Lieut. Shaw, naming an hour when he should be pleased to make a trial of strength in the offing. As soon as this proposal was mentioned to the crew of the American schooner, it was accepted with three cheers, and the enemy was duly apprised of the fact.

At the time named in the challenge, Lieut. Shaw got under way, and stood into the offing. Here he hove-to, waiting for his antagonist to come out. Observing that the lugger did not lift her anchor, he fired a shot in the direction of the harbour. This signal was repeated several times, during the remainder of the day, without producing any effect. After dark, the *Enterprise* bore up, and ran down to leeward of St. Croix, where she continued cruising for several days; during which time she captured a small letter-of-marque, and carried her into St. Kitts.

After filling up his water and provisions, Lieut. Com. Shaw sailed again immediately. A day or two out, or in May, 1800, he fell in with, and brought to action a French privateer schooner, called *la Seine*, armed with four guns, and having a complement of fifty-four men. The combat was short, but exceedingly spirited, the Frenchman making a most desperate resistance. He did not yield until he had twenty-four of his crew killed and wounded, and his sails and rigging cut to pieces. The *Enterprise* had a few men hurt also. The prize was manned and sent into St. Kitts.

Two weeks later, the *Enterprise* being to leeward of Guadaloupe, chased and engaged another privateer called *la Citoyenne*, carrying six guns, and manned with fifty-seven men. Like *la Seine*, *la Citoyenne* held out and fought to the last, refusing to strike so long as a hope of escape remained. When she struck, it was ascertained that she had lost four men killed, beside having eleven men wounded. Capt. Shaw always spoke of the obstinacy of the resistance made by these two gallant Frenchmen with great respect. In the two affairs, the *Enterprise* had a marine killed and seven men wounded. *La Citoyenne* was also manned and sent into St. Kitts.

The *Enterprise* next went off Porto Rico. Here Lieut. Com. Shaw heard that two American mariners were sentenced to death for having killed two Frenchmen in an attempt to recapture their vessel. These seamen had been twice taken to the place of execution and reprieved, suffering, in addition to this cruel trifling, much in the way of ordinary treatment. In the struggle in which the Frenchmen fell, they had actually succeeded, but were recaptured before they could reach a port. Shortly after the *Enterprise* went into St. Kitts, when Lieut. Shaw made known the situation of these captives to the American agent for prisoners, and an abortive attempt was made to obtain their release. The affair was not finally disposed of, however, before the *Enterprise* sailed on another cruise.

Lieut. Com. Shaw now passed between Antigua and Desirade, where he made a large three-masted French lugger, which he immediately recognised as the vessel that had sent him the challenge at St. Thomas. The

Enterprise closed in expectation of an engagement, but, after exchanging a few shot, the lugger hauled down her colors. This vessel proved to be the same as that which had sent the challenge, and from the feebleness of her resistance, in connection with the other circumstances, we are left to suppose some artifice led to her defiance. On board the prize were several officers of the French army, one of whom proved to be of the rank of a major-general. The Enterprise went into St. Kitts with the lugger, and no sooner did she arrive than Lieut. Com. Shaw put the general and a captain in close confinement, as hostages for the security of the two condemned Americans. Care was taken to let this fact be known at Guadaloupe, and it had its influence.

In the mean time, Com. Truxtun arrived on the station, and he supported Mr. Shaw in what he had done. Matters now looked so serious that the general asked permission to be sent, on his parole, to Guadaloupe, to arrange the difficulty in person. His request was granted, and, within the month, he returned, bringing back the liberated Americans in his company. Mr. Shaw's spirit and decision obtained for him much credit with the authorities of the period, and were doubtless the means of saving two brave men much additional suffering, if not from ignominious deaths.

While the affair of the condemned mariners was in progress, Lieut. Com. Shaw did not keep his schooner idle in port. She had now become a favorite little cruiser, and was seldom at anchor longer than was necessary to repair damages, or taken in supplies. In June she was cruising to leeward of Guadaloupe, when she fell in with another privateer called *l'Aigle*; a very

fast and destructive cruiser, of nearly the *Enterprise's* force, as she carried ten guns, and had seventy-eight men on board. *L'Aigle* had cut up both the English and American trade very extensively, nor had her commander any objections to engage, although the *Enterprise* was so handled as to leave her no choice. The vessels crossed each other on opposite tacks, the American to leeward, but close aboard her enemy. Each delivered her broadside in passing, with considerable effect. The helm of the *Enterprise* was put down in the smoke, and she shot rapidly up into the wind, tacking directly athwart the Frenchman's wake. This was done so quickly as to enable the American to discharge four of her six guns fairly into the enemy's stern, raking her with great effect. The enemy was now evidently in confusion, and his schooner coming round, Mr. Shaw laid the enemy aboard to windward, firing but one more gun; or eleven in all. The Americans met with no resistance, finding the crew of *L'Aigle* below. At first this circumstance excited surprise, the French commander having one of the greatest reputations of any privateersman in the West Indies, and being known to be as resolute as he was skillful.

On examining the state of the prize, however, it was ascertained that a round shot had struck the French commander on the upper part of his forehead, tearing away the scalp, and he lay for dead, on deck. He recovered his senses in the end, and survived the injury. Another shot had passed directly through the breast of the first lieutenant. Nor was the fate of the second lieutenant much better than that of his commander. A shot had also grazed his head, carrying away a part of

one ear, and much of the skin, throwing him on the deck senseless. It was owing to these singular casualties that the men, finding themselves without leaders, deserted their quarters when the Americans boarded.

L'Aigle had three men killed and nine wounded, in this short affair. Three of the Enterprise's people were wounded, but no one was slain. The prize was sent in, as usual, and Mr. Shaw immediately prepared for farther service.

In July, this gallant little schooner, then cruising to leeward of Dominico, fell in with le Flambeau, another privateer of note in those seas. This vessel, a brig, was every way superior to the Enterprise, mounting the same number of guns, it is true, but of heavier metal, and having a crew on board of one hundred and ten souls. She had also a reputation for sailing and working well, and was commanded by a brave and experienced seaman.

The Flambeau was seen by the Americans overnight, but could not close. Next morning, she was discovered sweeping toward them in a calm. Lieut. Com. Shaw allowed her to approach, until the sea breeze struck his schooner, when he immediately set every thing, and crowded sail in chase. The brig spread all her canvas, and both vessels went off free, for some time, with studding-sails set. The Flambeau was apparently disposed to observe before she permitted the Enterprise to come any nearer. While running, in this manner, at a rapid rate, through the water, the Frenchman, who was then carrying studding-sails on both sides, suddenly hauled up close on a wind, boarding his starboard tack. The Enterprise did the same,

hauling up nearly in her wake. In this manner the chase continued, the *Enterprise* gaining, until the vessels got within range of musketry, when the *Flambeau* opened a heavy fire with that species of arms. The *Enterprise* returned the fire in the same manner, until close aboard of her enemy, when Lieut. Com. Shaw edged a little off, shortened sail, and received a broadside. This discharge was immediately returned, and a spirited fire was kept up for about twenty minutes. Finding himself getting the worst of the combat, the Frenchman hauled all his sheets flat aft, luffed, and tacked. The *Enterprise* endeavoured to imitate this manœuvre, but unluckily she missed stays. There remained no other expedient for Lieut. Com. Shaw but to trim every thing that would draw, get round as fast as he could, and endeavour to get alongside of his enemy by his superiority of sailing. This was done, and the firing re-commenced. The foretopmast of le *Flambeau* had been badly wounded, and men were seen aloft endeavouring to secure it, when, a flaw of wind striking the brig, the spar came down, carrying six men with it overboard. As the *Flambeau* was running away from the spot where the accident happened, and the *Enterprise* was fast coming up to it, the latter lowered a boat, and saved all the Frenchmen. A few minutes later, she ranged close alongside her enemy, when le *Flambeau* struck.\* The action lasted forty minutes, and had been hotly contested on both sides.

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\* This account of the combat between the *Enterprise* and le *Flambeau* differs, in several particulars, from that given by the writer in his *History of the Navy of the United States*. The account in the latter work was written from the statements of an



Le Flambeau had forty men killed and wounded, and the Enterprise eight or ten. The Frenchman was hulled repeatedly, and among other accidents that befel him, a shot passed through his medicine chest, while the surgeon was busy operating on the hurt. The prize was carried to St. Kitts, and, in the end, all the proceeds were adjudged to the officers and people of the Enterprise, as having captured a vessel of superior force. In the engagement, the Enterprise mustered eighty-three souls, all told.

This was one of the warmest actions of the war of 1798. It added largely to the reputation of the schooner and her gallant commander, the services of both having been unusually brilliant for the force employed. Active as our subject had been, he was not content to remain idle, however, going to sea again as soon as he had repaired damages.

In August, Lieut. Shaw, cruising in the Antigua passage, fell in with another French privateer, in the night. The Frenchman endeavoured to escape, but, after a chase of five hours, the Enterprise got him fairly under her guns, when he struck. This vessel proved to be la Pauline, of six guns and forty men. The French consul at Porto Rico was a passenger in this vessel. La Pauline was sent into St. Kitts, like all her predecessors.

In September, still cruising in the Antigua passage, Lieut. Shaw captured, after firing a few guns, a letter-of-marque, called le Guadaloupéenne, a vessel of seven

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officer of the Enterprise, who admitted that he trusted altogether to memory. The present account is taken from memoranda made by Captain Shaw himself, and is doubtless correct.

guns and forty-five men. On board the prize was found the same general officer who had been taken in the three-masted lugger and exchanged, and who now became a prisoner, the second time, to Lieut. Com. Shaw, in the same season.

How much longer this success and activity would have continued, it is hard to say; but, by this time, the health of Mr. Shaw was suffering severely through the influence of the climate, and, induced to follow the advice of his medical attendants, he asked to be relieved. The malady was a continued diarrhœa, and was not to be neglected in that latitude. Highly as the activity of Mr. Shaw was appreciated, he was ordered to transfer the command of the *Enterprise* to Lieut. Sterret, late of the *Constellation*, and permitted to sail for the United States in the *Petapsco* sloop of war, where he arrived late in November. Lieut. Shaw did not reach Washington until early in January, 1801, where he was personally thanked by the President for his services. The Secretary also paid him a similar compliment. He was promised promotion, and actually received verbal orders to prepare to go to Boston, where he was to assume the charge of the *Berceau*, a prize corvette of twenty-six guns, which was a post-captain's command. This arrangement, however, was defeated by the progress of the negotiations, and a treaty of peace was ratified by the Senate the following month.

In March, 1801, Mr. Jefferson's administration commenced, and the peace establishment law, which had been passed under the government of his predecessor in office, was now carried into effect. The *Berceau* was restored to the French by the conditions of the

treaty, and, so far from promoting any of inferior rank, there existed the necessity of disbanding the greater portion of the gentlemen already on the list of captains. Of more than thirty captains and commanders then in service, but nine of the former rank were to be retained. The law, however, directed that thirty-six lieutenants were to continue on the list. This was a reduction of nearly three-fourths, and it became a serious question who was, and who was not, to be disbanded.

Under ordinary circumstances, there is little question that Mr. Shaw, a native of a foreign country, and without political support, with less than twelve years' residence, and not yet three years' service in the navy, would have been among those who would be compelled to retire. But the cruise of the *Enterprise* had been far too brilliant to suffer this injustice. In six months that schooner had captured eight privateers and letters-of-marque, and fought five spirited actions; two of which were with vessels of superior force. In four of these actions she had actually captured her antagonists, and in that in which the combatants separated as not being lawfully belligerents as respects each other, she had nobly sustained the honor of the flag. It was impossible to overlook such services, and Mr. Shaw was retained in his proper rank. His name appears as fourth on the list of lieutenants, under the peace establishment law, leaving Stewart, Hull,\* and Sterret above him.

In the spring of 1801, the government sent the *George Washington* 28, armed *en flute*, into the Mediterranean, with the tribute for Algiers. To this vessel Lieut. Com. Shaw was appointed, as honorable a command as could be connected with such duty. After

delivering the stores, the ship remained out, convoying and looking after the interests of the American trade, until the following year, when she returned to America. The whole service occupied about a twelve-month; the usual extent of a cruise in that day, when crews were shipped for only a year. On her return home, the *George Washington*, which had been an Indiaman bought into the navy, was sold and returned to her original occupation.

By the new law Mr. Shaw was now put on lieutenant's half-pay, which, at that period of the history of the navy, was only twenty dollars a month. Necessity compelled him to ask for a furlough, on receiving which he made a voyage, as master, to Canton, touching at the Isle of France. On this voyage he was absent about eighteen months, returning to the United States in September, 1804. Previously to this, Mr. Shaw had married a lady of Philadelphia, of the name of Palmer. Elizabeth Palmer was of a family of Friends, but attachment to the subject of our biography induced her to break the rigid laws of her sect, and, of course, submit to being rejected by her church. It was this marriage, and the birth of one or two children, that compelled Mr. Shaw to seek service in the Indiaman just mentioned.

During his absence on the India voyage, or May 22d, 1804, the rank of master commandants was restored to the navy, by the promotion of the eight oldest lieutenants. Of course, Capt. Shaw became the fourth officer of that rank then in service. This was at the moment when Preble was carrying on his brilliant operations before Tripoli, and the subject of gunboats was much discussed in the naval circles. Early in January, 1805,

Capt. Shaw addressed a letter to the Secretary, offering to carry a flotilla of these craft into the Mediterranean. His idea was to build them in time to sail in March, expecting to be able to reach the point of operations in the succeeding May. To this offer, Capt. Shaw annexed a request that the commodore on the station should be instructed to give him the command of the gunboats he should succeed in navigating in front of the enemy's port. The arrival of Com. Preble, in this country, induced the government to construct the boats, but Capt. Shaw, himself, was appointed to the command of the *John Adams* 28, and in May he sailed for the Mediterranean, having three of the gunboats in company. On their arrival on the station, it was found that peace had been made, and shortly after the *John Adams* returned home. The ship was now laid up in ordinary at Washington, at which port she had arrived in December, after a cruise of seven months.

Capt. Shaw received orders to repair to New Orleans in January, 1806, or the month after his return home, with directions to construct a flotilla of gunboats, for the service of those waters. This was the commencement of the great gunboat system in the country, those already in use having been built for special service abroad. The following winter he was made acquainted with the existence of the plot of Burr. This compelled him to use extraordinary exertions to equip a force equal to commanding the river, under circumstances of this nature. Early in February, he appeared off Natchez, with a flotilla mounting sixty-one guns, and manned with four hundred and forty-eight seamen and soldiers. The two ketches, *Ætna* and *Vesuvius*, had joined him

in the river, composing more than a third of this force. The services of Capt. Shaw, on this occasion, met with the approbation of the government.

After the dispersion of Burr's force, Capt. Shaw was ordered to Washington, and was sent to Richmond, as a witness on the trial of the accused. At the close of the year 1807, he was commanded to sit on the court which tried Com. Barron for the affair of the Chesapeake, having been promoted to the rank of post-captain the 27th August, previously.

After the court rose, Capt. Shaw received orders, of the date of May, 1808, to take charge of the navy yard at Norfolk. On this station he continued until August, 1810, when he was commanded to proceed, once more, to New Orleans. On this occasion, he repaired to his station by land. On reaching Natchez, he met Governor Claiborne, who had been directed to seize Baton Rouge. A flotilla of gunboats had been lying off Natchez some time, and taking command of it, Capt. Shaw covered the debarkation of the troops that effected this piece of service.

During the year 1811, Capt. Shaw was principally engaged in making preparations to defend New Orleans, in the event of a war with Great Britain. He examined all the approaches to the place, though the storm blew over, and little was done by the government towards effecting this important object. These labors, however, were of service when the war so suddenly and unexpectedly broke out, the following year. As the enemy paid no great attention to this part of the country until late in the war, Capt. Shaw had little other duty to perform, while he remained on this station, than to make

such preparations as his means and orders allowed. Among other things, he commenced the construction of a heavy block ship, that subsequently was used in the defence of the place. In 1813, Gen. Wilkinson seized Mobile, Capt. Shaw commanding the maritime part of the expedition. On this duty the latter was employed about three months, having a strong division of gun-boats and light cruisers under his orders. On this occasion, the navy transported the guns and stores to the point, where the troops erected the work subsequently rendered distinguished by the repulse of a British attack by water. The communication with New Orleans, by sea, was also kept up by means of the flotilla. On his return to New Orleans, Capt. Shaw was much engaged in procuring cannon, ammunition and gun-carriages, for the defence of that important place. To obtain the latter, a quantity of mahogany was purchased, and on this material about forty heavy guns were mounted. These guns were subsequently used by the army that repulsed the enemy in 1815.

In the spring of 1814, Capt. Shaw left the station and repaired to Washington, at which place he arrived early in May. After settling his accounts, he obtained a short leave of absence to visit his friends. After discharging this domestic duty, he proceeded on to Connecticut, and took command of the squadron lying in the Thames, between New London and Norwich. This force consisted of the United States 44, Macedonian 38, and Hornet 18. As these ships were vigilantly blockaded by the enemy, the Hornet alone was enabled to get out. She effected her escape under Capt. Biddle, and subsequently captured the Penguin 18, but the

two frigates were kept in the river until peace; or March, 1815.

As soon as the war terminated, the United States proceeded to Boston under Capt. Shaw, with orders to prepare for a cruise in the Mediterranean. In September of the same year she joined the squadron under Bainbridge, at Malaga. Peace with Algiers, however, had been made by Decatur, and, there being no necessity for retaining the large force that was out in that distant sea, Com. Bainbridge came home, leaving the station in command of Capt. Shaw, the next senior to himself in the Mediterranean. The force left with Com. Shaw consisted of his own ship, the United States 44, Constellation 38, Capt. Crane, Ontario 18, Capt. Elliot, and Erie 18, Capt. Ridgely. The Java 44, Capt. Perry, joined him soon after.

Com. Shaw retained this command until the following year, cruising and visiting the different ports of that sea, when he was relieved by Com. Chauncy, in the Washington 74. Capt. Shaw continued out, however, until November, 1817, when he exchanged for the Constellation, and came home, that ship requiring repairs. The Constellation anchored in Hampton Roads, December 26, 1817, making the cruise of her commander extend to about twenty-eight months. Com. Shaw got leave to visit his family in Philadelphia, from which he had now been separated, on service, nearly five years.

Com. Shaw never went to sea again, in command. He was shortly after put in charge of the Boston navy yard, where he remained the usual time. When relieved, he was placed in command at Charleston, S.



Carolina, a station rather of honor, however, than of active duty. September 17, 1823, he died at Philadelphia, where he had been taken ill; the place that he considered his home, and where he had first established himself on his arrival in the country, thirty-three years before. As Com. Shaw was born in 1773, he was just fifty when he died.

Com. Shaw was twice married. His first wife was Elizabeth Palmer, the Quakeress already mentioned. By this lady he had several children, all of whom, but two daughters, died young. Of these two daughters, Elizabeth, the eldest, married Francis H. Gregory, Esquire, of Connecticut, a captain in the navy, and now in command of the *Raritan 44*; and Virginia, the youngest, is the wife of Wm. H. Lynch, Esquire, of Virginia, a lieutenant in the navy of fifteen years' standing, and late commander of the steamer *Poinsett*. By Mrs. Gregory, there are seven grandchildren, the descendants of Com. Shaw; and by Mrs. Lynch, two. The second wife of Com. Shaw was a Miss Breed, of Charlestown, Massachusetts, and of the family that gave its name to the celebrated hill, on which the renowned battle was fought, in June, 1775. By this lady, who still survives, there was no issue.

Com. Shaw was a man of great probity and sincerity of character. As a seaman, he was active, decided, and ready. No man was braver, or more willing to serve the flag under which he sailed. As has been said, the cruise of the *Enterprise*, in 1800, if not positively the most useful, and, considering the force and means employed, the most brilliant, of any that ever occurred in the American navy, it was certainly among

the most useful and brilliant. Of itself, it was sufficient to give a commander an established reputation. His other services were of a respectable order, though circumstances never placed him subsequently in situations to manifest the same qualities.

Com. Shaw was a man of fine presence, and had the manly bearing and frank demeanor of a seaman. His character answered to his exterior. There was a warm-heartedness in his demeanor toward his friends, that denoted good feelings. Few officers were more beloved by those who served under him, and he was disposed to deal honorably and justly by all mankind.

## JOHN TEMPLER SHUBRICK.

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THE subject of our sketch is the eldest of four brothers who have served with credit and reputation in the navy, since the commencement of the present century. Of these brothers, John, the oldest, never rose higher in rank than to be a lieutenant commandant; William Branford, the second in seniority, is the present Commodore Shubrick; Edward Rutledge, the third, died quite recently, a captain, on his passage between the Brazil and the Mediterranean stations, in command of the *Columbia 44*; while Irvine, the fourth and youngest, is a commander of the promotion of 1841. It is seldom, indeed, that so many members of a single family are found in the same profession, serving equally with credit to themselves, and advantage to their country.

The family of Shubrick belongs to South Carolina, in which state it has long been connected with many of the most distinguished names. We have only to mention those of Drayton, Hayne, Heyward, Hamilton, Pinckney, Horry, Trapier, &c., &c., to show the character of its connections.

Col. Thomas Shubrick, the father of the four sons just mentioned, was an officer of the Revolution, having served with distinction in the army of Gen. Greene

during the celebrated southern campaign. He was with the latter, in the capacity of an aid, at the battle of Eutaw Springs. This gentleman was born late in 1755, and was consequently quite young at the commencement of the great struggle for national independence. He was the seventh child, and the third son of Thomas Shubrick and Sarah Motte, both of Charleston; the latter being of the connection of that noble woman who furnished Lee with the implements to set fire to her own house, in order to subdue a British garrison. Col. Thomas Shubrick, the father of our subject, married a Miss Branford, in 1778. Her mother was a Bullein, one of the variations of the name of Boleyn. John was the seventh child and the fifth son of this marriage, having been born on Bull's Island, a valuable estate that belonged to Col. Shubrick, on the 12th September, 1788. His father died at another estate called Belvedere, March 4th, 1810; his mother survived until August, 1832.

Young Shubrick was taught in the schools of Charleston, in the manner usual to boys of his class in life, until the year 1801, when he was sent to the care of the Rev. Thomas Thacher, of Dedham, Massachusetts, accompanied by his elder brother, Richard. The succeeding year, they were joined by their next younger brother, William, the present Commodore Shubrick. Under the instruction of this truly kind and excellent guide and friend, he remained until the spring of 1804, when he returned to Charleston, and commenced the study of the law, in the office of his kinsman, Col. Drayton, so well known to the country for his probity and public services. During the time young Shubrick

remained occupied in this pursuit, his progress created the most sanguine hopes of his future success, though his disposition strongly tempted him to engage in more active and stirring scenes than those likely to attend the career of a barrister. By the persuasion of friends, however, as well as a sense of duty, the young man persevered for two years, when his father yielded to the wishes of two of his sons, and procured for them midshipmen's appointments. The warrants of the two Shubricks were of the same date, August 19th, 1806, though there were more than two years' difference in their ages. This placed John, the elder of the two, and the subject of our sketch, in the navy when he was little more than eighteen years old. With many minds and temperaments, this would have been commencing the profession somewhat too late, perhaps, though the education previously obtained was of great advantage to one so much disposed to acquire all useful knowledge as this youth. By some mistake of the Department, the warrants were ante-dated, appearing as if issued June 20th. The circumstance was of little moment, nor do we know that it had any influence on the subsequent promotions of either of the young gentlemen interested.

From the very commencement of his service, John Shubrick's career was marked by that species of fortune that seemed ever to lead him where hard knocks were to be given and taken. So marked, indeed, was his career in this respect, that, in the end, it began to be thought that his luck would give any ship a chance for a fight on board which he might happen to serve. The first vessel to which the young man was attached

was the Chesapeake 36, Capt. Gordon, which vessel he joined at Washington, while fitting for the Mediterranean station, to carry the broad pennant of Commodore James Barron. In this ship he dropped down to Norfolk, remained there until she sailed, and was in her at the time of the memorable attack that was made on her by the Leopard 50, Capt. Humphreys. In this affair, those on board the Chesapeake were probably more exposed than had they been in a regular engagement in which both parties were prepared, and contended under equal advantages.

On the occasion of his first hearing a shot fired in anger, Shubrick was one of the midshipmen in the division of Lieut. Wm. H. Allen, he who was so long Decatur's first lieutenant, and who was subsequently killed in command of the Argus. Allen was third lieutenant of the Chesapeake, a rank that gave him the midship division on the gun-deck, a berth that is usually called the slaughter-house, from the circumstance that the fire is generally concentrated on the centre of the ship. The division was particularly lumbered, but great activity was manifested in clearing it. It is generally known that the Chesapeake could not discharge her guns for want of powder-horns to prime them with, as well as the want of matches, or heated loggerheads. But for this unprepared condition of the ship, one broadside might have been fired, though it is probable a second could not. As it was, the only gun discharged was in the division to which Mr. Shubrick belonged. Two powder-horns were received from below, after the Leopard had opened some time, when three of the guns were primed, being otherwise ready. Mr. Allen him-

self got a loggerhead from the galley, and applied it to the priming of one of these guns, but it was not yet warm enough to cause the powder to explode. He then ran to the galley, procured a coal, and with that he succeeded in discharging one gun. It is doubtful whether this was before or after the order had been given to haul down the colors, the two things occurring almost at the same instant. Allen and his officers were about to discharge the other two guns, when an order was issued to fire no more. The officers worked as well as the men, in these critical circumstances; and the breeching of one of the guns of the second division was middled principally by Allen himself, Shubrick, and the present Commodore Wadsworth, who was the senior midshipman of the division. But two of the crew appear to have been at that gun in consequence of the rest being wounded or absent.\*

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\* Mr. Wadsworth, having been a midshipman more than three years when the Leopard attacked the Chesapeake, was one of the witnesses examined on the trial of Commodore Barron, which Shubrick was not, most probably on account of the short time he had been in service. It will give the reader some idea of the unprepared state of the ship, in the division whence the only gun was fired, if we extract some of the questions put to this witness, and the answers he gave.

Q. "What time elapsed before you received powder-horns?"

A. "About twelve or fifteen minutes, I suppose, from the commencement of the attack."

The powder of these horns was the *priming*, without which the guns could not be fired.

Q. "Had you cartridges in your division, at any time before the surrender?"

A. "Not that I knew of."

Q. "Had you matches or loggerheads in your division, at any time before the surrender?"

This was a rude encounter for so young an adventurer to meet, almost in the first hour after he got to sea. The Chesapeake suffered much less than might have been expected, when it is remembered that she lay near a quarter of an hour, and in smooth water, virtually unresisting, under the broadside of a fifty gun ship. Still she suffered; having had no less than between twenty and thirty of her people killed and wounded. Of this loss, a fair proportion occurred in the division to which Shubrick belonged.\*

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A. "No lighted matches, or hot loggerheads. The gun we fired was fired by a coal of fire."

Q. "If you had fired the guns, had you every thing necessary to reload and to continue the fire?"

A. "We had not in the division."

Q. "Were any men killed or wounded in your division?"

A. "Several were wounded, how many I do not know. None were killed immediately, but one died a short time afterward."

Q. "State to the court to what guns these wounded men belonged."

A. "Several of them to this gun, F. I don't recollect the rest."

This was the gun mentioned as that at which the three officers worked:

\* The curious in such matters may have a desire to know the extent of the damage received by the Chesapeake in this celebrated affair. The firing lasted from twelve to fifteen minutes, in smooth water, and without resistance, the one gun fired by Allen excepted; viz.:

"In the foresail, four round-shot holes, twelve grape-shot holes, and the starboard leech (bolt rope) cut away. In the mainsail, (which must have been in the brails, as the ship was hove-to,) three round-shot holes, full of grape do., and the footrope cut away."

"Maintop-sail, one round-shot hole; foretop-mast stay-sail much injured by grape-shot. In the spare foretop-mast, two twelve-pound shot holes, which have rendered it entirely unfit for service."

"Main-sky-sail-mast cut in two."

"The second cutter much injured by a shot hole, which went



Shubrick remained in the Chesapeake after she was given to Decatur. Late in 1808, however, he was transferred to the brig *Argus*, in which vessel he remained, cruising on the coast, under three several commanders, Capts. Wederstrandt, Evans, and Jones, until early in 1810. As this was a very active little cruiser, the time passed in her was of great service to our young officer, as, indeed, was that under Decatur, in the Chesapeake. After remaining in the *Argus* near twenty months, Shubrick was ordered to join the *United States 44*, which was just fitted out to carry Decatur's pennant. He continued but a few months, however, in this fine frigate, being compelled to quit her in consequence of a misunderstanding with another officer, which was near producing a duel. Shubrick gave the challenge, conceiving himself the injured party, and all the arrangements were made for the meeting, when the affair reached the ears of the commodore. Decatur sent for the gentlemen, and demanded a pledge from each that the affair should go no farther. This pledge Shubrick refused to give, as the challenger, and Decatur found himself rather awkwardly placed in his character of a mediator. It would not do to suffer discipline to be

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through and through her, cut both of her masts, and three of her cars in two. First cutter slightly injured."

"Twenty-two round-shot in her hull, that is to say, twenty-one on her starboard, and one on her larboard side."

"The fore and main-masts are incapable of being made seaworthy; the mizzen mast badly wounded, but not incapable of being repaired on shore; three starboard, and two larboard main-shrouds, two starboard fore-shrouds, two starboard mizzen-shrouds, main-top-mast stay, cap, bob-stay, and starboard main-lift cut away, likewise the middle stay-sail stay.

"Killed, 3; badly wounded, 8; slightly wounded, 10."

brow-beaten, on the one hand, while his own nature was opposed to punishing a young officer for having sensitive feelings on the subject of his honor, even though those feelings might be a little exaggerated. In this dilemma, he decided on ordering young Shubrick to quit his ship, taking care to send him on board another vessel of his squadron, with the acting appointment of lieutenant! There was a slight semblance of punishment in sending a midshipman from the finest vessel under his orders, to the smallest and least desirable craft he had among his cruisers, but it was a punishment any midshipman in the service would have been rejoiced to receive.

The vessel to which Shubrick was now sent was the *Viper*, probably the smallest sea-going craft in the navy, at that time. He joined her at midsummer, 1810, and it may be remarked in passing, that William Shubrick was made acting lieutenant in the *Wasp*, by Lawrence, about the same time. As John Shubrick was born in 1788, he got this important step in his profession when in his twenty-second year, and after having been only four years in the service. This seems extraordinary preferment in days like these, when a young gentleman is compelled to pass six years as a midshipman before he can even be examined, and frequently as many more as a passed midshipman before he gets his lieutenant's commission. The service requires an entirely new arrangement of its grades, as well as the establishment of some that are new, in order to impart to it fresh life and hope. About the time of which we are now writing, Commodore Stewart sent a nephew of his, the present Capt. M'Cauley, late of the *Delaware 80*, with a

letter of introduction to Decatur, who had just hoisted his pennant in the United States. Young M'Cauley had been made a midshipman a short time previously, and had been ordered to join the frigate. As Decatur and Stewart were close friends, the former felt the propriety of saying a few encouraging words to the kinsman of the latter, on his introduction to naval life. After a few general remarks, the commodore added, "Every thing depends on yourself, young gentleman. You see my pennant aloft, there; well, I joined this very ship myself, only twelve years since, a midshipman, like yourself, and you see I now carry a broad pennant in her." All this is very true, but Mr. M'Cauley, when he related to us this anecdote, had been a lieutenant as long as Decatur had then been in the navy.\*

In addition to the pleasure of receiving this acting lieutenancy, Shubrick had the satisfaction of being put under the orders of a townsman, Lieut. Com. Gadsden, the officer who commanded the *Viper*. The schooner cruised along the coast south, touching at Charleston, and passing into the Gulf of Mexico. At New Orleans, Lieut. Joseph Bainbridge took charge of the *Viper*.

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\* Decatur entered the navy as a midshipman in 1798. He was made a lieutenant in 1799, and a captain in 1804. The first ship he commanded was the *Constitution*, *Old Ironsides*, which vessel was turned over to him by Preble, on quitting the Mediterranean command, September, 1804, or about six years after he entered the navy. In 1805, he exchanged the *Constitution* for the *Congress* 38, with Rodgers, and in 1807, he got the *Chesapeake*, after the affair with the *Leopard*. In 1810, he was transferred to the *United States*, which he held until 1814, when he went to the *President*, and was captured off New York. In 1815 he got the *Guerriere*, and the Mediterranean squadron. This was the last ship he ever commanded.

In 1811, Shubrick was transferred to the *Siren 16*, Capt. Gordon, one of the medium sized brigs, that had done so much service before the town of Tripoli. So attentive had the young man been to his duty, and so great was his improvement in his profession, that he was soon intrusted with the duties of the first lieutenant of this brig. It is true he was not commissioned as a lieutenant at all, but in that day it was no unusual thing for a majority of the ward-room officers of even frigates to be merely acting.

An unpleasant affair occurred while Mr. Shubrick was doing first lieutenant's duty in this brig. Some rope was making for the vessel, and Shubrick had occasion to attend at the walk, with a gang of hands. The superintendent of the rope-walk was an Englishman, and, in the course of the duty, he abused the seamen and ended by grossly insulting their officer. Shubrick was armed, but, unwilling to draw his sword on such an opponent, he caught up a stick and began to thresh him with it. It seems that the Englishman carried a pistol, which he leveled at Shubrick's head and fired. At the moment, the latter had the stick grasped with both hands, and was in the act of repeating the blow. His thumbs were crossed, and the ball injured them so badly that both were amputated. Notwithstanding this outrage, and the fact that the man had provoked and merited the chastisement he received, Shubrick refused to proceed against him, saying he could not take the satisfaction that was customary among gentlemen, and he would not resort to any other mode of atonement.

Toward the close of the year 1811, the *Siren* came

north, and Shubrick still remained in her. Early in 1812, he received his commission as a lieutenant, having now been nearly six years in the service, and having reached his twenty-fourth year.

Lieut. Shubrick was now ordered to join the Constitution 44, Capt. Hull, which ship had just returned from Europe, and was receiving a new crew, together with many new officers. War was declared a few days later, and every nerve was strained to get the ship ready for sea as soon as possible. So hurried were the equipments that one hundred of the ship's people joined her only the night previously to the day on which she sailed from Annapolis. The Constitution was exceedingly well officered. For her first lieutenant she had Charles Morris, now Commodore Morris, one of the very ablest men the American marine ever possessed. Even in that day, this gentleman enjoyed a reputation very unusual for one of his rank; while, at the present time, after filling many places of high responsibility, no officer commands more of the confidence and respect both of the service and the country. The Constitution had, for her second lieutenant, Alexander S. Wadsworth, an officer of great respectability, a brother of the gentleman who was blown up with Somers in the Intrepid, and the present Commodore Wadsworth. The third lieutenant was George Campbell Read, the present Commodore Read, who has always ranked high in the service; the fourth lieutenant was Beekman Verplank Hoffman, who died a captain a few years since, and who was thought to be one of the best, if not the very best division officer in the navy; the fifth lieutenant was Shubrick, and there was an acting sixth, in Charles

Morgan, the present Commodore Morgan, who was then young as an officer, but of very excellent materials.

This was officering a frigate in an unusual manner, but there were so few ships at the time, it is not surprising as many young men crowded in those that did go out, as could get on board them, or could get permission to go. Hull experienced the benefit of possessing such a quarter-deck before he had been out long, it being probable the escape of his ship, a few days later, was owing to his having so many lieutenants to relieve each other, and to keep the duty alive.

The Constitution lifted her anchor on the 12th of July, 1812. On the 17th, she fell in with an English squadron of five vessels, including one ship of the line and four frigates. The memorable chase that succeeded will be related in detail elsewhere, though it has already passed into history, as one of the most brilliant things of its kind on record. At one time the Constitution was so hard pressed as to escape only by kedging. This was done out of sight of land, and it occasioned no little surprise among the English when they discovered the fact. On the side of the enemy, the boats of five ships were put upon two, in order to tow them up, in the calm, and no alternative remained to the Constitution but the expedient so successfully adopted.

It will not be difficult to fancy the fatigue and trials of a chase of this character, which lasted altogether three days and nights. The officers, as soon as relieved, threw themselves on the quarter-deck, sleeping in the best spot they could select, no one thinking of undressing, or of quitting duty a moment longer than

was absolutely necessary. Shubrick had his full share of the work, being employed in the boats as well as in the ship, as belonged to his rank. In a struggle of this nature, in which all may be said to have done well, no particular praise, however, can be accorded to any individual. Hull himself generously attributed much of his extraordinary success to Morris and his other officers, which was probably well deserved, though Hull himself was a prime seaman, and well fitted for such a scene.

The Constitution cruised a short time after this escape, and went into Boston. Bainbridge had claimed the ship, as due to his rank, and there was a strong prospect of his getting her, but Hull profited by some delay and uncertainty, and got to sea again on the 2d of August. This was the cruise in which the Constitution captured the Guerriere. In that engagement, Shubrick, as fifth lieutenant, commanded the quarter-deck guns, and was of course in the midst of the active scene that occurred in that portion of the ship, when the Constitution got a stern board and came foul of her adversary. He escaped without a wound, and had the gratification of seeing the first British frigate lower her flag, that struck in that war. He was sent on board the prize, before she was abandoned, and otherwise was usefully employed.

Shubrick had now been in the navy but little more than six years, and he had actually been present at the three most important events which had then occurred, since the peace with Tripoli, viz., the attack on the Chesapeake, the chase of the Constitution, and the capture of the Guerriere! But his good fortune did

not end here. Bainbridge now got the ship, and Parker succeeded Morris as his first lieutenant. Wadsworth left her also, going with Morris, who had been promoted to the *Adams*, as his first lieutenant. Shubrick and Hoffman remained in the frigate, the latter becoming her second lieutenant, and the former her third. Alwyn, who had been master in the late engagement, was also promoted to a lieutenancy, and became the junior of the ship.

Bainbridge sailed from Boston on his cruise, October 26th, 1812, having the *Hornet* 18, Capt. Lawrence, in company. The *Essex* was to leave the *Delaware* about the same time, and to join the commodore at Port Praya. This junction was never effected, however, and the *Constitution* stood across to the coast of Brazil, reaching St. Salvador, December 13th. Here the *Hornet* was left to blockade an English sloop of war, that was carrying specie, while the *Constitution* cruised to the southward. On the 29th she fell in with and captured the enemy's frigate, the *Java*, after a bloody combat of near two hours' duration; the particulars of which are to be found in our sketch of Bainbridge's Life. After destroying his prize, the commodore went into Salvador, where he landed his prisoners on parole.

In this battle, Shubrick was stationed on the gun-deck, where he did his duty, as usual. His customary good fortune attended him, for he was not injured, though the loss of the ship was considerable. Alwyn died of his wounds, and Bainbridge himself was hurt seriously, though the danger was fortunately subdued. This made the third of Shubrick's combats, without speaking of the celebrated chase.



It would seem, now, that Shubrick's luck began to be rated against that of the Constitution herself. Lieut., now Com. Ballard, was desirous of getting into the frigate, in the hope that she might have another fight, while Lawrence was willing to take Shubrick in exchange, trusting he would bring his good fortune, and certain he would bring his good conduct with him. The exchange was effected accordingly, and the Constitution sailed for home, January 6, 1813, leaving the Hornet still blockading the Bonne Citoyenne. After remaining off the port alone, eighteen days, Lawrence was chased into the harbor by the Montagu 74, and then running out to sea, he made sail to the northward. On the 24th of February, the Hornet fell in with, engaged and captured the British sloop of war Peacock 18, Capt. Peake, after a close and warm combat of only fifteen minutes. The result is well known; the prize sinking while Lieut., now Com. Conner, and Midshipman, now Capt. Cooper, were on board of her. These gentlemen, and most of their men, were saved in the Peacock's launch, but several of their companions, as well as a good many of the English, went down in the brig.

In this engagement Shubrick acted as the Hornet's first lieutenant. Mr. Walter Stewart, of Philadelphia, was on board and his senior, but that gentleman was ill in his berth, and unable to do duty. Lawrence commended the conduct of his new officer, and every one who witnessed it spoke of it in the same terms. Of course Shubrick remained in the Hornet until she reached home, carrying with him a reputation for good fortune, as well as good conduct, that was very enviable in an officer of his rank. He had now been four times

in action ; three times successfully within the last eight months, or within the seven months he had been at sea. In addition to this, he was in the Constitution's chase, an exploit worth a victory any day. These were some compensations for the attack of the Leopard, and so did Mr. Shubrick not alone feel them to be, for they were thus regarded by the service and the country.

Shubrick continued attached to the Hornet for some time after her return, and sailed in her, under Capt. Biddle, when Com. Decatur's squadron was chased into New London. Previously to this, however, an amusing instance of the influence of his fortunes on the minds of his brother officers occurred. A report was circulated that an enemy's brig was cruising close in with the eastern outlet of the Sound, and the Argus went out to look for it. Shubrick went in her, as a volunteer, hoping that his usual good fortune might bring on a combat. The enemy's cruiser was not met, however, and the Argus returned to sail on her cruise under Allen.

Finding that there was little chance of getting out in the Hornet, Shubrick got transferred to the United States, thus joining the ship of his old commander, Decatur, once more. Under this distinguished officer he continued to serve until near the close of his own career.

The summer that Com. Decatur's squadron was blockaded in the Thames, Lieut. Shubrick was married to Elizabeth Matilda Ludlow, a young lady of one of the old and respectable families of New York. This new connection was formed in the height of a war, but could not lead our young officer from the obligations of duty. When Decatur left the United States and Mace-

donian lying in the river, where they continued until the peace, in order to take the President, Lieut. Shubrick, in common with most of his officers, was transferred along with him. Shubrick ranked as the second lieutenant of this fine frigate, having Warrington, and subsequently Fitz Henry Babbitt, as the first. Babbitt was but a year or two older in the service than he was himself, and they had already been shipmates once before, in the unfortunate Chesapeake. In that frigate, Babbitt had been one of the oldest of the midshipmen, and Shubrick one of the youngest.

The President did not get to sea until January 14th, 1815. That very night she fell in with an English squadron, consisting of the Majestic, razée, Endymion, Nymph and Tenedos frigates. As resisting such a force was out of the question, a long chase ensued, during which the Endymion, a heavy frigate, succeeded in getting so near as to compel Decatur to engage, in order to avoid the hazard of being crippled by her chase guns. A long and bloody action ensued, during which both ships suffered severely, the American more particularly in officers and men. Shubrick, as second lieutenant, commanded the forward division of the gun-deck. But Mr. Babbitt falling early in the engagement, by being hit in the knee by a round-shot, the commodore sent for Shubrick to supply his place, and he was virtually the first lieutenant of the ship during the remainder of the trying scenes of that day and night. After crippling and quitting the Endymion, the President endeavoured to escape from the remainder of the squadron, which now drew near. The attempt was useless, however, and the Tenedos and Nymph having

closed and commenced a fire, the colors were hauled down.

This was the second time that Shubrick had seen the American ensign lowered to the English, but it now occurred under circumstances that rather added lustre, than the reverse, to the national flag. If he had seen the ensign in which he took so much pride twice lowered, he had the consciousness of having seen it compel that of the enemy to yield three times, in actions of ship to ship.

In this bloody battle no less than three of the President's lieutenants were killed, viz., Babbitt, Hamilton and Howell. Decatur himself was injured; but, as usual, Shubrick escaped unharmed. He was carried a prisoner to Bermuda, but was shortly after released by the peace. Irvine Shubrick, the youngest of the four brothers, was on board the President, as a midshipman, on this occasion, and on his first cruise.

Although the country, substantially, had a release from the pains and penalties of war, in 1815, it was not so with the subject of this sketch. Algiers had begun her depredations on American commerce shortly after the Dey fancied the English power would leave him without any grounds of apprehension from the little marine that had made so deep an impression on the Barbary States, in its conflict with Tripoli. It remained, therefore, to punish this treacherous aggression, which had no other motive than a wish to plunder. Decatur was offered a squadron for this purpose the moment he got home, and he hoisted his pennant in the *Guerriere* 44, a new frigate that had been built during the English war, and which had never yet been to sea. The com-

modore had become too sensible of the merits of Shubrick to leave him behind, and the latter was immediately attached to the *Guerriere*, as her first lieutenant.

Decatur sailed from New York, May 21st, for the Mediterranean, having under his orders three frigates, and seven sloops, brigs and schooners, or ten sail in all. The *Guerriere* reached Tangiers, June 15th, and communicated with the consul. From this gentleman the commodore ascertained that the Algerine admiral had been off the port only the day before, and that he had sailed for Carthagena, in Spain, at which port he intended to touch. The squadron made sail immediately, and, without touching at Gibraltar, it entered the Mediterranean. Decatur called out by signal, however, in passing, three of his vessels that had separated in heavy weather, and rendezvoused at the Rock, by instructions. On the 17th, the Americans came up with and engaged the Algerine admiral, in a frigate, chasing a large brig, that was in company, on shore at the same time. The *Constellation* was the first to engage, but Decatur soon shoved the *Guerriere* in between the combatants, driving the enemy from his guns by his broadside. In making this discharge, one of the *Guerriere*'s guns bursted, blew up the spar-deck, and killed or wounded from thirty to forty-five men. A large fragment of the breach of this gun passed so near Shubrick as to hit his hat; and still he escaped without a wound. Shortly after, the Algerine struck, after suffering a fearful loss.

Decatur got off the brig, which was also captured, and sending his prizes into Carthagena, he proceeded

to Algiers, off which place he arrived on the 28th. Here he dictated the terms of a just treaty with the Regency, both parties signing it on the 30th June; or just forty days after the squadron had left America!

This rapid success put it in the power of Decatur to give Shubrick a high proof of the respect and confidence in which he held his character. Capt. Lewis, of the *Guerriere*, had been married a very short time before he sailed, and, now the war was so soon and honorably terminated, he felt a natural wish to return to his bride. Lieut. B. J. Neale, of the *Constellation*, was in the same situation, he and Capt. Lewis having married sisters. These two gentlemen got leave of absence, as soon as the treaty was signed, with a view to return to America. This enabled the commodore to order Capt. Downes, of the *Epervier*, to his own ship, and to give the former vessel, with an acting appointment, to Shubrick, who was directed to sail immediately for the nearest American port. It is understood that Shubrick himself was also selected to bear the treaty; a high distinction under the circumstances.

The *Epervier* sailed from Algiers early in July, 1815, and is known to have passed the Straits of Gibraltar, about the 10th of the month; since which time no certain information has ever been heard of her. There is a vague rumour that she was seen in a tremendous gale, in the month of August, not far from the American coast, but it is of a character too questionable to be relied upon. The *Enterprise*, Lieut. Kearney, was making a passage at this time, and she experienced a heavy blow, which was said to be tremendous a little farther to the eastward of her, and the most probable conjecture

is, that the *Epervier* was lost in that gale. Near thirty years have gone by since the melancholy occurrence, and all that is certain is the fact that no one belonging to the ill-fated vessel has ever appeared to tell the tale of her calamity.

Thus prematurely terminated the career of one of the noblest spirits that ever served under the American flag. Shubrick was not quite twenty-seven when he perished, and was just attaining a rank where his own name would become more intimately connected with his services, than could be the case while he acted in only subordinate situations. Considering the duration of the peace that has since existed, it would seem as if he had lived just long enough to see all the real service the profession opened to him, and vanished from the scene like one who, having well enacted his part, had no longer any motive for remaining on the stage. With him perished in the *Epervier*, Capt. Lewis, Lieut. Neale, Lieut. Yarnall, Lieut. Drury, and other sea officers, besides several citizens who had been recently released from captivity in Algiers, in virtue of one of the conditions of the treaty.

It is rare, indeed, that any sea officer who is not called on to command a vessel, obtains as much reputation as fell to the share of John Shubrick; still rarer, that any one so thoroughly deserved it. Entering the navy in the summer of 1806, and perishing in that of 1815, his services were limited to just nine years; one half of which period he did duty as a lieutenant. During these nine pregnant years, he served in the *Chesapeake* 38, the *Argus* 16, the *United States* 44, the *Viper* 12, the *Siren* 16, the *Constitution* 44, the

Hornet 18, the United States 44, the President 44, the Guerriere 44, and the Epervier 18; ten different cruisers in all, without enumerating his second turn of duty in the United States, at a time when she did not get out. We are not aware that he had a furlough for an hour, though he had a short leave of absence about the time of his marriage. In these nine years, besides being kept thus on the alert, in ten different sea-going craft, he was present at six regular sea-fights, five of which were between vessels of a force as heavy as that of frigates. He participated, also, in the glory of the celebrated chase off New York, and lost his life by one of those dire disasters that so often close the seaman's career; as if Providence designed for him a fate suited to the risks and dangers he had already run.

One child, a son, was the issue of the marriage of Lieut. Com. Shubrick with Miss Ludlow. This gentleman, Edmund Templer Shubrick, still survives, and is now a lieutenant on board the Raritan 44, Capt. Gregory.

Shubrick was a man of martial bearing, and of extremely fine personal appearance. In these particulars few men were his equals. He was five feet eleven inches in height, was well and compactly made, with a frame indicating strength and activity. His eyes were of a bluish gray, with an expression inclining to seriousness; his hair was brown, and his complexion ruddy. In temperament he was grave, with little disposition to merriment; on the contrary, a shade of melancholy was not unfrequently thrown across his countenance, as if Providence shadowed forth to him,



in mercy, the shortness of his time, and the fearful as well as early termination of his days.

Among other commendable qualities, Shubrick possessed the gentleman-like attention to personal neatness. Without the least propensity to dress, in the vulgar sense, the feeling which associates character, station and appearance together, was strong in him. An instance is related of his attention to such matters, that occurred under circumstances to render it characteristic. While serving in the *Argus*, which was then commanded by Capt. Wederstrandt, the brig was near being lost off the mouth of the Penobscot, in a tremendous gale of wind. Nothing saved the vessel but her own excellent qualities, for it blew directly on shore, and there was a common expectation that the vessel and crew would all go together, on that wild coast. Orders were given to overhaul ranges of cables, to anchor as a last resort, though no one believed the ground tackle could or would hold on for five minutes. Among the midshipmen was Foxhall Parker, of Virginia, now Commodore Parker of the East India squadron. Parker was attending to the cables, when Shubrick, who was also at the same duty, quietly remarked to him, that their situation had caused them to neglect their appearance; that they would, in all probability, be soon thrown upon the beach, where their bodies would be found and interred with the rest of the crew, without distinction. By dressing themselves in uniform they would be interred apart, when their friends might have the melancholy gratification of knowing where their remains were to be found. At this suggestion

Shubrick and Parker put on their uniforms, and waited the result with composure. Providence caused the gale to abate, and the vessel was saved.

The firmness of Shubrick, on all occasions of duty, was of proof, though the lamb was not more gentle in the intercourse of private life. None served with him, without feeling that he was a man fitted for high destinies. His very character might be said to have been as martial as was his appearance, and there is little doubt, had not Almighty God called him away thus early, he would have won, and decorously worn, the highest honors of his manly profession. Entering the service so late, with an education so well and thoroughly commenced, the mind of this young officer was more cultivated than was then customary with seamen. In a word, his early death was a national loss, the navy containing, at the time it occurred, no officer of brighter promise, or one from whom the country had more to hope for, than John Templer Shubrick. To this hour he is mentioned with manly regret by his old shipmates, and his name is never introduced in the navy except in terms of commendation and respect.

## EDWARD PREBLE.

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THE family of Preble is of long standing in the country. The name appears in the records of the seventeenth century, and is to be referred to the earlier emigrations. Thus it was that the subject of this sketch and William P. Preble, the late *chargé-d'affaires* of this country in Holland, the gentleman who was employed to protect the interests of Maine in the negotiations connected with the north-eastern boundary question, were the descendants of a common ancestor, though quite distantly related.

The father of our subject was Jedediah Preble, who was born in 1707, at York, in the Province of Maine, as the present state of that name was formerly called. He was the second son of Benjamin Preble, who was the second son of Abraham, who was the son of the emigrant. Abraham Preble, the emigrant, was first settled at Scituate, in Massachusetts proper, where his name appears as early as 1636. He is found in Maine as early as 1645, and died in 1663. It follows that the Prebles have been Americans for more than two hundred years, and residents of Maine nearly, if not quite, two centuries. In 1645, the name of this Abraham Preble appears, in Maine, as an assistant or councillor of the government of Sir Ferdinando Gorges; an office he held until its dissolution. He subsequently held

various offices of trust under the sway of Massachusetts, having been one of a commission to exercise many of the powers of governor, after the junction.

Jedediah Preble appears also to have been a man of local note and influence, having filled various situations of trust and dignity in his own section of the country. This gentleman is described as a man of fine presence, of great resolution, and of a fixedness of purpose that is still alluded to among his descendants, whenever a similar tendency is observed among his posterity, as a quality indicating that the party has inherited "a little of the brigadier;" a rank to which this gentleman attained among the provincial troops of his day. In the campaign in which Quebec was taken, Mr. Preble served as a captain. On the Plains of Abraham, he was quite near Wolfe when he fell, and he was wounded himself in the course of that celebrated battle. In that day, waistcoats were worn with flaps that descended some distance down the thigh, and a bullet struck Capt. Preble, penetrated this part of the dress, and entered the flesh, carrying with it, however, so much of his different garments that the wounded officer was enabled to extract the lead himself, by pulling upon the cloth. At a later day, this gentleman had the command on the Penobscot, occupying a place called Fort Pownal. Previously to filling this trust, Mr. Preble had risen to the rank of brigadier-general, in the service of his native colony, which, it will be remembered, was properly Massachusetts. He is said to have been wounded in another of the engagements of this war. At the peace of 1763, Gen. Preble was in command on the frontier just mentioned. When the quarrel oc-

curred between the mother country and her North American Colonies, Gen. Preble took sides with his native land. He became so warm a whig that he even abandoned the Episcopal church, to which he properly belonged, because his clergyman continued to pray for the king and royal family. As this old gentleman did nothing by halves, he joined a Congregational church on that occasion. About this time he was elected a major-general by the provincial government, but declined the appointment on account of his advanced age. General Preble died the year peace was made, or in 1783, at the age of seventy-seven. He must, consequently, have been turned of fifty at the taking of Quebec, was fifty-seven at the peace of '63, and near, or quite, seventy at the commencement of the Revolution. One account, however, places the death of Gen. Preble a year later. He represented his town in the Legislature of Massachusetts, between the years 1753 and 1780. In 1773, he was chosen a councillor, and was accepted by the royal governor, though of the popular party; several others of the same way of thinking having been rejected. Under the Constitution of 1780, Gen. Preble was elected to the State Senate, from the county of Cumberland, and he was made a Judge of the Common Pleas in 1782.

General Preble appears to have been twice married. By his first wife he had two sons and a daughter. The commodore was the child of a second connection, having been born August 15th, 1761, on that part of Falmouth Neck, in the Province of Maine, which is the site of the present town of Portland. Of the four brothers of Preble, of the whole blood, two were older and

two younger than himself. Eben seems to have been the eldest son of Gen. Preble by his second marriage. He was a merchant in Boston, where he accumulated a considerable estate. His residence at Watertown has since passed into the possession of a China merchant of the name of Cushing, and is much admired for its beauties. This gentleman had two sons, both of whom are dead, and two daughters. Of the latter, one married into the family of Amory, and the other married Capt. Ralph Wormley, of the British navy. Joshua, the next son of Gen. Preble, married and settled himself in Newburyport, Massachusetts, where he left issue. Edward, the subject of our memoir, was the third son, as has been mentioned. Enoch, the fourth, became a sailor, making his first voyage in 1779, and his last in 1824. He was a respected ship-master thirty-seven years, having passed eight years, including the time he was at sea during the Revolution, in subordinate situations. This gentleman was the last survivor of his generation, in his own family, dying in October, 1842, in the seventy-ninth year of his age. He has left four children, of whom the youngest, George H. Preble, is now a passed midshipman in the navy, of the date of 1841. We believe this last gentleman to be the only representative of his distinguished name in the service, contrary to what is usual in cases where one of the family has earned a name, in times that are gone, under the ensign of the republic. Henry, the youngest brother of the whole blood, lived a long time in Sicily, having been consul at Palermo. He is said to have been a man of taste and of cultivated mind. This gentleman subsequently settled in Pittsburg, Penn.,

where one of his two daughters married Thomas, a son of the celebrated Joel Barlow. He died, in 1826, leaving one other child, a daughter, who continues single.

Of the sisters of Preble, of the whole blood, one married a Mr. Codman, and another a Mr. Oxnard. The latter gentleman adhered to the crown, in the war of the Revolution. The sons of this last marriage, however, were American, heart and mind; one of them, Thomas Oxnard, having fitted out, at Marseilles, and commanded a privateer, during the last English war, that he called the True-Blooded Yankee; a vessel that became famous for her success and boldness. Capt. Oxnard manifested much of the enterprise and resources of his celebrated uncle, and was so warmly American in feeling, that, though expatriated, at his death recently he made a request that his shroud should be the stars and stripes!

Young Preble manifested the peculiarities that marked his subsequent career, at a very early period in life. From childhood he was of a quick, fiery temperament; a quality that formed the principal, if not the only serious blot on his professional character. It has been thought that this natural failing was increased in after-life by the disease, dyspepsia, that undermined his constitution. From childhood, also, he was distinguished for resolution, undaunted firmness, decision, and an inflexibility of opinion, that rendered it very difficult to cause him to swerve from a purpose. In this last particular, he was thought to have his fair proportion "of the brigadier" in him.

Many anecdotes are related of the boyhood of young Preble, all tending to prove his courage, determination,

and high temper. On one occasion, his father was about to go on an excursion to the neighbouring islands, with a party of gentlemen, and the boy was denied a place in the boat, on account of his tender years. In order to get rid of his importunities, his father gave Edward a task, which it was thought could not possibly be completed in time, with a promise that he should go, did he get through with it. The boy succeeded, and, to his father's surprise, appeared on the shore, claiming the promised place in the boat. This was still denied him, under the pretext that there was not room. Finding the party about to shove off without him, young Preble, then about ten years of age, commenced hostilities by making an attack with stones picked up on the wharf, peppering the party pretty effectually before his laughing father directed a capitulation. It seems the old general decided that the boy had the "right stuff" in him, and overlooked the gross impropriety of the assault, on account of its justice and spirit. This species of indulgence is more natural than prudent, and it is probable we can trace in it one of the causes why Preble had so little command over himself in after-life. Still it was proper to make concessions to the boy, as he had right on his side, in one respect at least; though it should not have been a concession made under fire.

A more creditable, and an equally characteristic, anecdote is related of young Preble, while still a school-boy. It would seem that his master, a person of the name of Moody, was a man of a temper almost as quick and violent as that of his pupil. On one occasion Preble had a quarrel with a boy of about his own age,



and he struck his competitor a smart blow in the face, causing the blood to flow pretty freely. This was done out of school, but the sufferer appeared in the presence of the master bleeding. The latter was so much exasperated as to catch up the shovel and aim a blow at the offender. The blow missed the boy, but fell heavily on the writing-desk at which he was seated. The calm, unmoved, and firm manner in which the boy received this assault, sitting, looking with a fearless eye at his assailant, caused the purpose of the latter to change. He laid down his formidable weapon, exclaiming—“That fellow will make a general, too, one day!”

It appears to have been the intention of Gen. Preble to educate his son Edward for one of the liberal professions. The boy was sent, while yet quite young, to Dummer Academy, where he laid the foundation of a respectable education, having made some progress in the Latin language, when the times induced his parent to withdraw him from school. One version of the anecdote just related, makes it occur at this academy. In the year 1775, young Preble, who was born in 1761, was of course only fourteen years of age. This was the year in which the English pursued the false policy of setting fire to sundry small seaports that were easy of access to their shipping, and substantially without protection. Much private misery was produced by this species of warfare, and, in every instance probably, a desire of personal revenge was added to the spirit of opposition that had previously existed in the country. Falmouth, (now Portland,) Preble's birth-place, was among the towns thus assailed, and it was partly destroyed. Gen. Preble thought it expedient, on account

of his exposed position in the town, to remove his family to a farm in its vicinity, where it remained several years; and here Edward found his friends on his return from school. In that day and region, laborers were not to be had for the asking, and so many of the young men of the country being absent in the army, or in private armed vessels of war, Gen. Preble was compelled to take the field, at the head of all his sons, in a capacity that was less martial than had distinguished his previous enterprises. On a pressing occasion, he ordered all his boys to handle their hoes, repair to the proper place, and to begin the humble, but very necessary, business of digging potatoes. Young Edward did his part of the duty with many rebellious repinings, until he suddenly threw down his hoe, declared he should do no more such work, and left the field. While his brothers were making their calculations as to what would be the consequences of the next meeting between the Brigadier and Ned, the latter was making the best of his way towards what was left of Falmouth. Here he shipped in a letter-of-marque that was bound to Europe, sailing soon after. The year in which this occurred does not appear in any of our published accounts, but we suppose it to have been as late as 1777 or 1778. Preble had long before manifested a desire to become a sailor, but his father opposed it, though it would seem he acquiesced, now the lad was fairly shipped, hoping one voyage would cure him. The voyage was to Europe, and the return passage was particularly severe. All this had no effect on the spirited young man, and Gen. Preble, finding his son bent on the profession, procured the appointment of

a midshipman for him, in the provincial marine of Massachusetts, which was probably the most active state marine in the confederation.

This appointment occurred early in 1779, and Preble was attached to a ship that mounted twenty-six guns, and which was called the Protector. His commanding officer was John Foster Williams, who had done a very handsome thing that very season, in a brig called the Herald, and who enjoyed a high reputation in the service to which he belonged. Preble was in his eighteenth year when he joined this ship, and all accounts render him a youth of high promise in his profession. He must have gone to sea originally, when a little turned of sixteen.

The Protector sailed soon after Preble joined her, and in June of the same year, she fell in with, and engaged an enemy's letter-of-marque, of quite her own force, if not of superior; one of those strongly armed running ships, it was much the fashion for the English to send to sea in that war. This vessel was called the Admiral Duff. The combat between the Protector and the Duff was close and sharp, and it would probably have proved as bloody as that between the Trumbull and the Watt, but for an accident that befell the English ship, which blew up at the expiration of more than an hour. Some of the accounts say, however, that the Duff had struck her colors before the accident occurred, but this circumstance may be questioned. The boats of the Protector picked up fifty-five of her crew, who had time to jump overboard. The Protector had six men killed and wounded in this affair. Shortly after the Protector had a running fight, and a narrow escape from the

Thames 32, in which affair the English frigate is said to have been a good deal cut up aloft.

Capt. Williams had made several prizes, and he returned to port to land his prisoners. He was now ordered to join the expedition against the enemy's post on the Penobscot, having been put under the orders of Com. Saltonstall, of the United States navy, for that purpose. It was while thus employed, that an incident occurred to Preble, that is worthy of being recorded, more especially since subsequent events have confirmed its truth. Preble related the affair substantially as follows: The Protector was lying in one of the bays on the eastern coast, which has been forgotten, waiting the slow movements of the squadron. The day was clear and calm, when a large serpent was discovered outside the ship. The animal was lying on the water quite motionless. After inspecting it with the glasses for some time, Capt. Williams ordered Preble to man and arm a large boat, and endeavor to destroy the creature; or at least to go as near to it as he could. The selection of Preble for such a service, proves the standing he occupied among the hardy and daring. The boat thus employed pulled twelve oars, and carried a swivel in its bows, besides having its crew armed as boarders. Preble shoved off, and pulled directly towards the monster. As the boat neared it, the serpent raised its head about ten feet above the surface of the water, looking about it. It then began to move slowly away from the boat. Preble pushed on, his men pulling with all their force, and the animal being at no great distance, the swivel was discharged loaded with bullets. The discharge produced no other effect than to quicken the

speed of the serpent, which soon ran the boat out of sight.

There is no question that in after-life, Preble occasionally mentioned this circumstance, to a few of his intimates. He was not loquacious, and probably saw that he was relating a fact that most persons would be disposed to doubt, and self-respect prevented his making frequent allusions to it. When it is remembered that Preble died long before the accounts of the appearance of a similar serpent, that have been promulgated in this country, were brought to light, it affords a singular confirmation of the latter. Preble stated it as his opinion, that the serpent he saw was from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet long, and larger than a barrel.

This account of the size of the serpent undoubtedly seen by Preble, is in singular accordance with that given to the writer by an intelligent officer of the navy, more than twenty years since. On that occasion the serpent was seen quite near by, for fully an hour, and once was viewed under water, as it passed beneath the boat. The writer's informant said it was his opinion that the animal was nearer one hundred and fifty than one hundred feet in length, and he supposed him to be of the size of a wine-pipe.

There appears an indisposition in the human mind to acknowledge that others have seen that which chance has concealed from our own sight. Travellers are discredited and derided merely because they relate facts that lie beyond the circle of the common acquisitions; and the term of "traveller's stories" has its origin more in a narrow jealousy, than in any prudent wariness of exaggeration. The provincial distrusts the accounts of

the inhabitant of the capital, while self-love induces even the former to deride the marvels of the country. As respects marine serpents, they are well-known to exist, the merest physical tyro living being familiar with the fact that there are water-snakes. This being admitted, the philosopher should have no difficulty in believing, in their substance, the accounts that have been published of the appearance of one or more sea-serpents on the eastern coast of this country. The animals of the ocean are known to exceed those of the land in magnitude, and the difference in size between the boa constrictor, or the anaconda, and the one hundred and fifty feet of the sea-serpent, is not so great as that between the mammoth and the whale.

There have been accounts published which would give the reader reason to suppose that Preble was captured in the *Protector*, by a frigate and a sloop of war, in a cruise that succeeded the one in which the action with the *Duff* took place. We conceive this to be true only in essentials. The *Protector* formed a part of Saltonstall's squadron, as has been mentioned, and fell into the enemy's hands, in common with most of the rest of that armament. That Preble was made a prisoner, is out of all doubt, and we suppose he was taken in the *Penobscot* on that occasion.

The young man was sent to New York, and became a prisoner on board the well-known prison-ship, the *Jersey*. After a time he was placed on parole, however, and a letter from General Preble is still in existence, in which he cautions his son not to violate his word, "not to stain his honor by attempting to escape." It would seem that Preble was not exchanged, or released

for a long time ; though the influence of an old brother officer of his father's had been exerted in his behalf, and contributed to render his captivity less irksome.\*

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\* Nothing will give a better idea of the notions that our young man imbibed from his education, than to copy a letter written by Gen. Preble to his son, while the latter was a prisoner in New York.

*Falmouth, July 11th, 1781.*

DEAR CHILD: I received your favor with great pleasure and satisfaction, to find you met with so much kindness and friendship from Col. Tyng and lady. I have wrote him my acknowledgments on the subject, and hope that your future conduct will be such as to render you in some measure worthy their further notice. As you are admitted on shore, a favor denied all the officers of the ship, never stain your honor by attempting to make your escape. I shall do every thing, and pursue every measure, that affords the least prospect of success, to get you exchanged in a justifiable way. Present your mamma's and my best compliments to Col. Tyng and lady, and let them know Madame Ross was in good health yesterday. Be always on your guard against temptations, or giving the least occasion to any that has shown you favors, to charge you with a breach of trust: be kind and obliging to all; for no man ever does a designed injury to another, without doing a greater to himself. Let reason always govern your thoughts and actions. Be sure and write me at all opportunities. Your mamma, brothers and sisters join me in presenting their love to you, and wishing you a speedy exchange. I am your ready friend and affectionate father.

JEDEDIAH PREBLE.

This letter is creditable to the father, and contains one sentence that is full of sound morality, expressed with the terseness of an apophthegm. The date of this letter, however, throws a little doubt over a portion of Preble's career. The expedition to the Penobscot occurred in July, 1779, and this letter is dated two years later. Now, most of the crews of the vessels taken escaped through the wilderness, and it is possible Preble was among the number; else he must have remained a captive two entire years. One version of his life says, he was taken at sea in the Protector, but that ship

On being restored to his liberty, Preble was received on board the *Winthrop*, another state cruiser, as her first lieutenant. This vessel was commanded by Capt. George Little, subsequently of the United States navy; an officer who had been first lieutenant of the *Protector*, and the gentleman who afterwards captured the *Berceau*, in the war of 1798, while in command of the *Boston* frigate. There is little question that our young adventurer made great progress in his profession while under the orders of two such expert seamen and discreet commanders as Williams and Little.

The exploit that gave Preble an early reputation for daring and presence of mind, occurred in this his first cruise in the *Winthrop*. The Americans captured a sloop off *Penobscot*, from the crew of which they learned the position of an armed brig, that had previously taken the sloop, and sent her out manned to cruise for coasters. Capt. Little determined to carry this vessel by surprise, as she lay at her anchors. Preparations were made accordingly, and the *Winthrop* stood into the bay under favorable circumstances. Preble, as first lieutenant, was to lead the boarders, who were selected with care. His party was to consist of forty men. The enterprise succeeded so well that the *Winthrop* ran alongside of her enemy, and Preble and the foremost of his party threw themselves on the decks of the Englishman; but the *Winthrop* had so much way on her in closing, that she shot clear of her enemy, leaving

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was destroyed in the *Penobscot*, and I can find no trace of Preble's having belonged to more than three vessels during the war of the Revolution, viz., the *Letter-of-Marque*, the *Protector*, and the *Winthrop*.



Preble with only fourteen men among the enemy. It is said that Little called out to his lieutenant to know if he should send him more men, and that Preble coolly answered, "No, he had too many already." At any rate, he carried the brig, securing her officers before they had time to gain the deck. In the exaggerated accounts that have succeeded, it has been pretended that this prize was a vessel of war, and that she was superior in force to the Winthrop. Neither was probably the fact, though the exploit was sufficiently creditable as it really occurred. That Preble was inferior to the force actually opposed to his small party, there is little question, and it is certain the whole affair was conducted with great skill and spirit. As the prize lay under, not only the guns of the English works, but even within reach of musketry, the enemy opened on her, and Preble had to work out to sea, with his small party, under a brisk fire. In this he succeeded, as ably as he had done in the attack, without sustaining any damage of moment.

The reader who is familiar with the exploits of Trippe, will find an incident in the life of that gallant officer, while serving under Preble's orders, that singularly resembled this which occurred to Preble himself.

Although there is now some obscurity thrown around the particulars of this affair, the name of the vessel captured appearing in none of the clearer accounts of it, there is no question that it was a very gallant exploit, and obtained for both Little and Preble much reputation in the naval circles of that day. Preble probably owed the rank he subsequently obtained in the

navy of the republic to the cool courage he manifested on this occasion, united to his conduct and general good character. Among the old seamen who lived at the close of the last century, it was often mentioned in terms of high eulogium.

Mr. Preble remained in the Winthrop until peace was made. During this time he saw much service on the coast, that cruiser being actively employed, and doing a vast deal of useful duty. She captured a good many vessels, and was particularly destructive to the small privateers, of which the enemy employed so many, more especially to the eastward. There can be no question that our young man's professional character was formed in the Protector and the Winthrop.

At the peace of 1783 all the naval armaments of the country were substantially suppressed. Some of the States, it is true, maintained a sort of guarda costas, each government having its own revenue laws under its own control; but these were few in number, and of small account. Preble was discharged, in common with most of his brethren, and was compelled to turn to the merchant service for employment. As our young man was now in his twenty-second year, and was possessed of so much character and skill, he had little difficulty in obtaining a vessel. At one time he was in the employment of a gentleman in North Carolina, though he appears to have passed the fifteen years that succeeded the peace in sailing from and to different parts of the globe.

In 1798 the *quasi* war with France commenced. Preble's predilections for the navy still remaining, his wishes to enter it were gratified by his receiving one

of the five first commissions that were granted to lieutenants. At the commencement of the new marine, it was determined that each lieutenant should be named for his particular rank in each vessel, and that the relative rank of the whole service should be determined by those of the respective commanders with whom the junior officers were required to serve. Preble was intended for the first lieutenant of the *Constitution*, a position that would have left him the second on the list of lieutenants in the entire service, that being the place Com. Nicholson held on the list of captains. Fortunately for Preble, perhaps, he did not like his captain, and he succeeded in keeping out of his ship, for he was placed in command of the *Pickering*, a brig of 14 guns, which was first commissioned for the revenue service. There were six of these small cruisers employed on the coast at this time, all of which were under the command of officers who properly belonged to the navy. The names of Preble, Campbell, Brown and Leonard were among them, and they all appear to have received the commissions of lieutenants commandant.

The *Pickering* was attached to what was called the Windward West India squadron, having its rendezvous at Prince Rupert's Bay, and cruising as far south as the Island of Tobago. Barry commanded this force, which, in the course of the year 1798, consisted of twelve vessels, including two frigates.

Preble appears to have made two cruises in the *Pickering*, in the course of the years 1798 and 1799. We cannot discover that any service worthy of being mentioned occurred in either. At the close of the year

1799, our officer was promoted to the rank of captain, appearing to have passed over that of master commandant, and he was appointed to command the *Essex* 32, then a new ship, and just getting ready for her first cruise. The *Pickering* was given to Capt. Hillar, was sent to the Guadeloupe station, and was lost at sea, all hands perishing. This appointment of Preble's is, in itself, an evidence of a just appreciation of his character, since both the rank and the ship he now obtained were a little beyond his claims on the score of date of commission. Rodgers, who had been Truxtun's first lieutenant, and who ranked him one as a captain, got only the *Maryland* sloop of war. It is a fact worthy of notice, that Little, Preble's first lieutenant in the *Protector*, and his commander in the *Winthrop*, ranked him by only two on the list of captains, as it was established in 1799. Rodgers was the only name between them.

The *Essex* was destined to accompany the *Congress* 38, also a new ship, on a cruise as far east as Batavia, to meet and give convoy to the homeward-bound India and China ships. Capt. Sever, of the *Congress*, was the senior of the two captains thus employed. The *Congress* and *Essex* sailed on this cruise, then much the most distant that any American cruiser had ever attempted, in the month of January, 1800. A few days out, the ships encountered a heavy gale, and lost sight of each other. The *Congress* was dismasted and returned to port, but the *Essex* made better weather, and continued on her course. Preble persevered, doubled the Cape, and reached his port of destination, where he proceeded to carry out the objects of the cruise.

It was his duty to collect a convoy of the valuable homeward-bound ships that were expected to pass the Straits of Sunda, giving notice of his presence, and cruising himself, in the interval, against the enemy's rovers. After remaining several months in the Indian seas, he collected a convoy of fourteen sail, with which he left Batavia, in the month of June. No opportunity occurred for distinguishing himself in this cruise, beyond the accurate and complete manner in which Preble executed his orders. One small French cruiser, out of the Isle of France, was chased off from the convoy, but she escaped under her sweeps in light weather. Notwithstanding the magnitude of his charge, the value of which amounted to many millions, Preble passed every thing in safety, and came into New York in the autumn. As sailing in convoy is dull work, it was near the close of the year when the *Essex* reached home. Peace was soon after made with France, and the ship was paid off. It is worthy of a passing remark, that this ship was the first American man-of-war to carry the pennant round both Capes; that of Good Hope, under Preble, as just related, and that of Cape Horn, under Porter, in 1813.

The health of Preble had suffered materially in this cruise, and he needed repose. He was offered the *Adams 28*, then fitting out for the Mediterranean, but felt himself bound to decline service at the moment. It is much in favor of the impression made by Preble at Washington, that he was retained at the reduction of the navy, in 1801, though no opportunity for distinguishing himself had occurred, and notwithstanding he was absent at a most important moment, on so distant a

cruise. At that time there were twenty-eight captains on the list, and seven commanders. The last were all discharged; but twelve of the former were at first retained, though the law directed that the number should be reduced to nine. Preble was the twenty-first captain before the reduction, and the ninth after it was actually made. James Barron, Bainbridge and Campbell were his juniors. As Dale and Truxtun both resigned the succeeding year, Barry died in 1803, and Morris was dismissed, without a trial, by Mr. Jefferson, in 1804, it brought the list down to one less than the number contemplated by the law, and left Preble the fifth in rank in the service. At this time Stewart was the senior lieutenant, and ought to have been promoted, under the provisions of the reduction law, early in 1804, though he did not receive that act of justice until two years later, having been made a commander, however, without law, in 1804.

There may have been an additional reason for Preble's declining the Adams, as he was married in 1801, being then just forty years of age. The woman of his choice was Mary Deering, or Dering, the only daughter of Nathaniel Dering, of Portland. This is an ancient and honorable name in Massachusetts, and we presume this lady was of the old stock; at any rate, she is known to have brought her husband a considerable accession of fortune. Preble was now at ease in his circumstances, and might have been excused for quitting a service that offered so few inducements to remain in it; but he loved his profession, and, fortunately for his own reputation, he determined to continue in service. In 1803, believing his health to be

sufficiently re-established, he reported himself as fit for duty, and asked for service. In May he was attached to the Constitution 44, Old Ironsides, as the ship is now affectionately called, which was then lying at Boston, and was about to be fitted out for the Mediterranean station.

The Tripolitan war had been miserably mismanaged since the peace with France. This was partly owing to the narrow policy that reigned in the national legislation; in some slight degree, perhaps, to the inexperience of certain officers employed; but most of all to the extraordinary instructions with which Mr. Jefferson had sent his cruisers to sea. As the Constitution vests the power to declare war in Congress, and that body had not directly exercised this authority in connection with Tripoli, the government chose to act, in its legal relations, as if America were not at war with the Bashaw, though everybody was willing to allow that the Bashaw was at war with America! In consequence of these peculiar views of the restrictions imposed by the Constitution, Dale had left home with instructions that compelled one of his small vessels to release an enemy's cruiser, after she had handsomely captured her in a warm and bloody action. According to the earliest notions of international rights, as limited by the Federal Constitution, an American man-of-war possessed the natural right to defend herself, but not the conventional right to bring her assailant, when fairly overcome, into port, unless by Act of Congress! Had Mr. Jefferson exercised the reasoning faculties he certainly possessed in no small degree, he might have seen that the right to capture ships on the high seas is purely an inter-

national, and not a mere national right, and that one nation can, to all intents and purposes, make war, though the consent of two may be necessary to re-establish peace. He made the capital mistake of supposing that the Constitution, in prescribing restraints on the powers of the servants of the public, also contemplated restrictions on the rights of the nation; it being material for every people to possess the privilege of defending themselves on equal terms, when assailed.

The indecision and uncertainty that such feeble and unstatesman-like constructions of public law threw over the operations of Dale, and, to a certain extent, over those of Morris, had emboldened the enemy, and left matters very much, in 1803, where they had been found in 1801. A better feeling, however, began to prevail at Washington; and it was now resolved to carry on the war with more of spirit and decision than had hitherto been manifested. With this view, Preble was ordered to hoist a broad pennant, and to take charge of the squadron intended to assemble for duty in the Mediterranean. This was a happy selection, and might be taken as a pledge of the success that was to follow.

But it was a far easier thing for the republic, in 1803, to resolve bravely in a matter of this sort, than to carry out its resolutions with military promptitude. The equipment of a single frigate was not always an easy thing, and the collection of a squadron, though it were even small, was a measure of serious moment. In some respects, however, the service, was on the advance, and care had been taken to construct several small cruisers, a species of vessel of which there had been



but one in the navy since its last reduction, and which was particularly needed for the purposes of blockading close in. The force that was put under the orders of Preble, on this occasion, consisted of the following vessels, viz :—

- Constitution 44—Com. Preble.
- Philadelphia 38—Capt. Bainbridge.
- Argus 16—Lt. Com. Decatur.
- Siren 16—Lt. Com. Stewart.
- Enterprise 12—Lt. Com. Hull.
- Nautilus 12—Lt. Com. Somers.
- Vixen 12—Lt. Com. Smith.

These were all fine vessels of their respective classes, and they were singularly well commanded. It is true, the five last were of little use for serious attacks, but they were the best craft that could be constructed for the blockade of a town like Tripoli. As was usual in that day, and in that service, they sailed from home as each got ready. The Enterprise was already out on the station, where she had been kept for some time, being a vessel not to be spared. Hull was in charge of her, but he being the second lieutenant in the navy, as respects rank, Decatur was to carry the Argus, a much heavier vessel, out to that officer, and to take the Enterprise in exchange; an arrangement that was subsequently effected.

Of the vessels belonging to Preble's squadron that sailed from home, the Nautilus was the first that got to sea. The schooner arrived at Gibraltar, July 27th, 1803. The Philadelphia reached the same place August 24th. The Constitution, wearing Preble's pennant, left Boston, August 13th, and she anchored off the

Rock, September 12th. The Vixen came in two days later; the Siren October 1st, and the Argus was detained until November 1st.

As the Philadelphia preceded the commodore by nearly three weeks, Bainbridge, acting under his orders, lost no time at the Rock, but commenced operations by capturing a Moorish cruiser that he fell in with off Cape de Gatt, and which had begun to commit depredations on the American trade. Returning first to Gibraltar with his prize, this officer proceeded aloft, after cruising a short time in quest of a Moorish frigate that was said to be just without the Straits. On her passage up the Mediterranean, the Philadelphia must have passed the New York 36, Com. Rodgers, and Adams 28, Capt. Campbell, coming down to meet the relief squadron at Gibraltar. This left nothing before Tripoli but the Enterprise, Lt. Com. Hull. Soon after the Vixen got there, and was joined by Bainbridge in the Philadelphia.

A little incident occurred, shortly after the arrival of the Constitution at the Rock, that it may be well to relate. The strict discipline of Preble, and his occasionally ungovernable temper, had made him any thing but personally a favorite with his officers. While all admitted his abilities as a commander, there were few who did not complain of his temper, which, beyond a question, was rendered worse by the peculiar disease of which he was the victim. One dark night, as the ship was near the Straits, she was suddenly found to be quite close to a strange vessel of war. The Constitution must have seen the stranger first, for she went to quarters, and was ready to engage by the time she had

closed. The hailing now commenced, both vessels appearing to be more anxious to ask questions than to answer them. Vexed with this delay, Preble ordered the name of his ship and of his country to be communicated to the other vessel, and to demand those of the stranger, under the penalty of getting a shot, if the demand were refused. The stranger answered that he would return a broadside for a shot. This was more than Preble could bear; he sprang up into the mizen rigging himself, took a trumpet, and called out in a clear, strong voice, "This is the United States ship Constitution 44, Com. Edward Preble. I am about to hail you for the last time; if you do not answer, I shall give you a broadside. What ship is that? Blow your matches, boys!" The stranger now answered—"This is his Britannic Majesty's ship *Donnegal*, a razeed of 60 guns." Preble declared he did not believe him, and that he should stick by him until morning, to make certain of his character. A boat, however, soon came from the other vessel to explain. The stranger was the *Maidstone* frigate, and the *Constitution* had got alongside of her so unexpectedly, that the delay in answering and the false name had been given to gain time to clear ship, and to get the people to their guns.

The spirit and firmness manifested by Preble, on this occasion, produced a great revolution in his favor, among the younger officers in particular. They saw he could be as prompt with an English ship of war as he was with them, and they had a saying, "If the old man's temper is wrong, his heart is right." Such an incident, in that day, when England was nearly what she claimed to be, "mistress of the seas," would make a strong im-

pression. It was not considered a trifle "to beard the lion in his den." But Preble had served in the Revolution, and, while he knew that an English ship was usually to be respected, he also knew that she was far from being invincible. It is a proof of the influence of the current literature and newspaper opinions of the day, that all the old officers of the Revolution had a far less exalted idea of English prowess, at the commencement of the war of 1812, than the bulk of the population.

Preble met Rodgers at the Rock, as has been mentioned, with two frigates under his orders. The *Nautilus*, Lieut. Com. Somers, which had been giving convoy aloft, also came in and joined. The state of things with Morocco was such as to demand immediate attention. There is little question that the Barbary powers played into each other's hands, in their wars with Christian states. In all their previous operations against Tripoli, the Americans had been diverted from the main object by the movements of the Moors, and the *Adams* had been kept below, a long time, cruising in the Straits, to watch the cruisers of the *Emperor*, and two Tunisians that were lying at the Rock. Preble resolved to leave every thing in his rear in a settled state, and he made his dispositions accordingly.

Although Com. Rodgers was the senior officer, he placed his ships at his successor's disposal, in the handsomest manner. The *Constitution*, *New York*, *Adams* and *Nautilus* went into the Bay of Tangiers, accordingly, October 6th, and Preble immediately presented his demands. He had an interview with the *Emperor*, in person, and the negotiations, conducted with moderation and firmness, resulted in a renewal of

the treaty of 1786. It is no more than justice to Rodgers, to say that his agency in this prompt demonstration was both liberal and important. He was consulted, and joined heart and hand in all that was negotiated and done.

This important duty performed, Rodgers sailed for home, and Preble gave all his attention to his important duties up the Mediterranean. While he had been at Tangiers, and during the time occupied about the Straits, several of his small vessels had arrived. Nearly his whole force, indeed, was collected at Gibraltar, with the exception of the Philadelphia and Enterprise. As the vessels aloft were commanded by Bainbridge and Hull, not only was the single officer of his own rank absent, but the two oldest men of his squadron also. It was under such circumstances that Preble caused his commanding officers to meet him, to deliberate on future operations. This council, consequently, consisted of Preble himself, Stewart, Decatur, Smith and Somers. To these was added Col. Lear, who had long been employed in Africa, and who had certain powers to treat, at the proper moment. The four gentlemen of the service, who thus met Preble, almost for the first time, were all young in years, and they held a rank no higher than that of lieutenants. Preble had been very little known to the service, during its brief existence of five years, which was all it then possessed, his East India cruise having kept him much out of sight in the French war, and his want of health since. Of his six commanders, four, viz., Bainbridge, Somers, Decatur and Stewart, were all Philadelphia seamen; Smith was from South Carolina, and Hull

alone was from New England. In addition to these circumstances, the commodore's reputation for severity of discipline and a hot temper, was so well established, as to produce little confidence and sympathy between these young men and himself. The former fought shy at the council, therefore, letting the commodore have things very much in his own way. They fancied it was their office to obey, and his to plan.

After his lieutenants commandant had withdrawn, Preble and Lear remained alone together in the Constitution's cabin. The former seemed thoughtful and melancholy, leaning his head on his arm, the latter resting on a table. Lear, observing this, inquired if he were unwell. "I have been indiscreet, Col. Lear," answered Preble, raising himself up to answer, "in accepting this command. Had I known how I was to be supported, I certainly should have declined it. Government has sent me here a parcel of children, as commanders of all my light craft." A year later, Lear reminded Preble of this speech, and asked him if he remembered it. "Perfectly well," said Preble, smiling, "but the children turned out to be good children."

Preble now sent off some of his small vessels, the Vixen going up the Mediterranean to relieve the Enterprise. He visited Cadiz in the Constitution on duty, and returned to the Rock. On the 12th November he gave a formal notification of the blockade of Tripoli, off which town he supposed Bainbridge then to be, having the Philadelphia, Vixen, &c., with him. On the 13th he sailed for Algiers, where he put a consul on shore. He then proceeded to Malta, which port he reached on the 27th of the same month. Here he was met by

letters from Bainbridge, communicating the disheartening intelligence of the loss of the *Philadelphia*. Some rumors of this disaster had been heard lower down the Mediterranean, but it was hoped they would prove not to be true. This ship had run on a reef in chase, and had been compelled to haul down her colors to the Tripolitan gunboats. To render the calamity still more poignant, the enemy succeeded in getting the frigate off, and had carried her in triumph into their harbor, where she now lay safely at anchor.

Preble keenly felt this loss in several points of view. It was commencing his operations against the Bashaw with much the most serious reverse the infant navy of the republic had then experienced. Although he could have no direct personal connection with the affair, it had occurred within his command; and more or less of the misfortunes, as well as of the success of military operations, is given by the world to him who is at the head of affairs. Then, in losing Bainbridge, he lost his only captain, and the man of all others to whom he would naturally turn for counsel and support. The frigate, moreover, was a very important part of his force, and her loss was, in fact, the one thing that most impeded his attaining complete success in his future operations. Under all the circumstances of the case, the kind and considerate manner with which he treated Bainbridge does his heart much honor. Had his unfortunate brother in arms been his brother in blood, Preble's letters and conduct, in all respects, could not have been more friendly or delicate. That Bainbridge felt this, is apparent in his own correspondence, and it is probable these two brave men had a just appreciation of each

other's intrinsic worth, in consequence of this common misfortune. Every thing that lay in Preble's power was done to alleviate the sufferings of the captives, and the utmost attention appears to have been bestowed on all their wants, so far as the command of funds and the exercise of a distant authority could go. In a word, nothing was omitted that it lay in the commodore's power to perform.

Preble, however, was not a man to waste his time in useless regrets. He sailed immediately for Syracuse, which port he reached on the 28th. His object in going into Sicily was to establish a point of rendezvous, and to open negotiations with the authorities of that island for certain aids that he now felt would be necessary for executing his plans. While these preliminary steps were in progress, the commodore disposed of his force in the best manner to protect the trade, and sailed for Tripoli in the *Constitution*, having the *Enterprise* in company. The vessels quitted Syracuse on the 17th December, and on the 23d the schooner, which was now commanded by Decatur, captured a ketch that was carrying female slaves from the Bashaw as a present to the Porte.

Preble had a double object in going off Tripoli, on that occasion. By showing his force before the town he encouraged the captives, and he gave his enemies reason to respect him. But the principal motive was to reconnoitre the place in person, in order to direct his future movements with a greater degree of intelligence. An active correspondence was kept up with Bainbridge, who suggested many useful hints as to different modes of annoying the enemy. One letter of Bainbridge,



bearing date December 5th, certainly suggested the practicability of destroying the Philadelphia, as she lay at her anchor, in the harbor of Tripoli. Preble bore all these things in mind, and he examined the position of the ship, the castle, batteries, &c., for himself. When he had been off the port a few days, it came on to blow heavily from the north-east, and he was admonished of the necessity of quitting that inhospitable coast, in that which was the worst month in the year. The Constitution and Enterprise accordingly returned to Syracuse.

It is probable that the thought of destroying the Philadelphia was first suggested by Bainbridge, though it has been claimed for both Preble and Decatur. It is not unlikely that such an idea should suggest itself to different minds simultaneously. It is certain that Preble did not risk any of his officers and men in such an enterprise, without calculating all its chances. One of Preble's characteristic traits was the great care he bestowed on all his preparations to insure success. It will be seen, as we proceed, that he wasted no time in useless parade, but, on the contrary, having taken a look at his enemy, he paid him no unnecessary visits until he was ready to go to work in earnest. Twice more only did he see Tripoli, until he came with his whole force to bombard the place. All the previous commanders had cruised, more or less, in front of the town, occasionally engaging a battery, or assaulting small convoys, and, in one instance, in making an abortive attempt at cannonading; but Preble did none of this. He ascertained his wants, supplied the deficiencies in the best manner he could, and when the

moment arrived, he applied his means with an intelligence and activity that showed he possessed the qualities of a great commander. The world, which sees little beyond victory or defeat, seldom fully appreciates the care, forethought and labor with which armaments are made, particularly at distant points and with imperfect means.

To whomsoever may belong the credit of suggesting the plan of burning the Philadelphia, to Preble belongs the merit of assuming the responsibility of ordering it, as well as of pointing out as many of the details as was consistent with a discreet exercise of authority, in an affair of such a nature. When the scheme was originally agitated between him and Decatur, as was probably the case while they were, for the first time, off Tripoli in company, the latter offered to make the attempt with his own schooner. This Preble thought too hazardous, and he turned his attention to the ketch which had fallen into his hands in the late cruise. The advantages offered by the possession of this vessel were not to be thrown away. She was of Mediterranean rig, and Mediterranean construction throughout, and might appear in the offing without exciting any distrust as to her intentions. All this was foreseen by Preble, and his instructions to his subordinates met, with great precision, the very contingency which occurred when this nicely arranged plan was carried into execution.

When every thing was ready, Preble issued his orders, February 3d, to Stewart and Decatur, and those two gallant officers sailed immediately. If it were a trait in Preble to make every provision to insure suc-

cess, it was another to enter into all the hopes and anxieties of those who were embarked in the enterprises he had directed. He was calm to the eye, but he felt the anxiety natural to his temperament, while the brig and ketch were absent. The delay was much greater than had been anticipated, in consequence of a gale of wind, which drove the adventurers from the mouth of the harbor itself, where they had anchored, and where Decatur had sent a boat to examine the little entrance to the port. The uncertainty lasted more than a fortnight, the two vessels being absent fifteen days. At length the long-expected craft hove in sight, and Preble soon had the pleasure of seeing the signal of success flying on board the Siren. The Sicilians, who were also at war with Tripoli, received the conquerors with as much delight as the Americans themselves, firing salutes and rending the air with shouts.

This success was of great moment to the future prospects of Preble. The Turks, though known to be indifferent gunners, and no very excellent seamen, were of sturdy frame, bold enough in battle, and had fearful reputations for their prowess in hand-to-hand conflicts. Every sea officer was cautious about letting these bloody-minded *sabreurs* get over his plank sheer; but here had Decatur met him at his own play, and proved that the Christian was the better man. Then the stigma of the frigate's loss (for in war misfortune ever leaves a reproach) was wiped out by the gallant manner of her re-capture, and her subsequent destruction. Among those who understand that it takes a man of a certain degree of military resolution even to order an enterprise of this daring, Preble's connection with the

attack on the Philadelphia was fully appreciated. It is highly probable that his own equally gallant exploit in the Penobscot was present to his mind when he first thought of this enterprise, and influenced him to decide in its favor.

As the season was advancing, and the important point of the destruction of the Philadelphia was disposed of, Preble now began to turn his attention still more earnestly toward making his preparations for the approaching summer. He sent Stewart, in the Siren, again off Tripoli to blockade, having Somers in the Nautilus under his orders; and these vessels were, in due time, relieved by others, so as to maintain a force at all times before the town. On the 2d of March the commodore took the Constitution to Malta, where he had business of importance, and, the run being short, on the 21st he went off Tripoli the second time. While he was there, the Nautilus captured a man-of-war built brig, that pretended to be an English privateer, but which in truth was a Tripolitan, and was intended to cruise against Americans. Preble sent her to Syracuse, where she was appraised, manned, and put into the service, by the name of the Scourge. She was given to Lt. Dent, who had been acting captain of Preble's own ship. On the 27th, a flag was sent ashore with letters for the prisoners.

After remaining a few days before Tripoli, again reconnoitering, Preble sailed for Tunis, though not without experiencing another very heavy gale of wind, anchoring before that town, with the Siren in company, April 4th. The reader will better understand the arduous nature of Preble's duties, when he is reminded

that he was now left with a single frigate and six small vessels, his prize included, to hold in check all the Barbary powers, which were more or less leagued together, and to carry on the war with Tripoli. He had awed Morocco by his early course, but Tunis was very troublesome, and menaced a war from day to day. His immediate predecessor in command had been given a force of no less than five frigates and one small vessel to perform the same duty. No better idea can be formed of the nature of the commodore's duties, and of the energy with which he discharged them, however, than to give a brief summary of his movements at this juncture, as well as of their objects.

It has been seen that Preble reached Tunis on the 4th of April. On the 7th he sailed, in a gale of wind, and reached Malta on the 12th. On the 14th he left Malta, and next day went into Syracuse. Here he was detained five days, sailing again on the 20th. He touched at Malta on the 29th; anchored once more at Tunis, May 2d; left it next day for Naples, where he arrived on the 9th. His business at this place was to obtain gun-boats for attacking Tripoli; the negotiation being successful. Preble procuring an order from the King of the Two Sicilies for both bomb vessels and gun-boats, on the 19th he sailed for Messina, where he arrived on the 25th. Here he selected two bomb vessels and six gun-boats. The latter he manned immediately, and, on the 30th, he sailed with them for Syracuse, getting in next day. Leaving the Sicilian vessels to be altered and equipped, Preble sailed again from Syracuse on the 4th of June, and anchored at Malta on the 5th; on the 9th he again sailed for Tripoli. The ob-

ject of this third visit was to treat for the liberation of the prisoners, previously to commencing serious operations, it being uncertain what might otherwise be the influence on their fate. The effort was fruitless, but supplies were sent to Bainbridge, whose condition was much alleviated in consequence.

Mr. O'Brien had been sent ashore, to treat for ransom, on the 13th June, and on the 14th Preble sailed once more for Tunis, with the *Argus* and *Enterprise* in company. The consul had sent him information that the Bey was in an ill humor, and required looking after. The vessels reached Tunis Bay on the 19th. On the 22d, Preble, satisfied his visit would produce its effect, sailed for Syracuse, touching at Malta on the 24th, and arriving on the 25th. The 28th was employed in sending money and clothing to Bainbridge, and on the 29th he sailed for Messina, arriving July 1st. On the 8th the *Nautilus* left Messina for Syracuse, with the two bomb vessels under convoy, and on the 9th the commodore followed, in the *Constitution*, which ship got in the day she sailed. July 14th, Preble sailed from Syracuse for Malta, with the bomb vessels and gun-boats in company; where he anchored on the 16th. Here he completed his arrangements, and sailed with every thing he could collect for Tripoli, on the 21st, arriving in sight of the place on the 25th July, 1804.

By recurring to this brief account, the following results will be discovered. Between the 2d of March and the 25th of July are one hundred and forty-five days; in this interval Preble put to sea nineteen different times, as often reaching his point of destination, besides calling off Malta once, without anchoring.

Although he actually brought up on every one of these entrances into harbors, his visits to Tripoli excepted, on which occasion the ship was usually kept free of the ground, he passed seventy-four days at anchor, and nearly as many under his canvas. The average time of his stops in port was less than four days; his longest detention was at Malta, fourteen days, where he went for supplies, and when he was not the master of his own time. Deduct this detention, as in fact ought to be done, to form a proper estimate of the character we wish to exhibit, with ten days passed at Naples, negotiating for the gun-boats, when he had to wait for the movements of royalty, and but fifty days will remain for nineteen visits to port, or less than three days for each visit. It may be questioned if any ship of the Constitution's size was ever more actively employed on duty of a similar nature. We know of no better illustration of Preble's real character, than this history of the movements of his ship for those four months and a half. Decision, combination, energy, unwearied activity, and a clear comprehension of every one of his duties, are apparent in all he did. Nor was the main object, of holding the Tripolitans completely in check the while, forgotten. Their town was vigorously blockaded the whole time, and when Preble arrived with his assembled force, the people were already beginning to feel the effects of having their commerce destroyed.

It is worthy of remark, that Preble resorted to no spurious warfare, in all his preliminary measures. On his several calls off Tripoli, he had specific objects in view, and these he accomplished without any menaces

or parade. We cannot find that the Constitution even scaled her guns against the place, or that Preble fired a single shot at the enemy, from his own ship, until he came prepared to make war on a scale as large as the means furnished by his own government would at all permit. It might be added, even larger, as he had materially increased those means by his own resources, while he was on the station.

Preble found himself, on the 25th July, before Tripoli, with fifteen sail, including every thing he could collect, viz., one frigate, three brigs, three schooners, two bomb vessels and six gun-boats. On estimating this force, it will be found that the Americans had at command six long 26s, twenty-two long 24s, a few long 12-pounders on the Constitution's quarter-deck and fore-castle, with something like twenty light chase guns, counting all in broadside. In other words, it was in Preble's power to bring about twenty-eight long heavy guns to bear on the castle, batteries, &c., at once, with something like twenty long light guns, 6s, 9s and 12s. The carronades could only be of use as against the enemy's gunboats and other craft. The long 26s mentioned were guns procured by Preble in Sicily, and were mounted in the Constitution's waist, three of a side. Altogether, the Americans had 1060 souls present.

The means of the Bashaw were infinitely more formidable. In addition to the advantage of fighting behind solid masonry, he had 118 guns in battery, most of which were heavy, and nineteen gun-boats, that of themselves threw a weight of shot almost equal to the frigate's broadside. In addition, he had a brig, two



schooners and two large galleys in the port, all of which were armed and fully manned. As for men, however, there was no want of them; the Bashaw's troops, including all sorts, amounting, as was thought, to a number between twenty and thirty thousand; a large force having been collected from the interior for the defence of the place.

Preble was not able to come to an anchor until the 28th. This was hardly done before it came on to blow fresh from the northward, and the whole squadron was compelled to weigh, and to claw off shore. It was thought at one time the gun-boats would have been towed under, but luckily the wind hauled, a circumstance which allowed less sail to be carried. The wind continued to freshen, proving how wisely Preble had acted, and, on the 31st, it blew fearfully; so violently, indeed, as to take the frigate's reefed courses out of the bolt-ropes. There would have been no hopes for the miserable little craft that had been obtained in Sicily, had not the wind continued to haul, until it made the coast a weather-shore, which gave them smooth water. On the 31st, the weather moderated, and the commodore was enabled to collect his scattered vessels.

Owing to all these disadvantages, it was August 3d, before Preble got again in front of Tripoli. By that time the enemy had sent two divisions of his gun-boats outside of a line of rocks that stretches from the little entrance of the harbor quite near the galley-mole, for a mile diagonally to seaward. No part of this reef, however, lay beyond complete protection from the fire of all the works, so far as that fire was efficient in itself. As

has been mentioned, these craft were separated in two divisions, one lying near the eastern, or main entrance into the harbor, which was in a great measure formed by these rocks, aided by a natural indentation in the coast, and the other near the western or little entrance, so often mentioned, and which has since become memorable from the explosion of the ketch *Intrepid*, which subsequently occurred at, or near, this point. A third division lay just within the rocks, as a reserve, but so placed as to be able to fire through their openings. The galleys were there also. These two divisions lay about half a mile asunder. There is no question that the Tripolitans, judging of the future by the past, fancied that this disposition of their floating force would keep their vessels inside from suffering by the fire of the American shipping. Their galleys and remaining gun-boats lay just within the reef, quite within supporting distance. Preble did not anchor, but a little after noon he laid his own ship's head off shore, distant about a league from the town, and showed a signal for every thing to pass within hail. Each commander received his orders according to previous instructions, the whole duty being conducted with singular regularity and precision. The small vessels manned the gun-boats and bomb vessels, and in one hour every thing and every body were reported ready. The *Constitution* then wore round, and stood in toward the town, leading the whole squadron. Half an hour later the gun-boats cast off, and formed in front of the sea-going craft. This was no sooner done than Preble made the signal to engage. Every thing advanced, the gun-boats covered by the light cruisers, and the bomb vessels began to

throw shells. The batteries replied, and then the smaller shipping on both sides joined in.

Preble had ordered Decatur and Somers, who commanded the American gun-boats, to attack the division of the enemy that lay near the main or eastern entrance to the harbor. There were six large gun-boats at this point, and they were the farthest to windward as well as the most remote from support, though quite within range of shot from all parts of the works.

Decatur's division of boats, three in number, being to windward in the American line, could fetch into the point aimed, while one boat belonging to Somers's division did the same; but Somers himself in one boat, and Lt. Bainbridge in another, both of the leeward division, were not able to close to windward, and they turned on the enemy to leeward. One of Decatur's divisions, however, did not close in consequence of some mistake in a signal. The desperate and remarkable conflict that followed among these gun-boats has been already described by us, and will be again in our sketch of Decatur's life, with farther details, and we shall consequently pass over it here. It is known that three of the Tripolitans were boarded, and brought out of their line, while the remaining boats were driven in behind the rocks under the cover of their own batteries.

While this bloody hand-to-hand conflict was going on close in with the rocks, the brigs and schooners engaged the division to leeward, and the division inside the rocks, assisted by Somers in his single boat, who had no other means to prevent his vessel from drifting in among the enemy, than to keep a few sweeps backing her off, throwing grape, canister and musket-balls



The accompanying plate will give a tolerably accurate notion of this day's work. No. 1 is the Constitution hove to; No. 2 are the American brigs and schooners; No. 3 is Somers; No. 4, Bainbridge; No. 5, Decatur attacking the enemy; No. 6, Tripolitan gun-boats; No. 7, Tripolitan galleys, &c. The bomb ketches were too far to the westward to be brought into the plate.

the whole time, in showers, upon the Turks. Once or twice the division inside manifested an intention to pass through the opening, and come out to the assistance of their brethren, but the grape and canister of the brigs and schooners as often drove them back. These movements were distinct and methodical, and each time the repulse was the result of signals from Preble himself, who did his duty nobly that day as a commander-in-chief, having his eye on all parts of the line, and neglecting nothing. The Constitution was engaged early, and her own fire was kept up with a vigor that has often been the subject of praise. She seemed to control the fight, moving along just within range of grape, as the deity of the combat. She silenced all the nearer batteries as she passed them, though they opened again as soon as she was out of range. We have heard a gentleman, who was then one of the prisoners in Tripoli, describe the enthusiasm excited among them by the daring and cool manner in which Preble handled his own ship on this occasion. They had but a single window, in the castle where they were confined, which commanded a view of only a part of the scene of action, the end of the rocks where Decatur engaged being out of sight; but they beheld enough to fill them all with exultation and delight. When the Constitution was seen standing in, she was deliberately shortening sail, with the men on the yards, and every thing going on as regularly as if about to anchor in a friendly port. Then she edged off and let the Turks have it. In the course of the action, the ship suffered a good deal, principally aloft. Preble himself had a very narrow escape, a shot coming in through a stern-port as the frigate was waring,

for this was the time when the Turks vented all their spite on her, and there is little doubt it would have cut the commodore in two, had it not struck the breech of a quarter-deck gun, and broken into fragments. Luckily it did no other damage than to wound a marine, though the fragments flew about a quarter-deck that was filled with men. The ship had a heavy shot through her mainmast, and her main-royal yard shot away. She met with a good deal of other damage, though it was principally aloft.

After covering the retreat of his bomb-vessels, gun-boats and prizes, with the Constitution, Preble hauled off among the last, and rendezvoused, with all his force, beyond the range of shot. His commanders then repaired on board the flag-ship to make their reports, receive their orders, and to learn, in that centre of intelligence, the incidents and casualties of the day. It was now that a scene occurred which it will not do to pass over in silence, inasmuch as it is closely connected with the personal character of the subject of this memoir, delineating his good, as well as his bad qualities. Preble had made his disposition for this attack with great care and preparation, and he anticipated from it even more important results than it had actually produced. In placing six of his gun-boats so near the eastern entrance of the harbor, while the rest were either within the reef, or half a mile distant, his enemy had made a very judicious disposition of his force, to contend against attacks similar to those which had hitherto been made on the place in the course of this war; but one that was very injudicious, when operations directed by Preble and executed by Decatur were to be resisted. The

commodore felt sure of seizing all these boats, and there is little question that his hopes would have been realized but for unforeseen accidents. Somers had got a little too far to leeward, his boat was an indifferent sailer, and he and Bainbridge were prevented from fetching into this division, and were compelled to engage to leeward, as has been seen, which they did in the most gallant manner. A third boat, one that belonged to Decatur's own division, did not close at all, engaging at a distance ; her commander justifying his course on a subsequent inquiry, by showing that a signal of recall had been made from the frigate. Such a signal had actually been hoisted by mistake, though it was only for a moment, and it is probable the fact served to increase Preble's dissatisfaction. The six gun-boats procured from the Neapolitans were of only twenty-five tons each, and were fit for nothing but harbor duty, while those of the Tripolitans were much larger, and were built to be used on the coast. Thus, those that were compelled to remain in the offing were built principally to remain inside, while those that were compelled to remain inside would have done perfectly well in the offing. The six boats mentioned would, consequently, have been a very important acquisition to the blockading and assaulting force ; and Preble, properly appreciating the daring and enterprise of Decatur and his companions, believed that in sending his six small boats against this division he would become master of the whole of it. These boats, too, were the only trophies of his victory, the effect of his attack on the batteries, and the rest of the shipping, being less apparent and less captivating to the public eye.

Decatur's exploit, in itself, was one of the most extraordinary and brilliant in naval annals, but it had obtained only half of the anticipated success. As a commander-in-chief Preble looked to results, and in these he had been keenly disappointed. It is probable, moreover, that his mind and senses had been too much occupied with the other portions of the stirring scene of that day, to leave him master, by means of his own observations, of the precise difficulties with which Decatur had to contend, or the supremely gallant manner in which he had overcome them.

Preble was in the frame of mind that such circumstances would be likely to produce on a temperament naturally so fiery, and with that temperament undoubtedly much aggravated by the disease which so soon after terminated his life, when Decatur appeared on the quarter-deck of the *Constitution* to report his acts, and to learn the news, like most of the rest of the commanders. The young man was in a roundabout, or in his fighting gear, just as he had come out of the combat; his face begrimed with powder, armed to the teeth, and with his breast covered with the blood that had flown from a wound received in his celebrated encounter with the captain of one of the two boats he had taken, almost as it might be with his own hand. At such a moment, Decatur was the centre of observation of all on the quarter-deck of *Old Ironsides*. He approached Preble in a quiet way, and said, "Well, commodore, I have brought you out *three* of the gun-boats." To Decatur's astonishment, and doubtless to that of all who witnessed this extraordinary scene, Preble seized his young subordinate with both hands by the collar, shook him violently,



as one would shake an offending boy, and cried bitterly—“Ay, sir, why did you not bring me *more?*” At the next instant Preble turned, and disappeared in his own cabin.

The whole thing had been so sudden, was so very different from what everybody had anticipated, and was of a character so very unusual for the quarter-deck of a ship of war, that all who witnessed it were astounded. Decatur himself was strongly excited and indignant, and it is said he made a spontaneous movement with one hand for the dirk he wore in his bosom. Then he ordered his boat, and was about to quit the ship. Had he been permitted to leave the Constitution in that frame of mind, it is probable that consequences of a very unpleasant character would have followed. Decatur was then a captain in rank, though he did not learn the fact until four days later, and his equality of commission would have been very likely to render the difficulty more serious. Down to that moment, however, he had been accustomed to regard Preble as one much his superior in degree; and it is not easy to impress on laymen the influence that rank possesses in the military professions.

The older officers present crowded around Decatur, and entreated him to pause, and above all not to leave the Constitution at that moment. They reminded him of the notoriously fiery temper of the commodore, and assured him that no one would be more sorry for what had just occurred than Preble himself, as soon as he recovered his self-possession. They called to his recollection that, to use their own expression, while they “despised him for his temper,” they all respected the

commodore's qualities as a commander, and even his justice in his cooler moments. Decatur was still in suspense surrounded by his friends and old messmates, when the cabin steward came to say, "Com. Preble wished to see Capt. Decatur below." After a moment's hesitation, Decatur complied, as indeed he was bound to do; such a request being usually considered as an order on board a man-of-war, coming from a superior to an inferior. In a few minutes, an officer who could presume on his rank, and who felt uneasy at leaving the two together, descended also to the cabin. He found Preble and Decatur seated very amicably, within a few feet of each other, both silent, and both in tears!

Explanations and apologies had doubtless been made by Preble, and from that moment all was forgotten. It is to the credit of both parties, that the occurrence appears to have left no rankling in the breast of either, each ever after doing full justice to the merit of the other. Decatur, indeed, was one of Preble's warmest friends, and so continued to the hour of the latter's death.

Notwithstanding the attack of the 3d August fell short in its results of Preble's expectations, there is little doubt that it produced a deep impression on the Turks. The gun-boats of the latter trusted themselves no more outside of the reef, and they got to be so shy that they would retire as soon as they found the American boats coming within the range of musket-balls. The Bashaw perceived that he had a vigorous leader to oppose, and his notions of impunity, living where he did in his castle within massive walls, were materially impaired.

As for Preble, he pursued his operations with cha-

racteristic vigor. The 4th, 5th and 6th, were employed in altering the rig of the captured boats, and in preparing them to be brought into line for future service. They were numbered 7, 8 and 9, and given to Lts. Crane, Caldwell and Thorn.\* Early on the morning of the 7th, Preble made a signal for all the light vessels to weigh, when they proceeded to take stations that had been pointed out to them respectively. The action did not commence until half-past two, when the mortar vessels and the gun-boats opened on the batteries and town; the latter with good effect, though the bombs, from some defect in their filling, as well as from the bad qualities of the vessels, never appeared to be of much service. The Tripolitan galleys and gun-boats made a demonstration toward passing the rocks to come out and attack the American gun-boats, but the latter were covered by the Siren and Vixen, while the frigate, with one or two of the other vessels, lay to windward in a position to overawe them. On one occasion this day, Stewart in the Siren manifested an intention to close with the enemy's galleys without a signal, for which he afterward received a stern rebuke from the commodore, who was disposed to hold his whole command in hand, like a skilful coachman managing his team. It was almost as unsafe to rush into the fight without orders from Preble, as it would have been to run away. In a word, he was a commander-in-chief, and did all the duties of that responsible station as much in battle as at any other time.

It was in this attack that No. 8, Lt. Caldwell, blew

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\* It is singular that the two last of these officers were blown up, at an interval of six years between the events.

up. The calamity occurred when the cannonading had lasted only an hour, but it had no effect whatever on Preble's operations. Every thing proceeded as if no such calamity had occurred, and it did not in the least lessen the weight of the American fire. He allowed the action to continue two hours longer, when, their ammunition being expended, he called the gun-boats off by signal. This was a hard day's work for those who were in the gun-boats, the latter suffering considerably, besides losing one of their number by the explosion. That evening Preble was joined by the *John Adams* 28, Capt. Chauncy, direct from home. This ship, however, could not be brought within range of the batteries, having placed her guns in her hold, and the carriages in other vessels, in order to convey stores to the squadron already on the station.

The arrival of the *John Adams* produced a short pause in Preble's activity. Since the two attacks, the Bashaw had become more disposed to treat, and Preble, in consequence of learning through his despatches, that a strong squadron would be likely to appear in a few days, thought it would be more in conformity with his duty to renew the negotiations. The result, however, was not fortunate. The Bashaw had commenced by demanding a thousand dollars a man, ransom, and the customary tribute in future. He now fell in his demands to five hundred dollars a man, ransom, and waived the claim to future tribute altogether. Preble would not accede to even these terms, as he hoped the appearance of the relief squadron would compel the Tripolitans to make peace on the conditions usually recognised by civilized nations.

During this informal truce, Preble had a very narrow escape. On the night of the 9th, he went on board the *Argus*, and directed Capt. Hull to run close in with the rocks, in order that he might reconnoitre the state of the port. This was done, but the vessel being seen, was fired at by the batteries, and a heavy shot raked her bottom for several feet, glancing under water, and ripping the plank out for half its thickness. An inch or two of variation in the direction of this shot, would have sent the brig to the bottom in a very few minutes; the injury having been between wind and water, and of a nature that scarcely admitted of any remedy at the moment.

Preble waited in vain for the appearance of the squadron, which Chauncy had told him he might hourly expect, until the 16th, when he determined to renew his operations with the means he possessed. Despatching the *Enterprise* to Malta, with directions to have water sent to the squadron, he ordered Decatur and Chauncy to reconnoitre as close in as was prudent, in boats. These officers found that the gun-boats and galleys of the enemy were moored in a line between the mole and the castle, so as to form a defence to the inner harbor, or galley-mole, being flanked and otherwise supported themselves by the works. An attack would have been made the day that succeeded this reconnoitering, but a gale of wind coming on from the northward, the squadron was obliged to quit its anchors. When it had obtained an offing and was lying-to, it fell in with the supplies from Malta, and learned that no intelligence had been received from the expected reinforcement. This last information caused Preble to

decide that he would continue his operations with his own limited means.

It was the 24th, however, before the weather permitted the squadron to stand in again toward the town. The Constitution anchored in the evening just without the drop of the enemy's shot, and sent her boats to tow the bomb-vessels to their stations. Shells were thrown most of the night, the enemy not returning a gun. There is no doubt that the vessels were anchored too far off from their object, and that few of their missiles reached the points aimed at.

On the 28th, Preble issued his orders for a combined attack by his whole force. On this occasion, the commodore determined to leave his bomb-vessels out of the affair, and to go to work with solid shot, and as close aboard as he could get. The gun-boats proceeded to their stations by midnight, so that they were soon close in with the rocks at the eastern entrance, where they had a partial protection under the reef, well assured the enemy's small craft would not dare to come near them, after the lesson they had received in the affair of the 3d. The gun-boats were covered by the Argus, Siren, Enterprise, Vixen, and Nautilus. Here the former anchored, and opened a heavy fire on the shipping and works. At daylight the Constitution weighed and stood in, the enemy's batteries immediately turning most of their attention on her, as the largest and most formidable of their assailants. Preble found his own eight gun-boats quite closely engaged with the sixteen that were left to the enemy, as well as with their galleys, and apprised that little ammunition remained in his own flotilla, he ordered it, by signal, to withdraw,

while he occupied the attention of its foes with his own ship. The frigate soon sank one gun-boat, drove two on shore and scattered the rest.

Preble did not haul off when this important service was rendered, but stood on until he was within musket-shot of the mole, where he backed his top-sail and lay near an hour, giving and taking, until all his small craft were safely out of harm's way. This was probably the hottest affair that had yet occurred. All the vessels were more or less injured aloft, and many grape struck the frigate; still the latter had not a man hurt! The Constitution lost shrouds, back-stays, trusses, spring-stays, lifts, and a great deal of running rigging was cut, while her hull received very little damage. The Tripolitans suffered a good deal, and, among other accidents that happened on shore, Capt. Bainbridge was near being killed by one of the shot of his countrymen, which penetrated his prison, covering him with stones and *débris*.

No further attack occurred until the 3d September, the interval having been employed in preparations. The enemy had not been idle, but had got up three of their boats which had been sunk in the previous affairs, and had added to their means of defence in other respects. They had also learned some lessons from experience. Instead of remaining in front of the town to await the assault, a position which took every shot that missed them into the place itself, they got under way the moment they saw the Americans in motion, and worked up to the weather side of their own harbor, under Fort English and another battery in its neighborhood, where they had also the benefit of some ex-

tensive shoals to protect them against the brigs and schooners.

This new disposition of the enemy's force compelled Preble to make a corresponding change in the disposition of his own. The only point favorable for bombarding was more to the westward, while the enemy's flotilla lay to the eastward. The commodore determined, therefore, to send all his light vessels to engage the Tripolitan flotilla, while he undertook the office of covering the bomb-vessels on himself. It having been ascertained that the range of the mortars was less than had been supposed, the two vessels were anchored nearer than on the former occasions, which left them a good deal exposed to the fire of the batteries.

Decatur, who was now a captain, commanded to windward and pressed the enemy closely. The Tripolitans stood his assault until the musketry began to tell, when they retired more up the harbor. A part of the American boats pressed the retreating flotilla, while the rest, covered by the brigs and schooners, engaged the works to windward.

Preble now stood in with the frigate to cover his mortar vessels, and running quite near the rocks he hove to, at a point whence he could bring his broadside to bear on all the principal works; but, at a point also where no less than seventy guns, principally those that were heavy, could, and did bear on him. The fire of Old Ironsides on this occasion greatly surpassed that of any previous attack, and was quite in proportion to the exposed position she was compelled to occupy. Preble threw more than three hundred round shot at the enemy, besides quantities of grape and



canister, before he left his position, having previously directed the small vessels to retire.

In the affair of the 3d, the gun-boats were an hour in action, during which time they threw four hundred round shot at the enemy; averaging among the eight the large number of fifty shot for each gun. When the American squadron returned home, a Spanish nominal six-and-twenty, that belonged to one of the Tripolitan prizes, was shown, which was said to have been loaded and fired in this action near seventy times, as fast as it could be spunged, rammed home, and touched off. The small vessels all suffered more or less aloft, as a matter of course, and the *Argus* received some damage in her hull. The bomb-vessels were much crippled: one of them was near sinking, and she had all her rigging cut away. Preble was much pleased with the conduct of the whole squadron in this affair.

The *Constitution* was much exposed in the affair of the 3d September, and she did not escape altogether with impunity, though it was wonderful that she was so little injured. Her own heavy fire probably alone protected her from very serious damage. When it is remembered that she was opposed to quite double the number of guns she could herself bring to bear in broad-side, and that these guns were fought behind masonry, the reader will at once understand the odds with which she had to contend. Although some recent events that have occurred in conflicts between the fleets of the most civilized nations of Europe and the water batteries of semi-civilized, if not of semi-barbarous nations, may lead the public mind astray on such matters, no truths

of this nature are better established than the facts that ships cannot fight forts where there is a just proportion between their respective forces, as well as equality in other respects, and that forts cannot stop ships under similar circumstances.

In addition to this general truth, Preble was obliged to fight his ship under marked disadvantages. The power of a ship in conflicts with batteries on the shore, is best exhibited when she can lie so close as to enable her concentrated fire to tell, and it is for this reason that the seaman always wishes to get his vessel as near to the work he is to attack, as possible. Could the Constitution have been placed in close contact with any single work in Tripoli, there is little question that the close discharge of the thirty guns she then carried in broadside, would have soon demolished that particular work, while the enemy could have brought only some eight or ten guns, at most, to bear on her. But several reasons existed why Preble could not profit by this peculiar mode of securing advantages to vessels. It would not have done to risk his single ship, situated as he was at such a distance from home, in so close a struggle with an enemy so powerful. Then the reef so often mentioned, reduced him to the necessity either of coming to very close quarters within it, or of giving the castle, Fort English, and the other batteries of the Tripolitans, the great advantage of cannonading him at the distance of about a mile; the very range for shot that such works would choose in repelling an attack from a ship, since their own missiles would penetrate wood, while those of the vessel would produce a very diminished effect on stone walls. In addition, a vessel

at that distance, lying in front, would probably be exposed to most of the fire of the place, at the same moment.

On the 3d September, the Constitution received the whole fire of Tripoli, while the small vessels were retiring, and it is good cause of surprise that she hauled off herself with so little loss. As it was, three shells passed through her canvas, one of which hit the bolt-rope of the maintop-sail, and nearly tore the sail in two. Her rigging, both standing and running, was much cut by shot, as were her sails generally. Most of the damages, however, were temporarily repaired during the height of the action.

Preble had now been just a month before Tripoli, with his whole force. During this brief space he had made no less than five attacks on the place, four of which produced serious impressions. His own ship had been three times hotly engaged, rendering the most material service. Under ordinary men, this would have been thought sufficiently active service of itself, but it would never have satisfied Preble, had it been in his power to do more. The time between the 7th and the 24th August, rather more than one-half of this month, was lost in fruitless expectation of the squadron under Com. Barron, and by the occurrence of a gale of wind. Thus, in point of fact, so far as the energies of the man were concerned, these five attacks should be considered as having occurred in fourteen working days. Even allowing time to repair damages, after the attack of the 7th, seventeen or eighteen of these busy days would be a liberal allowance. We dwell on these circumstances, as they are closely connected with

Preble's character, and demonstrate its energy. That it belonged to his true character, is further proved by the pause he made when Capt. Chauncy's arrival gave him reason to suppose a strong reinforcement was near, for which he waited with patience, as most conducive to the true interests of his country. Many officers would have been aroused to renewed exertions, by the wish of earning all the laurels they could, previously to being superseded; but no such motive influenced Preble. On the contrary, he restrained his natural disposition to act, for the good of all, and only resumed the offensive when he found that the fine season was fast passing away in idleness. We see much to admire in Preble's short career as a commander, but we see no trait which so distinctly shows that he was governed purely by high and noble motives, as this pause in this otherwise ceaseless activity of mind and movement.

By reference to our dates, the reader will see that the two first attacks on Tripoli occurred within four days of each other, and the three last within ten. Even while making these last assaults on the place, Preble was meditating the bold and serious project of sending in the *Infernal*, as the ketch *Intrepid* was not unaptly termed. We shall not go over again the details of this melancholy enterprise, which have already been given in our sketch of Somers, but confine ourselves in the present article to the more immediate connection of our subject with the event.

The project of sending in a vessel like the *Intrepid*, to explode in the inner harbor of Tripoli, in the midst of all the shipping, was doubtless Preble's own. It was admirably conceived, and the preparations for it

were made with the utmost care. The ketch had arrived from Malta with a cargo of fresh water, while the squadron was blown into the offing, and she was no sooner discharged than arrangements were commenced for this important service.

Preble gave much of his own time and attention to the equipment of the ketch. Somers was with him repeatedly on the business, and not only did Preble use much caution in issuing his instructions, but he experimented personally, with port-fires and other means of firing the train, in order to make sure that all the calculations were strictly accurate.

Even in recording this, the saddest of all the exploits as yet connected with American naval enterprise, we shall be excused for directing the attention of the reader to Preble's untiring activity. The last assault on the town had been made on the 3d of September; the *Intrepid* was sent in on the night of the 5th, making, in truth, six attacks in a month and one day. The country knows, that it was hoped the result of this attempt would be to coerce the bashaw to treat as with an equal. During the forty years that have since rolled by, no new light has been thrown on the cause of the disaster. It is a secret with the brave thirteen who volunteered to man the ketch, and who perished to a man in the catastrophe.

It is certain that Preble, in his official narrative of the events before Tripoli, a well-written, manly, and seaman-like communication, it may be said in passing, gives it as his opinion that Somers and his party blew themselves up, in order to prevent falling into the hands of the enemy. He thought that one of the

largest Tripolitan gun-boats was missing next morning, and the people of the port were seen hauling on shore three others that appeared to be much shattered. From these circumstances, Preble inferred that the large boat had boarded the ketch, and that the others were approaching to sustain her, when Somers, in conformity with a resolution previously expressed, blew himself up. Preble left the station so soon after the occurrence of the event itself, as to leave him little opportunity to ascertain the facts, and his report was made out as soon as he got to Malta.

There is little doubt that the explosion of the *Intrepid* was the result of an accident, or was produced by the shot of the enemy. The batteries were firing at the time, and the *Constitution* keeping well in the offing, to prevent suspicion, the shot from a gun *inside* the ketch might very well have hit its object before its report reached the frigate, not having a tenth of the distance to go. These circumstances may have blended the two reports, that of the explosion and that of the gun, in one. Some untoward accident may have occurred inboard. Had a shot passed through the ketch and hit a nail, or a bolt, it might very well have produced an explosion on board a vessel into which powder had been started in bulk. The gun-boat that blew up in the action of the 7th August was probably struck by a cold shot, although Preble naturally enough supposed it, at the time, to have been a hot shot; there being no other proof that the Tripolitans used hot shot at all.

But the journal of Bainbridge sets at rest the question, so far as the loss of the enemy was concerned. He says distinctly that the explosion did no injury

whatever. He then enumerates the number of the dead, and the places where they were found. The dead were just thirteen, corresponding exactly with the number of persons in the ketch. Preble had intended that number to be only twelve, viz., two officers and ten men; but a third officer, Lieut. Israel, smuggled himself on board the ketch, increasing the party by one. Now Bainbridge recorded all these particulars at the time, and before he knew any thing of the character of the ketch, who were in her, or any thing beyond the facts of the loss, and the finding of the bodies. Had any Turks been killed, their bodies would also have been found; but thirteen alone were ascertained to have been destroyed. It is true that the bodies could not be distinguished, some of them scarce retaining the vestiges of humanity, rendering it difficult, in some of the cases, to say whether the sufferer were a Christian or a Mahomedan; but the exact correspondence of the number found, with the number known to have been in the ketch, and the well ascertained fact that the Intrepid had not reached her point of destination by several hundred yards, would seem to dispose of the question entirely. Preble was mistaken, beyond a doubt. No Turk was injured, nor was any damage done to the shipping of the port. The gunboats that were seen hauling up, were probably damaged in the attack of the previous day, and the one that had disappeared may have shifted her berth, as one locks the stable after the horse has been stolen. It is possible that one of the boats nearest the ketch may have been sunk, but none of the prisoners in Tripoli appear to have heard of any damage whatever, that

was done the enemy. As Dr. Cowdery, in particular, was permitted to go a good deal at large, and even Bainbridge got very accurate information through the Danish Consul, it is hardly possible any serious damage could have been done, and they not learn it.

Preble's anxiety was intense, the whole of the night of the 4th. On the morning of the 5th, however, his narrative-journal commences with the following characteristic paragraph: "We were employed in supplying the gun-boats with ammunition, &c., and repairing the bomb-vessels for another attack," &c. The weather compelled him to relinquish this design; and on the 7th, the season showed so many evidences of its character, that he ordered the guns, mortars, shot and shells to be taken out of the Neapolitan craft and his prizes, and sent the vessels themselves to Syracuse, thus effectually bringing the attacking system to a close for that year. The John Adams, Siren, Nautilus, and Enterprise, were sent to tow these craft into port, leaving Preble, in the Constitution, with the Argus and Vixen in company, to maintain the blockade.

It is impossible to say what the resources and energy of a mind like that of Preble's might have dictated, had he remained long, with even this diminished force, near his enemy. Something he would have attempted, beyond a question, though we have no clue to his intentions, nor do we know that any were yet formed. On the 10th September, or quite a month later than Preble had been induced to expect him, Com. Barron hove in sight, in the President 44, having the Constellation 38, Capt. Campbell, in company. There being now a senior officer present, Preble sailed on the 12th for



Malta, where he soon after relinquished the command of the *Constitution*.

Had the arrangements for sending the reinforcement been made after the government was apprised of Preble's spirited operations before Tripoli, it is probable some means would have been devised to leave him still in command. The thing might have been done, easily enough, though the excuse for sending a senior captain was the smallness of the list. It is more probable that the solicitations of officers at home, and the influence of that principle which is so active in the country, rotation in office, and which is sufficiently vicious as practised in civil affairs, but which is fatal to any thing like military success, on a scale large enough to meet the wants or to satisfy the pride of a great nation, were at the bottom of the change. When Rodgers assembled his whole force in the bay of Tunis, the succeeding year, then the largest squadron that was ever collected under the flag, he had but four captains present, including himself; and by substituting the name of Preble for that of Rodgers, this force could have been commanded by one of these officers as well as by the other. The three junior captains, James Barron, Campbell and Decatur, were all younger than Preble. But these things were not thought of at the time, and two seniors were sent out to the station, a circumstance that induced Preble to come home. He accordingly sailed for Syracuse, in the *Argus*, which place he reached on the 24th September. Finding Decatur here, he ordered him to Malta, to take charge of his own frigate, feeling a deep gratification in being able to bestow so fine a ship on an officer who had so brilliantly distinguished himself.

Preble had still a great deal to do before he left the Mediterranean, though relieved from his command. His accounts were to be settled, and they occupied him several weeks; especially as the duty carried him to Malta, Syracuse, Messina, and Palermo. Barron, too, had occasion for his services. Preble had gone on board the *John Adams* 28, Captain Chauncy, late in October, and having closed up his affairs at Palermo, he sailed for Naples, December 2d, in order to ascertain if he could not obtain additional and better vessels, from the Neapolitan government, for the ensuing season. The negotiation failed, and he sailed for home, December 23d. The ship called in at Gibraltar, and visited Tangiers, in order to see if all remained tranquil in that quarter. Finding nothing to detain him, the commodore proceeded on, anchoring at New York, February 26th, 1805. He repaired to Washington, with as little delay as possible, which place he reached the day of Mr. Jefferson's second inauguration, or March 4th, 1805.

Thus terminated the celebrated cruise of Preble, after an absence from home of only one year, six months and twelve days. Its operations having been stated already, with sufficient minuteness, it remains only to add a few particulars, and to speak of its effects, not only on the country, and on the Barbary Powers, but on the civilized world. On the country, the effect was to induce it to love and cherish its marine, of which it now became justly proud. It was something for a nation, whose political independence had not been acknowledged but one-and-twenty years, to carry on a war four thousand miles from home, and to make so deep an inroad upon what had been the settled policy of Europe for ages.

Previously to Preble's quitting his command, the bashaw was willing to relinquish all claims to tribute, for ever, and, in the peace that shortly succeeded, this relic of a barbarous policy was totally abandoned. Tunis submitted to a similar provision the same year, and Algiers followed on the first occasion. There is no question that the general abolition of tribute, and of the system of making slaves of Christians captured in war, was but the direct consequence of the vigor and spirit manifested by Preble before the town of Tripoli. The Pope, whose coasts were peculiarly exposed to ravages from the corsairs of Africa, and are lined by towers built expressly to repel their inroads, publicly declared that the Americans had done more to suppress the lawlessness of the Barbarians, than all the rest of Christendom united!

The effect of Preble's discipline on the navy was in the highest degree beneficial. No complaints were made of vessels not doing their duty, in presence of the enemy, as so often happens in naval warfare. His squadron got into no confusion, and no excuses were heard of a want of preparation. He had inspired his subordinates with such a spirit, that the signal for battle was looked for with eagerness; and, once flying, every man knew his station, and he occupied it with certainty and despatch. Preble commanded his squadron; and so thoroughly was every man in it sensible of this fact, that his overseeing eye was sufficient to ensure obedience. In this particular, no naval force was probably ever in better condition than the little squadron under his orders. When Preble left it, it was like a band of brothers; but, in a few months, it was torn to pieces by

factions. It is true that a portion of these dissensions might have been the natural consequence of bringing together men from different squadrons, but there is no question that Preble had the faculty of imparting to his inferiors such a sympathy in his own ardent desire to advance the duty on which he was employed, as to place country before self. Nothing could be less alike, in this respect, than the squadron Preble left behind him, on quitting Tripoli, and that which was to be found there six months later.

The effect produced on the Barbary Powers, by Preble's service before Tripoli, as it was connected with the treaties that succeeded, has already been incidentally mentioned. Since the year 1804, a trifling instance to the contrary during the war with England excepted, the American name and American rights have been respected on all of that inhospitable coast. The ice was broken, and the Turk had learned to respect the prowess of a distant, and, as he had imagined, a feeble people. England herself had not so great a name among these semi-barbarians, as that Preble had purchased for his country.

It is proper to mention the loss with which Preble effected so much. Between the 3d August, when he fired the first gun at the Tripolitans, and the 4th September, when he may be said to have fired the last, the Americans had only thirty men killed, and twenty-four wounded; making a total of fifty-four casualties. Among the slain were one master and commander, four lieutenants, and one midshipman. Among the wounded, one captain and one lieutenant. Compared to the magnitude of the services performed, and the re-

sults obtained, this may be taken as a demonstration of the prudence and judgment manifested in conducting the different attacks.

When Preble left the station, the officers who had served under him addressed to him a letter, that was intended to convey their high sense of his character and services. Such letters are usually improper, and, indeed, ought not to be received; but this originated in a generous motive—the fact that Preble had been superseded in command appearing to call for some testimony from that quarter. The communication was short, but it said all that such a document could well say. Preble was not only not liked at the commencement of the cruise, he was almost hated, by many under his orders, on account of the hotness of his temper, and the tightness of the hand he held over them. But if Preble were passionate, he was just. The merit of every man was observed, appreciated, and rewarded. Coupling this high feeling with his military qualities, respect had ripened into esteem, and it may be questioned if the commodore left an enemy behind him when he sailed from Syracuse, the Tripolitans excepted. The letter in question was signed by one captain, (Decatur,) four commanders, two lieutenants commandant, twenty-four lieutenants, five masters, eight surgeons, five pursers, three marine officers, and the only chaplain there was.\*

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\* The names of the senior officers have appeared sufficiently often in this sketch to render them familiar, but the reader may like to know who were the younger lieutenants that served under Preble in this war. They and their subsequent fates were as follows, viz.:

Gordon, died a captain,	1817.
Tarbell, do. do.	1815.
Elbert, died a lieutenant,	1812.
Morris, now a commodore.	
Reed, died a lieutenant,	1812.

At Washington, Preble was consulted by the government, and he recommended it to build suitable bomb-ketches, and to cause some heavy gun-boats to be constructed, especially in reference to the present war. Both were done; the duty of superintending the building of the ketches being assigned to himself. On inquiry, finding he could not get the ketches ready in time for the expected operations before Tripoli, he was authorized to purchase two substantial vessels, and have them fitted with mortars; thus extending his duty against the enemy to this country. The bomb-vessels and gun-boats were sent out in the spring of 1805, and all but one arrived in safety; though peace was concluded previously to their reaching the station. This peace,

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Dexter, died a commander,	1818.
Bennet, died a lieutenant,	1810.
Nicholson, resigned,	1810.
Lawrence, killed a captain,	1813.
Bainbridge, died a captain,	1824.
Thorn, blown up,	1810.
M'Donough died a commodore,	1825.
Carroll, resigned a commander.	
Maxwell, died a lieutenant,	1806.
Burrows, killed a master com.	1813.
Spence, died a captain,	1827.
Van Schaick, resigned,	1807.
Trippe, died a lieutenant com.	1810.
Crane, now a commodore.	
Reed, died a master com.	1813.
Ridgely, now a commodore.	
Izard, resigned,	1810.
Haswell, do.	1810.
Marcellin, died,	1810.

Thus, of these twenty-four lieutenants, who served under Preble, between the 3d August and the 4th September, 1804, only three remain in the navy, and only three are believed to be living. Among the list of names that signed the letter to Preble, we can discover but one more (Stewart) that has not departed for the other world. It is much the same even with the midshipmen, not one now remaining in service, unless it be the present Commodore Cassin, who was then an acting master.

it should never be forgotten, was the consequence of the spirited operations of the summer of 1804; the Tripolitans not deeming it prudent to await the results of the operations of a force so much larger, in the summer of 1805.

Preble had received much kindness from Sir Alexander Ball, one of Nelson's captains, who had been made governor of Malta. This excellent officer, and amiable man, had expressed a wish to procure two fishing-smacks, of the American build, and Preble took this occasion to purchase two, which were carried to Malta, and delivered to the admiral, who received them, not as presents, but by paying for them, at their original cost.

Preble had a proper sensibility on the subject of his being superseded, as well as a just appreciation of the worth of Sir Alexander Ball's good opinion. He accordingly sent to that officer a copy of the letter he had received from the secretary of the Navy, wherein that high functionary explained the necessity, or what he conceived to be the necessity, of sending to the Mediterranean two captains senior to himself. In reply to Preble's letter, Ball says—"I have communicated this to all I know. They join me in regretting that an officer whose talents and professional abilities have been justly appreciated, and whose manners and conduct eminently fit him for so high a command, should be removed from it."

In another letter, in reply to a communication of his thanks for services received from Preble, Ball says—"I beg to repeat my congratulations on the services you have rendered your country," &c.—"If I were to offer my humble opinion, it would be that you have

done well in not purchasing a peace with money—a few brave men have been sacrificed, but they could not have fallen in a better cause; and I conceive it better to risk more lives, than to submit to terms that might encourage the Barbary States to add fresh demands and insults.”

Preble's exertions and services were not forgotten by the nation. Congress voted him, and, through him, to the officers and men who had served under his orders, their solemn thanks. It also voted a suitable medal in gold to the commodore, and swords to various officers, who had distinguished themselves in the different affairs. As this resolution was approved by the President, March 5th, 1805, on the day after Preble reached Washington, it must have been so timed in order to give him a suitable, and no doubt a most gratifying, greeting on reaching the seat of government.

As for the nation itself, its reception of Preble partook of none of those noisy demonstrations of joy that have attended the return of other successful officers; but his services made a very deep impression. The character he had acquired, through deeds that demanded more of intellect than is usual in the mere combats of ships, partook of its own peculiarity, and he was regarded as an officer who had manifested some of the higher qualities of his profession, rather than simply as a bold and skilful sea-captain.

The impression made by Preble at Washington would seem to have been particularly favorable. In 1806, if not earlier, Jefferson offered him a seat in his cabinet, by wishing to place him at the head of the Navy Department. It would seem that there is no doubt of this fact, as well as that the offer was subse-



quently renewed. The President had become sensible of the necessity of a considerable navy, and wished to reorganize that of this country under the advice of an officer of whom he had formed so favorable an opinion. Preble, at first, declined ; but several officers of rank urging him to accept, among the foremost of whom was Decatur, he felt disposed to comply. Had it not been for the state of his health, which now began to give way seriously, under the derangement of the digestive organs, it is supposed he would have been put at the head of the department in question. In making up his mind to accept this civil appointment, we have no means of knowing whether it was, or was not, the intention of Preble to lay down his commission as a sea-officer. As he always manifested a strong attachment to his original profession, it is probable he would have retained his rank in the navy, there being nothing contrary to law, or nothing incompatible in the duties, in placing a soldier, or a sailor, at the head of his own particular branch of civil control, but much that is to the contrary. Carnot, when only a captain of engineers, directed the movements and organization of all the armies of France, returning to his modest rank, after the duty had been admirably performed. It is to the credit of both Jefferson and Preble, that when the former offered, and the latter consented to accept a seat in the cabinet, the two were opposed to each other in their politics. The good of the navy was their common object.

Ill health, however, prevented Preble from rendering this additional service to his country. His malady assumed the character of a wasting consumption, and in

the summer of 1807, the symptoms became so alarming as to give cause to apprehend an early and a fatal termination. His last remedy appears to have been a short trip to sea, but it proved of no avail, and in August he returned to his native place, Portland, to die. The brother next him in years, who was also a seaman, though in the merchant service, was the closest in feeling of all Preble's blood relations. This brother attended him much in his last illness, and to this brother were Preble's last words addressed. They were—"Give me your hand, Enoch—I'm going—give me your hand." His death occurred August the 25th, 1807; and, consequently, when he was just turned of forty-six years of age.

Commodore Preble left a widow, who still survives, and an only child, a son. This child was a mere infant at his father's death. He was subsequently educated at one of the Eastern colleges, and at Göttingen in Germany. When he reached the proper age, government sent him the appointment of a midshipman, but it was declined for him, by his mother. This son still survives, and may perpetuate the line of his distinguished parent.

In person, Preble, like his father and most of his family, was a man of imposing presence. He was about six feet in height, though rather of an active than of a large frame. Still he was sufficiently muscular, and the style of his personal appearance was a union of gentleman-like outline, with size and force. In uniform, he was a striking figure. His countenance varied with his feelings, and altogether he would be considered, in any part of the world, a man of mark.

Much has been said of the temper of Preble, and

some allusion has been made to it here. Certainly it was bad, in the ordinary meaning of the term ; though disease had probably a full share in producing it. By nature, he was quick, and in early life impetuous even ; but he was said to be affectionate and kind in all the domestic relations. His friends were much attached to him, and no man of a bad heart can secure the love of intimates. Many anecdotes are told in connection with this quickness of temper, one of which was circulated with much gusto by the young men of his squadron, who had suffered themselves, from time to time, by his bursts of passion. The vessels had not a sufficient number of medical men, and Preble was induced to engage a Sicilian, to whom he gave a temporary acting appointment, as a surgeon's mate. This person was to assist in, or to take charge of, the hospital established at Syracuse. When the preliminaries were settled, the doctor inquired if it would be proper for him to wear a uniform. To this Preble answered, certainly ; it was expected that every officer should appear in the livery prescribed by law. It was understood the doctor would equip himself, and return next day to receive his orders. At the appointed hour, and while Preble was in his dressing-gown shaving, an officer was ushered in, wearing a richly laced coat, a cocked hat, and *two epaulettes*. At first the commodore could not recognise this personage. He saw the American button, but he himself was the only man on the station authorized to wear *two epaulettes*. Commanders then only wore one, on the right shoulder ; and lieutenants, one on the left. After bowing, and looking his surprise, Preble recognised his Sicilian surgeon's mate in this exaggerated guise. Terrible was the burst of passion that

followed! Preble profoundly deferred to military rank, and was very particular in respecting all its claims. To have a Sicilian surgeon's mate thus desecrate a captain's uniform was more than he could stand; and the very first outbreak of his passion set the poor Sicilian on the jump. Preble gave chase, in the hope of helping him down stairs, by a posterior application, and the scene is said to have come to its climax in the street. The man was so frightened as never to return.

But these were infirmities that sink into insignificance when we come to consider the higher qualities of Preble. His career in the present navy was so short, and the greater portion of it kept him so much aloof from the body of his brother officers, that we must look to some unusual cause for the great influence he obtained while living, and the lasting renown he has left attached to his name, now he is dead. If the few days passed in visits, during which nothing ostensible was done, be excepted, Preble was only forty-two days before Tripoli, altogether. In that time he captured nothing, excluding the three gun-boats taken in the first attack, nor did he meet with any of that brilliant success which carries away men's imaginations, making the result the sole test of merit, without regard to the means by which it was obtained. Still it may be questioned if any other name in American naval annals has as high a place in the estimation of the better class of judges, as that of Preble. Decatur performed many more brilliant personal exploits; the victory of M'Donough, besides standing first on the score of odds and magnitude, possesses the advantage of bringing in its train far more important immediate consequences than any other naval achievement of the country; yet it may

be doubted if the intelligent do not give to Preble a place in the scale of renown, still higher than that occupied by either of these heroes. Hull broke the charm of a long-established and imposing invincibility, yet no man competent to judge of merit of this nature, would think of comparing Hull to Preble, though the latter virtually never took a ship. The names of neither Lawrence, Bainbridge, nor Perry, will ever be placed by the discriminating at the side of that of Preble, though tenfold more has been written to exalt the renown of either, than has been written in behalf of Preble. They, themselves, would have deferred to the superiority of the old Mediterranean commodore, and neither would probably dream of placing his own name on a level with that of Preble's. Chauncy, out of all question, occupied the most arduous and responsible station ever yet filled by an American naval commander, and Preble never performed more gallant personal deeds than Chauncy, or showed higher resolution in face of his enemy; yet Chauncy always spoke of Preble as men name their admitted superiors! Paul Jones alone can claim to be placed on the same elevation as to resources and combinations, but few who are familiar with the details of the events connected with both, would think of placing even Jones fairly at Preble's side. There was a compactness, a power of combination, an integrity of command, and a distinctness of operations about Preble's memorable month, that Jones' justly renowned cruise did not exhibit. It will be vain to contend that Jones' materials were bad, and that his inferiors could scarcely be called his subordinates. There may have been much truth in this, but

Jones' cruise showed high resolution and far-reaching views, rather than the ability to control, combine and influence, the qualities that Preble so eminently possessed. Landais would never have deserted Preble twice; he would have had him out of his ship and Dale in his place, for the first offence. Stewart, who, with a singularly equal temper, has caught his old commander's tact at making himself obeyed, would have managed to get the Frenchman out of the Alliance before he had effected one half of the mischief of which he was the cause.

There can be little doubt that some portion of Preble's reputation is owing to the place he filled in the order of time, as connected with the formation of the present marine. This of itself, however, would not have built up a permanent name, and the subsequent exploits of M'Donough, Decatur, Lawrence, Biddle, Blakely, &c., would have been certain to throw it in the shade. We must look to something more than this priority as to time, for the credit our subject has obtained. We think the solution of the difficulty will be found by making the brief analysis of his services, with which we shall conclude this sketch.

Preble was sent into a distant sea to act against an enemy who was but little understood at home, and under instructions from a cabinet that gave itself scarcely any concern about naval operations of any sort. The most that can be said of the naval administration of this country for the first ten years of the century, is to admit that it was liberal to the officers, and sufficiently well disposed to carry out the laws; but, as a directing spirit capable of wielding the force committed to its care with activity and intelligence, it

did not then, nor has it since existed in any emergency. In an intellectual, professional sense, the navy has scarcely had a head, nor is it likely to possess one while the selections of its chiefs are made from among state-court lawyers, ex-masters of merchant vessels, and politicians by trade.

Under such circumstances, an officer is sent with a very insufficient force to compel a prince of Barbary to conclude a peace on honorable and equal terms. The small vessels placed under his orders, though admirably adapted to blockading Tripoli, were of very little service in making attacks on the place. Had Decatur never quitted his six pounder schooner, the *Enterprise*, we probably should not have heard of her name in connection with this war. The same is true of Somers and the *Nautilus*. In a word, the use that could alone be made of five of the six vessels Preble possessed in the moment of action, was to blockade the port, to cover his flotilla, a power created solely by himself, and to employ their officers and people in such service as he could create for them in emergencies. Useful as these little cruisers might be, and were, in certain portions of the duty, they were of very little account as part of the assailing force.

Insufficient as were his means originally, Preble was met, even before he had reached the scene of action, by the unpleasant tidings that these means were diminished quite one-third, through the accidental loss of one of his frigates. Not only did this loss subtract from his own force, but it added almost in an equal degree to that of the enemy. The *Philadelphia* was a stout eighteen pounder frigate, and used as a floating battery only, and equally well fought, she would have

proven almost a counterpoise to the only battering ship Preble now had. This he saw, and he took his measures early to destroy her. The instructions given to Decatur on that occasion, prove how fully Preble's mind was impressed with all the contingencies of such an enterprise; how clearly he foresaw success, and how far he wished to improve it. The possibility of converting the Intrepid into a fire-ship, was calculated,\* and orders given accordingly. The sudden shifting of the wind rendered it impossible to profit by this hint; but the order itself shows how fully and comprehensively Preble understood the matters he had in hand. Decatur was ordered to take fixed ammunition for the Philadelphia's guns, and to use them against the town, should it be in his power. He found these guns loaded, and the flames drove him out of the ship; but they did a part of the duty of gunners for him. On the destruction of this ship depended the success of the approaching season, in a word, and Preble laid his plan and chose his agent accordingly. The success was as much his, as success ever belongs to the head that conceives and combines, when the hand is not employed to execute.

This accomplished, Preble commenced that scene of active preparation of which we have already endeavored to give the reader some idea. Nearly all the available force that could be employed against Tripoli, was to be created four thousand miles from home, with one hand,

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\* In his instructions to Decatur, Preble uses these words, viz:—  
“ Make your retreat good with the Intrepid, if possible. *unless you can make her the means of destroying the enemy's vessels in the harbor, by converting her into a fire-ship for that purpose, and retreating in your boats and those of the Siren. You must take fixed ammunition and apparatus for the frigate's eighteen pounders; and if you can, without risking too much, you may endeavor to make them the instruments of destruction to the shipping and bashaw's castle.*”



while the dissatisfied Barbary States were to be held in check with the other.

This scene of preparatory activity ended, the new one began, of attacking stone walls and a strong flotilla, with a single frigate; a twenty-four pounder ship, it is true, but supported only by six very badly constructed gun-boats. The batteries had many heavy pieces, and the three boats captured on the 3d August, mounted nominal twenty-sixes, which threw shot that weighed twenty-nine pounds. At this time all the heavy American shot fell two or three pounds short of their nominal weight. Against these odds, then, Preble had to contend. Nevertheless he had his advantages. His enemy possessed no accurate gunners, and were otherwise deficient in the resources of an advanced civilization. Under these circumstances, Preble risked just as much as was prudent. So nicely balanced were his movements between extreme audacity and the most wary and seaman-like caution, that we never find a vessel of any sort exposed without a sufficient object, or, an accident excepted, exposed in vain. His operations commenced, nothing checked their vigor but the most discreet forbearance. When Barron was hourly expected, he paused with a magnanimity that in itself denoted a high and loyal character; but when the dire calamity occurred to Somers, and when Caldwell was blown up, he went to work the next hour, as it might be, to push his operations, just as if nothing unusual had occurred. Under the most disadvantageous circumstances, and with cruelly insufficient means, he lowered the pretensions of his enemy one half, in ten days, and had brought them down to next to nothing by the end of a month! We say cruelly insufficient

means, for, in effect, the Constitution alone, with her thirty guns in broadside, had frequently to contend with more than a hundred guns in batteries.

But, no better circumstance can be cited in favor of Preble's professional character and conduct, than the hold he obtained on the minds of his officers. Personally, they had much to induce them to dislike him; yet, we cannot recall an instance in which we have ever heard one of them find any fault with the least of his movements. All seem to think that every thing that was done was done for the best. We hear no complaints of injudicious or unreasonable operations; and what is still more unusual in combined movements, of commanders who did not do their whole duty. Inequality of conduct and of services is one of the commonest occurrences in all extended operations, by sea or land. We hear tales and anecdotes of this sort, as connected with McDonough's and Perry's victories, as connected with Chauncy's various manœuvres and battles, but none in relation to Preble and his command. Every man in his squadron knew and felt that he was governed; though it is not improbable that Preble was, in a degree, aided in the exercise of his authority, by the fact that an entire grade existed between his own rank and that of all of his commanders. A stronger practical argument in favor of the creation of admirals cannot be cited, than the manner in which Preble held all his vessels in hand, during his operations against Triploi. Still his own character had the most connection with the result; and even to this hour, old men who have since commanded squadrons themselves, speak of his discipline with a shake of the head, as if they still felt its influence.

Follow Preble from his scene of glory to his native land, and we find him appreciated by many of the highest intellects of the republic. His mind was used, even across the Atlantic, in arranging future operations against the enemy; and so much was his advice esteemed, and his counsel coveted, that he is finally invited to preside over the branch of the public service to which he belonged. Such would have been his destiny had not death intervened.

One cannot but regret that Preble did not survive, with all his powers, until after the occurrence of the last English war. Nothing was more apparent than the want of combination and intelligent wielding of force on the Atlantic, that was exhibited throughout the whole of those important years; and we cannot but think, had Preble's capacity and energy been brought to bear on the service, he would have shown something more than brilliant isolated combats, as the result of even the small means that could have been placed at his control. He would then have been second in rank in the navy, as to all practical purposes, and must have been intrusted with one of the largest squadrons. His last moments were said to have been embittered by regrets for the affair between the *Leopard* and *Chesapeake*, and he always retained a sort of revolutionary predilection for meeting the English.

Preble's influence on the discipline of the service was of a valuable and lasting nature. Until his time, the men of the present navy were little accustomed to act in concert, and some of the previous attempts had not been attended with very flattering results. Officers would obey at every hazard, it is true, as Stewart did when he went to sea in the *Experiment*, towing out his

main-mast after him, in consequence of a petulant order from Truxtun, but they had not been taught to repress their own ardor, to yield their own opinions to those of their superiors, in face of an enemy, in order to present a combined and available front, until Preble gave them the severe, but salutary lesson.

It is probable that the marine of this country, long ere the close of this century, will become one of the most powerful the world has yet seen. With a rate of increase that will probably carry the population of the nation up to sixty millions, within the next fifty years, a commerce and tonnage that will be fully in proportion to these numbers, no narrow policy, or spurious economy, can well prevent such a result. In that day, when the opinions of men shall have risen in some measure to the level of the stupendous facts by which they will be surrounded, the world will see the fleets of the republic, feel their influence on its policy, and hear of the renown of admirals who are yet unborn; for the infatuated notion that wars are over, is a chimera of speculative moralists, who receive their own wishes as the inductions of reason. In that day, all the earlier facts of the national career will be collected with care, and preserved with veneration. Among the brightest of those which will be exhibited connected with the deeds of that infant navy out of which will have grown the colossal power that then must wield the trident of the seas, will stand prominent the forty days of the Tripolitan war, crowded with events that are inseparable from the name and the renown of Edward Preble.

L I V E S

OF

DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN

NAVAL OFFICERS.

BY

J. FENIMORE COOPER,

AUTHOR OF "THE SPY," "THE PILOT," &c. &c.

VOL. II.

JONES,  
WOOLSEY,

PERRY,  
DALE.

PHILADELPHIA:  
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PAUL JONES.

*Lith. of MURRAY, 111. Nassau st, N. Y.*

# NAVAL BIOGRAPHY.

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## JOHN PAUL JONES.

FEW names connected with the American marine have so much claim to celebrity as that of the subject of this sketch. His services were of a character so bold and romantic, the means he employed were seemingly so inadequate to the ends he had in view, and his success, on one occasion in particular, was so very brilliant as to have given rise, on the part of his political and personal enemies, to much unmerited and bitter calumny, while his admirers and friends have been induced to lean a little too strongly to the side of eulogy and indiscriminating praise. As the matter of the life and character of this distinguished officer has been frequently the subject of comment in biographies, of more or less merit, within the last few years, and a great mass of evidence has been produced to remove the veil which was so long drawn before his early years, this is perhaps the time when an attempt may best be made to arrive at a just appreciation of the deeds of the officer, and of the qualities of the man. In assuming this task, we shall avail ourselves of such of the best authenticated

facts that offer, reasoning for ourselves on their results and principles.

There are no longer any doubts thrown over the birth and early life of Paul Jones. His grandfather was a regular gardener, in the neighborhood of Leith, of the name of Paul. His father, John Paul, was apprenticed to the same trade, and at the expiration of his indentures he entered into the service of Mr. Craik, of Arbigland,\* in which situation he passed the remainder of his days. We have the assertion of Jones himself, that there never existed any connection between the Earl of Selkirk and his father, as has been long and generally asserted; and we may add, the present head of that noble family has assured the writer of this article that the Pauls were never in the service of his grandfather.

John Paul, the gardener of Craik, of Arbigland, married Jean Macduff, the daughter of a small farmer in the parish of New Abbey. Seven children were the fruits of this connection, two of which died in infancy. John was the youngest of the remaining five. William, the eldest of the family, left Scotland at an early age, and finally married and settled at Fredericksburg, in Virginia. He was the principal cause of subsequently attracting his distinguished brother to America. The daughters were Elizabeth, Janet, and Mary Ann. The first never married; the second became the wife of a watchmaker in Dumfries, of the name of Taylor; and the third had two husbands, the first of whom was

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\* Craik, of Arbigland, was a man of extensive scientific and literary attainments, as well as of large fortune. It may have interest with the American reader, to learn that Washington's friend and physician, Dr. James Craik, was a natural son of this gentleman.

named Young, and the second Loudon. Several of the descendants of these sisters came to America, where some of them are now living.

John, the fifth and youngest surviving child of this humble family, was born July 6th, 1747, at Arbigland, in the parish of Kirkbean, Scotland. His early education was such as marked his condition, in a country like the land of his birth. It was plain, substantial, and moral. The boy appears to have improved his limited opportunities, however, for while his taste, sentiments and language, in after-life, betray the exaggeration of an imperfect instruction, his handwriting, orthography, and principles, prove that the essentials had not been neglected. Still, the acquirements he obtained at school could not have been great, for we find him regularly apprenticed to the sea at the age of twelve. His master was a Mr. Younger, a merchant in the American trade, and a resident of Whitehaven, a port at the entrance of the Solway, in the adjoining kingdom of England.

Thus far, there was nothing unusual in the career of the boy. He neither ran away to go to sea, nor did any thing to throw a tinge of romance around this period of his life. His first voyage was to America; with which country his personal connection may be said to have commenced at the age of thirteen. The vessel in which he sailed was the *Friendship*, of Whitehaven, Benson master, and her destination the *Rappahannock*. Here he found his brother William established, and, while in port, young Paul became an inmate of his house.

Jones manifested great aptitude for his profession,

and soon acquired all that portion of seamanship that is not dependent on experience and judgment; the last two being ever the work of time. The affairs of his master becoming embarrassed, however, the indentures were given up, and the lad was left to shift for himself at an age when counsel and government were the most necessary. It is a proof that young Paul was not a common youth, that there is no difficulty in tracing him through all this period of his humble career. As soon as left to his own exertions, he shipped as third mate in the *King George*, a slaver out of Whitehaven. This must have occurred about the year 1765, or when he was eighteen, as we find him, in 1766, the first mate of the *Two Friends*, of Kingston, Jamaica, a vessel in the same trade. It would seem that he made but two voyages to the coast of Africa; and his tender years, necessities, and the opinions of the day, may well prove his apology. The pursuit did not please him, and he left the *Two Friends* on her return, and sailed for Kirkcudbright as a passenger, in the *John* of that port. This circumstance proved of great importance to him, for the master and mate died of yellow fever, on the passage, when Mr. Paul assumed the direction, and carried the vessel safely to her haven. His reward was the command of the brig he had most probably been the means of saving; the vessel belonging to Currie, Beck & Co., of Kirkcudbright.

— This must have occurred in the year 1767.\* Here,

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\* Since the appearance of this sketch in *Graham's Magazine*, authentic information has been communicated to the writer on various points, which has induced him to vary a little from his original statements.

then, we find our hero, the son of an humble gardener, in command of a sea-going craft, at the early age of twenty, or at that of twenty-one, at the latest. Such preferment frequently occurs in cases where connections and patronage unite to push a youth forward; but never with the obscure and unpatronized, without the existence of a high degree of merit. We want no better evidence that Paul was discreet, intelligent, industrious and worthy of respect, at that period of his life, than this single fact; merchants never trusting their property out of their reach without sending their confidence along with it. The new master also discharged the duties of supercargo; additional proof of the early stability of his character.

Our young seaman sailed but two years in this employment. He left the service of the house which had given him his first command, in consequence of its having dissolved partnership and having no further employment for him.

In our original sketch of Jones, it was stated that a prosecution for having caused the death of a certain Mungo Maxwell, while in command of the *John*, was probably connected with his quitting the employment of Currie, Beck & Co.; but the fact is denied by his friends, on seemingly good authority. As the occurrence was the foundation of much calumny against Jones, when, at a later day, the passions and interests of nations got to be connected with his character, it is necessary to relate the circumstances, which appear to have been as follows:

Jones had occasion to correct Maxwell, in the usual nautical mode, or by flogging. The punishment was

probably severe, and it is equally probable that it was merited. The man, shortly after, shipped in another vessel, called the Barcelona Packet, where he died in the course of a week or two, after a few days of low spirits, accompanied by fever. This occurred in June, 1770. It would seem, however, that Maxwell complained to the authorities of Tobago, in which island the parties then were, of the flogging he had received from Capt. Paul, and that the latter was summoned to appear before the judge of the vice-admiralty court to answer. A certificate of the judge is extant, in which it is stated, that Maxwell's shoulders exhibited the proofs of severe flogging, but that he dismissed the complaint as frivolous, after a hearing. The certificate adds, that the deponent, the statement being in the form of an affidavit, carefully examined the back of Maxwell, and that he has no idea the man could have died in consequence of the flogging mentioned. Another affidavit, made by the master of the Barcelona Packet, establishes the other facts.

The later biographers of Jones have alluded to this subject, though not always in a way that is sustained by their own proofs. Sands, the best and most logical of them all, has fallen into a leading error in his account of this affair. He appears to think that Maxwell instituted a prosecution against his commander in England, confounding the facts altogether. Maxwell died long before he could have reached England, on his passage from Tobago, where he had been flogged, to one of the Leeward Islands; nor does it appear that he ever took any legal step in the matter, beyond the complaint laid before the vice-admiralty judge. That a



prosecution for murder was menaced or instituted against Jones, is shown by one of his own letters. Capt. Mackenzie, on no visible authority, refers this prosecution to the envy of some of his neighbors and competitors of Kirkcudbright. There does not seem to be any conclusive reason, however, for supposing that the prosecution occurred anywhere but in the West Indies. It may have taken place in Great Britain, though the term "British jury," which Jones uses in connection with this affair, would apply as well to a colonial as to an English or Scottish jury. There was no trial, nor is it even certain, that there was even a formal prosecution at all; Jones' allusion to the subject being in the following words—viz. :

"I have enclosed you a copy of an affidavit, made before Governor Young by the judge of the court of vice-admiralty, at Tobago, by which you will see with how little reason my life has been thirsted after, and, which is much dearer to me, my honor, by maliciously loading my fair character with obloquy and vile aspersions. I believe there are few who are hard-hearted enough to think I have not long since given the world every satisfaction in my power, being conscious of my innocence before Heaven, who will one day judge even my judges. I staked my honor, life, and fortunes for six long months on the verdict of a British jury, notwithstanding I was sensible of the general prejudices which ran against me; but, after all, none of my accusers had the courage to confront me. Yet I am willing to convince the world, if reason and facts will do it, that they have had no foundation for their harsh treatment," &c.

This language was probably used by a man who remained openly within reach of the law, for six months, inviting by his presence a legal investigation of charges that involved a felony, without any legal steps having been commenced. The precise facts are of less importance, as it is now reasonably certain that Maxwell did not die in consequence of the flogging he received from Jones; for could a case have been made out against the latter, it is not probable it would have been abandoned altogether, when enmity was so active and prejudice so general. Nor is it material where this persecution was practiced, his subsequent career proving that our subject was by no means deserving of the character of an officer failing of humanity. The occurrence, notwithstanding, appears to have embittered several of the earlier years of Jones' life; to have made an impression against him in his native country, and to have contributed to induce him to abandon Scotland; his last visit to that country, except as an enemy, taking place in 1771. Jones left the employment of Currie, Beck & Co., April 1, 1771, and remained in Scotland until near the close of that year.

On quitting Scotland, Jones repaired to London, where he assumed the command of a ship called the *Betsey*, which was also engaged in the West India trade. In this vessel he remained until the year 1773, when he was induced to relinquish his command, in order to proceed to Virginia, where his brother William had recently died, and to whose estate he was an heir. This call upon his services and time was probably sudden and imperative, as he subsequently complains much of the losses he suffered, in consequence of hav-

ing left his affairs in Tobago in the hands of careless or unfaithful agents. It would seem that Jones recovered about ten thousand dollars from the estate of his brother, though the commonwealth had already administered to it—a circumstance that probably did not at all contribute to increase the succession. All, or a portion of the money left in Tobago, was also recovered, so that our hero might now be said to be at ease in his circumstances.

At a later period of his life, Jones became a little remarkable for a display of poetic taste. This tendency, which can scarcely be said to have ever approached the “sacred fire,” was seen even at this early day, for he subsequently spoke of his intention to devote the remainder of his days to calm contemplation and poetic ease, when he revisited Virginia. This feeling, quite probably, received some incentive from the discontent of a man who had not long before escaped from an inquiry that he deemed a persecution. It is certain that, while resident in Virginia, he assumed the name of Jones; calling himself John Paul Jones, instead of John Paul, which was his legal and proper appellation. The motive of this change of name, as well as the reason of the selection he made, are left to conjecture. It is probable the latter was purely arbitrary, as he does not appear to have had any near relatives or connections of the name of Jones. For the change itself, the most rational supposition is, that it was induced by his difficulties in connection with the affair of Mungo Maxwell. Sands thinks it may have come from a determination of founding a new race, when Jones transferred himself to a new

country. Mackenzie fancies it may have proceeded from a wish to conceal his intended service against England, from the friends he had left in Scotland, or a desire to prevent his enemies from recognising him as a native of Great Britain, in the event of capture. Neither of these reasons is satisfactory. That of Sands is purely imaginary, and unlikely to occur to a man who does not seem to think of marrying at all. Those of Mackenzie are equally untenable, since the friends Jones left in Scotland were too humble in station to render it necessary, or useful, or probable. How could one born in the colonies be thought any safer in the event of capture, in 1775, than one born in Great Britain, allegiance being claimed from all its subjects alike, by the British crown? In a letter to Robert Morris, Jones says, "I conclude that Mr. Hewes has acquainted you with a very great misfortune which befell me some years ago, and which brought me to North America. I am under no concern, whatever, that this, or any other past circumstance of my life, will sink me in your opinion. Since human wisdom cannot secure us from accidents, it is the greatest effort of human wisdom to bear them well." This passage has induced Mr. Sands to think the "great misfortune" was some heavy mercantile loss. There is no evidence to show, nor is it at all probable, that Jones had then been in circumstances to justify his using such an expression as addressed to a man of Robert Morris' rank and extensive dealings; and it is far more rational to suppose that the word "accidents" has been loosely applied to the circumstances connected with Maxwell's death, than to any other event of Jones' life. If a

“great misfortune” had any agency in bringing him to America, it was probably this event; and it may have induced him to change his name, in a moment of disgust, or of morbid resentment.

It is remarkable that there should still be a mystery connected with this change of name, in a man of Jones' celebrity. One of his near connections thinks that the new appellation was not assumed until he entered the American navy, and that it might have been taken in compliment to Gen. Wm. Jones, of North Carolina, who had been much his friend. This circumstance may have induced the selection of the name, though it scarcely seems sufficient to account for the change itself. It is probably now too late to hope to explain the mystery.

The year 1775, therefore, found Jones in every respect in a proper mood to seek service in the young marine that sprung up out of the events of the day. He offered his services, accordingly, and they were accepted. There is reason to think Jones had a real attachment to the colonies, as well as to the principles for which they contended; and it is certain that, having fairly cast his fortunes in them, he had just as good a moral right to maintain both as any native of the country. The obligations created by the mere accidents of birth, can never, in a moral sense, justly be put in competition with the social ties that are deliberately formed in later life, and he is a traitor only who betrays by deceiving. The argument, that a native of England, established in America in 1775, had not the same moral right to resist parliamentary aggression as the subject born in the colonies, is like advancing a

distinction between the social claims and duties of the man born in Yorkshire and those of the man born in London. By the English constitution, itself, the resident of the British capital had a right to oppose the aggressions which led to the American Revolution; and it was a right that did not extend to open revolt, merely, because the aggressions did not affect him in that direct and positive manner that alone justifies resistance to existing law under the plea of necessity. All attempts, then, to brand Jones as a pirate, and as having been peculiarly a traitor to his country, must rest on fallacies for their support; his case being substantially the same as those of Charles Lee, Gates, Montgomery, and a hundred others of merit and reputation; the difference of serving on the ocean, instead of serving on the land, and of being the means of carrying the war into the island of Great Britain itself, being the only reason why so much odium has been heaped on the one, while the others have virtually escaped.

Jones does not appear to have had any connection with the American Navy, until a short time before the passage of the law of December 22, 1775, which, in fact, gave it legal and efficient existence. By this law, a commander-in-chief, four captains, and thirteen lieutenants were appointed. The latter were classed as first, second, and third lieutenants, and of these the name of John Paul Jones takes rank of all others of the highest grade. His commission is said to have been dated the 7th of December, fifteen days before the passage of the law. This, in fact, made him the sixth in rank in the service; though other appointments were

shortly after made, and the question of permanent rank was reserved for future consideration. Thus, in the following year, when independence had been declared, and the rank was regulated, we find Dudley Saltonstall, the oldest captain by the law of December, 1775, placed as the fourth on the list, and Abraham Whipple, the second, reduced as low as to be the twelfth. As respected himself, Jones subsequently complained of a similar mortification, though it would seem unjustly, as the whole matter was understood when the appointments were made. There was some hardship in his case, however, as two of those who were his junior lieutenants in 1775, were made captains above him in 1776. Still, it was in a revolution, related to original appointments, and every thing depended on the original understanding.

Jones was ordered to the *Alfred* 24, Commodore Hopkins' own vessel, as her first lieutenant. A sloop called the *Providence* was purchased, and he was offered the command of her, but declined it, in consequence of his ignorance of the mode of sailing such a craft. Jones always affirmed that he first hoisted the flag of the United Colonies, with his own hands, when Commodore Hopkins first visited the *Alfred*. This occurred on the *Delaware*, off Philadelphia; and the flag was the pine-tree and rattle-snake, the symbols then used by the colonies.

As a matter of course, Jones was in the expedition against New Providence. The squadron did not get out of the *Delaware* until the 17th February, 1776, lying frozen in, at Reedy Island, for six weeks. It is supposed that this circumstance enabled Capt. Barry

to get to sea in the Lexington before it, though that brig was purchased and commissioned subsequently to the equipment of the vessels of Commodore Hopkins' squadron.

Jones was useful in piloting the vessels through some difficulties on the Bahama Banks, and seems to have enjoyed a consideration every way equal to his rank. In the action which occurred with the Glasgow 24, on the return of the squadron to America, he was stationed on the gun-deck of the Alfred, and had no other responsibility than was attached to the management of his battery. He states, himself, that the main-deck guns of the Alfred were so near the water as to have been useless in a good breeze. On this occasion, however, the wind was light, and nothing occurred to disturb the fire but the position of the vessel. Her wheel-rope was shot away, and, broaching to, the Alfred was sharply raked by the Glasgow, for some time, and must have been beaten but for the presence of the other vessels. As it was, the English ship got into Newport ; a sufficient triumph of itself, when it is remembered that she had four or five enemies on her, two of which were but little her inferiors in force. On the 11th of April, Com. Hopkins carried his vessels into New London.

This was unquestionably Jones' first cruise, and the affair with the Glasgow was his first engagement. In that day slavers were not obliged to fight their way, or to run, as at present ; and there is no evidence that our hero had ever before met an enemy. He must have been at sea two or three years, during the continuation of the war of 1756, but he nowhere speaks



of any adventures with the French cruisers. As the squadron sailed on the 17th February, and got into New London on the 11th April, the cruise lasted only fifty-three days; though it may be deemed an adventurous one, when we recollect the power of England and the indifferent qualities of the vessels.

From New London, Commodore Hopkins carried all his vessels round to Providence, when the affair with the Glasgow resulted, as unfortunate military operations are very apt to do, in courts martial. Captain Hazard, of the Providence 12, the sloop Jones had once declined accepting, was cashiered, and Jones was appointed to succeed him. His orders were dated May 10th, 1776. There being no blanks, the order to take the Providence as her captain was written by Commodore Hopkins on the back of the commission Jones held from Congress, as a lieutenant. Being, at that time, certainly the oldest lieutenant in the navy, his right to the command could not well be questioned.

The first service on which Jones was employed, after getting his vessel, was to transport certain troops to New York. Having done this with success, he returned to Rhode Island, hove out his sloop, and prepared her for more critical exploits. In June he was ready again for sea. He was now employed a few days in convoying military stores through the narrow waters about the eastern entrance of Long Island Sound; and, as this was done in the presence of an enemy of greatly superior force, it was an extremely delicate and arduous duty. He was frequently chased, and several times under fire, but always escaped by address and precaution. On one occasion he covered

the retreat of a brig that was coming in from the West Indies, laden with military supplies for Washington, and which was hard pressed by the Cerberus frigate. By drawing the attention of the latter to himself, the brig escaped, and, proving a fast vessel, she was subsequently bought into the service, and called the Hampden.

It would seem that the spirit, enterprise and seamanship Jones displayed, during the fortnight he was thus employed, at once gave him a character in the navy; his boldness and success having passed into history, although no event of a brilliancy likely to attract the common attention occurred. This is a proof that seamen appreciated what he had done.

In July, Jones sailed for Boston, always with convoy; thence he proceeded to the Delaware. As this was the moment when Lord Howe's fleet was crowding the American waters, the service was particularly critical, but it was successfully performed. While at Philadelphia, Jones received his commission as captain, signed by John Hancock; it was dated August the 8th. This fact rests on his own assertion,\* though Mr. Sherburne has given a copy of a commission dated October 10th, which he appears to think was the true commission of Jones. In this he is probably right; new commissions, arranged according to the regulated rank,

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\* It is proper to say, that the late Miss Jeanette Taylor, Jones' niece, a woman of intelligence and character, assured the writer that she once possessed the commission of her uncle, that was dated August 8th, but had given it away as containing an autograph signature of Hancock. The fact is of no material moment, the rank having been regulated only in October.

having doubtless been issued accordingly. It will be seen that Independence was declared a little before the arrival of the Providence at Philadelphia.

Hitherto, Jones had sailed under the orders of Com. Hopkins. He was now brought in immediate contact with the Marine Committee of Congress; and it is a proof of the estimation in which he was held, that the latter offered him the command of the Hampden, the vessel he had rescued from the Cerberus, by his own address. Jones, by this time, had got to understand the Providence, and he preferred remaining in her, now that he had her ready for immediate action, to accepting a vessel that had still to be equipped, though the latter was much the most considerable craft. The Providence mounted only twelve four-pounders, and she had a crew of seventy men.

The Marine Committee next ordered the Providence out on a cruise that was not to exceed three months, giving her commander roving orders. Jones sailed on the 12th of August, and went off Bermuda. Here he fell in with the Solebay, frigate, which vessel outsailed him on a wind, with a heavy sea going, and actually got within pistol shot of him, in spite of all his efforts. While closing, the frigate kept up a steady fire from her chase-guns. Jones saw that he must change his course, if he would escape; and, getting ready, he bore up, set his square-sail, studding-sails, &c., and went off before the wind, directly under the broadside of his enemy. The manœuvre was a bold one, but its success must have been, in some measure, owing to a concurrence of favorable circumstances. There was a cross sea on, and the Solebay not anticipating any se-

rious conflict with so inconsiderable an enemy, doubtless had her broadside guns secured ; or, if either battery had been manned at all, it was probably on the weather side, the Providence having been a little to windward during most of the chase. Previously to putting his helm up, Jones edged gradually away, thus effecting his intention completely by surprise ; the officers of the Solebay having reason to suppose they were gradually weathering on the chase, until they saw her going off dead before the wind. By the time the frigate could get her light sails set, the sloop was beyond the reach of grape, and her safety was insured, the Providence being unusually fast under her square canvas.

After this critical chase, which had some such reputation, though in a less degree, at the commencement of the war of the Revolution, as that of the Constitution possessed at the commencement of the war of 1812, the Providence went to the eastward. Off the Isle of Sable, she fell in with the Milford 32, which chased her, under fire, for nearly eight hours. Jones does not appear to have run the same risk on this occasion, as in the affair of the Solebay, though he evidently considered the adventure creditable to himself. In point of fact, he kept, most of the time, just without the drop of the enemy's shot, though there were moments when both vessels kept up a distant cannonade. If there was any particular merit on the part of the Americans, it was in the steadiness and judgment with which Jones estimated his own advantages, and the audacity with which he used them. Such experiments certainly give confidence to a marine, and increase its means of usefulness, by bringing the hazards a vessel is compelled to run, down

to a just and accurate standard. Manœuvering boldly, in face of a superior force, either on shore or afloat, is an evidence of high military confidence, and insomuch a pledge of both spirit and skill. The influence of both these little affairs must have been highly beneficial on the temper of the American navy.

The day succeeding the last chase, Jones went into Canseau, where he destroyed the English fishing establishment, burned several vessels, and shipped some men. He next went to Isle Madame, and made several descents of a similar character, displaying great activity and zeal. In the course of the cruise the Providence made sixteen prizes, besides destroying a great number of fishermen. She was out more than six weeks, reaching Providence, on her return, October 7th, 1776.

The representations of Capt. Jones induced Com. Hopkins to send an expedition against the colliers of Cape Breton, including the adjacent fisheries. The Alfred had not been out since her first cruise, and was then lying in the river without a crew. That ship, the Hampden, and Providence were selected for the purpose, and the command of the whole was assigned to Jones. No better proof of the estimation in which he was held, or of the influence he had obtained by means of his character, is needed than this fact. The orders were dated October 22d, 1776, and were perfectly legal; for, though Congress regulated the rank on the 10th, Com. Hopkins continued at the head of the navy until the succeeding January, when his office was abolished.

Jones soon found he could not collect a sufficient number of men for the three vessels, and he came to a determination to sail with only the Alfred and Hamp-

den. This arrangement was changed, however, in consequence of the Hampden's getting ashore, and her officers and people were transferred to the Providence. This occurred on the 27th October, and the two vessels were unable to get out until the 2d of November. As it was, Jones conceived he put to sea very short-handed; the Alfred mustering only 140 souls, whereas she had sailed from Philadelphia, the previous February, with 235.\*

As this is the time at which the rank was regulated, though the circumstances do not seem to have yet been known in Rhode Island, it is proper to explain the influence the new arrangement had on the position of our subject. In the first appointments, Jones ranked as the senior first lieutenant of the navy. The fourth officer of the same grade was Mr. Hoysted Hacker, who was promoted to a command soon after Jones himself received his own advancement. Still, Capt. Jones ranked Capt. Hacker, and the latter had actually been appointed to command the Hampden, in the expedition to the eastward. This same officer was transferred to the Providence, and actually sailed as a subordinate to Jones on the 2d November, when, by the regulated rank established by a vote of Congress twenty-two days before, he was placed above him on the new list of captains. On that list appear the names of twenty-four captains. Of these, Jones ranks as the eighteenth, and Capt. Hacker as the sixteenth. It is not surprising that the former complained of such a change; though his argu-

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\* Clarke, Mackenzie, and various other writers give the Alfred and Columbus, each, 300 men, on the expedition against New Providence; crews altogether disproportioned to the sizes of the ships. Jones' own authority is used for what we say.

ments against the elevation of many respectable gentlemen who were placed over him, under original appointments, at the regular formation of the marine and after the declaration of independence, are by no means as strong.

The *Alfred* and *Providence* went to the eastward, as had been arranged, crossing the shoals. They passed many of the enemy's ships that were lying off Block Island, in the night, anchoring in Tarpaulin Cove, for light to go over the shallow water. While lying in the Cove, a privateer was examined for deserters, four of which were found, and a few men were pressed, as Jones always maintained, in obedience to orders from Com. Hopkins. This affair, subsequently, gave Jones a good deal of trouble. He was sued by the owner of the privateer, the damages being laid at £10,000; Com. Hopkins declining to justify the act. This, for some time, was one of the many grievances of which Jones was in the habit of complaining, and quite probably with justice.

Off Louisburg, three prizes were made, one of which proved to be very valuable. It was a large store-ship, called the *Mellish*, conveying clothing to the British troops. The following night, the *Providence* parted company in a snow-storm. The two smaller prizes were now ordered in, but Jones continued his cruise, keeping the *Mellish* in company on account of her great importance to the American cause. A landing was made at Canseau, a good deal of injury done to the enemy, and the ships again put to sea. Off Louisburg, Jones took three colliers, out of a convoy, in a fog. Two days later, he captured a fine Letter of Marque, out of Liverpool. The *Alfred* was now full of prisoners,

and, it being of great importance to secure the Mellish, Jones shaped his course for Boston. On the 7th December, he fell in with his old acquaintance, the Milford, and had another critical chase, in which he succeeded in covering the Mellish, though the Letter of Marque was recaptured, owing to a false manœuvre of the prize-master. On the 15th, the Alfred went into Boston, the Mellish, for the sake of certainty, going to Dartmouth.

At Boston, Jones received an order from Com. Hopkins to transfer the Alfred to Capt. Hinman, who was his junior, on the regulated list, even, by two numbers. This was certainly a hard case, and cannot well be accounted for, except through the existence of prejudices against our hero. That Jones was the subject of many prejudices, throughout his life, is beyond a question; and it can scarcely be doubted that some of these feelings had their origin in faults of character. It is highly probable that he had some of the notions that the Englishman, or European, is known still to entertain toward the Americans, and which were much more general half-a-century since than they are to-day, the betrayal of which would not be very likely to make friends. It is undeniable that the Americans were an exceedingly provincial people in 1777; nor is the reproach entirely removed at the present time; and nothing is more natural than to hear men educated in a more advanced state of society, declaiming about defects that strike them unpleasantly; or nothing more natural than to find those strictures producing an active and blind resentment. Jones was unaided, too, by connections; even the delegates of Virginia appearing not to take the



usual interest of the representative, in an unknown and unsupported stranger. His chief reliance seems to have been on Mr. Hewes, of the Marine Committee, and on Robert Morris; the latter of whom became his firm friend in the end.

Jones remonstrated against this appointment of Capt. Hinman, and succeeded in getting an order to place the Alfred, Columbus, Cabot, Hampden and Providence under his own command, with directions to sail to the southward, with great discretionary powers. These orders produced no results; Com. Hopkins, according to Jones' account of the matter, throwing impediments in the way. It is probable, too, that in February, 1777, the country was not in a condition to fit out a military enterprise of so much importance; want of means being quite as instrumental in defeating Jones' hopes as want of will. There is, also, reason for thinking that Hopkins distrusted Jones' feelings as regards the country; the result most likely of some of his loose and indiscreet remarks.

Many of Jones' official letters, written during the cruises he had made, have been preserved, and aid in throwing light on his character. In general, they are plainly and respectably written, though they are not entirely free from the vaunting which was more in fashion formerly than it is to-day; and occasionally they betray an exaggerated and false taste. On the whole, however, they may be received as superior to the reports of most of the commanders of the age; many captains in even the regular marine of the mother country making reports essentially below those of Jones in sentiment, distinctness, and diction.

Hopkins having some of Jones' new squadron with himself, at Providence, and refusing to give them up, the latter made a journey to Philadelphia, in order to demand redress of Congress. He does not appear to have been regularly apprized of the regulated rank, until this occasion. A memorial, addressed to Congress, at a later day, and on the subject of rank, and his other grievances, was intemperate in language, and probably did his cause, which was tolerably strong in facts, no good. Speaking of the officers who were put above him on the regulated list, he says—"Among those thirteen, there are individuals who can neither pretend to parts nor education, and with whom, as a private gentleman, *I would disdain to associate.*" This is sufficiently vain-glorious, and downright rude. If he betrayed similar feelings while at Philadelphia, it is not surprising that his claims were slighted.

Jones had an explanation with Hancock on the subject of his rank, and left Philadelphia, soothed with assurances that his services were appreciated. He had the indiscretion, however, to let the commission, dated August 5th, 1776, pass out of his hands, and was never able to recover it. This commission, he afterward affirmed, was the first granted after the declaration of independence, and entitled him to be put at the head of the list of captains.\*

By the journal of Congress, it would seem that a resolution was passed on the 15th March, 1777, directing that one of those ships that had been previously

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\* It will be remembered that Miss Taylor told the writer she once owned this commission, and had given it away.

ordered to be purchased, should be given to "Capt. John Paul Jones, until better provision can be made for him." Referring to the dates of these different transactions, we are left to believe that this resolution was passed as some atonement for depriving our hero of his former command: that the project of sending him out with the vessels which Com. Hopkins detained, was subsequently formed, and a third means of employing this active officer was suggested after his visit to Philadelphia. It must be confessed, however, that much confusion exists in the dates of many of the events connected with the life of Jones, those connected with the resolutions of Congress, in particular, often appearing irreconcilable with known occurrences, unless we suppose that the passage of a resolution and its promulgation were by no means simultaneous. Thus it is that we find Jones expressing his surprise at the regulated rank, in April, 1777, though it was enacted in October, 1776.

The ship which was assigned to Jones, under the resolution just mentioned, was a vessel called the *Ranger*. She lay at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and wanted a great deal of work to fit her for sea. Her new captain immediately set about the necessary arrangements, when the third project alluded to was brought up, and he received fresh orders. The commissioners in Paris had ordered a very heavy frigate to be built in Holland, on account of government. This ship was, at first, called the *Indien*, and subsequently the *South Carolina*. She was one of the heaviest single-decked ships that had then ever been constructed, mounting Swedish thirty-sixes on her main deck. The

idea was now to give this ship to Jones, and to send him out to join her, with a party of officers and men, in a French Letter of Marque, called the *Amphitrite*, that had recently arrived with stores from Europe. The arrangement contemplated that Jones should cruise in the *Amphitrite*, on his way out, and, as France was then at peace with England, this could only be effected by a transfer of property. Owing to some difficulty of this nature, the scheme fell through; and, in June, by another resolution, Jones was ordered to the *Ranger* again. This ship he commenced fitting for sea, though it required months to effect the object. While engaged in the negotiation about the *Amphitrite*, Jones received a third commission as a captain, from the Marine Committee, direct. The two preceding it had been commissions to command particular vessels, while the present made him, in general terms, a captain in the navy, by virtue of which he might command any vessel of the government. This was done because the committee did not know precisely what the commissioners in France had effected in the way of ships in Europe. The date of this last commission corresponded with that given under the regulated rank.

It is worthy of remark, that the very day Congress ordered Jones to the *Ranger*, it adopted the stars and stripes as the flag of the republic. This was June 14th, 1777. One of the first things Jones did, on reaching his ship, was to hoist this new ensign. He always claimed to have been the first man to hoist the flag of 1775, in a national ship, and the first man to show the present ensign on board a man-of-war. This may be

true or not. There was a weakness about the character of the man that rendered him a little liable to self-delusions of this nature, and, while it is probable he was right as to the flag which was shown before Philadelphia, the town where Congress was sitting, it is by no means as reasonable to suppose that the first of the permanent flags was shown at a place as distant as Portsmouth. The circumstances are of no moment, except as they serve to betray a want of simplicity of character, that was rather a failing with the man, and his avidity for personal distinction of every sort.

The *Ranger* was not ready for sea before the 15th October. Even then her equipment was very imperfect, the vessel having but one suit of sails, and some of these were made of insufficient cloth. The ship was frigate built, like most of the sloops of that day, and was pierced for twenty-six guns; viz., eighteen below, and eight above. This number was furnished, but he rejected all but those for the main deck, mounting eighteen sixes. Even these guns he considered as three diameters of the bore too short. Of men he had enough, but his stores were very short, and it is a singular fact, that he could obtain but a barrel of rum for his whole crew. Under such difficulties, however, was the independence of this country obtained.

The *Ranger* sailed from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for France, Nov. 1st, 1777. This was the first time Jones had left America, or the American waters, since his arrival in Virginia, after the death of his brother. He still went to Europe in expectation of obtaining the Dutch-built frigate, intending to cruise in her, with the *Ranger* in company. On the 2d Dec. the

Ranger arrived at Nantes, having made two captures on the passage. She saw a convoy, but got nothing from it, and had a short chase with a two-decked ship. On all occasions, Jones represents his people, who were principally eastern men, as behaving well.

A severe disappointment awaited Jones on reaching France. Owing to the jealousy of England, the commissioners had found themselves under the necessity of transferring the ship building in Holland to the King of France; an arrangement which deprived them of all authority over her.\* Jones submitted to this defeat of his hopes with a moderation and good sense that are in his favor; thus proving, we think, that his many previous complaints were founded on just principles, in his own opinion at least, and not in querulousness of character, as has been sometimes alleged; for, in this case, the evil being unavoidable, he saw no good motive for quarrelling with fortune. He consoled himself with the

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\* The *Indien* was subsequently hired to the State of South Carolina, and had her name changed to that of the state. The negotiation was carried on through the agency of the Chevalier de Luxembourg. In his History of the Navy, the writer mentions his belief that this Chevalier de Luxembourg was not a sovereign prince, as has been supposed, but a member of the House of Montmorency. In an *Acte de famille* of this illustrious house, which was made in this century, we find these words—viz.:

“1731. The Duke of Chaillon had but one son, Charles Paul Sigismund, known by the name of Duke of Bouteville; who had an only son, Charles Anne de Montmorency-Luxembourg, Duke of Olonne. The Duke of Olonne had two sons, of which one, known as the *Chevalier de Luxembourg*, is dead without issue.”

There is no question that this Chevalier de Luxembourg is the person who hired the *Indien* to the State of South Carolina, *on shares*. As the ship had been given to the king, may not this have been a secret experiment in royal privateering?

knowledge that Congress thought him worthy of so important a trust, and says, "I can bear the disappointment with philosophy."

As soon as all hopes of getting another and better ship were abandoned, Jones took the *Ranger* round to Quiberon Bay, convoying some American vessels. Here he met the fleet of M. Le Motte Picquet, and opened a negotiation for a salute. His request was acceded to, and salutes were exchanged, not only with this distinguished officer, but, a few days later, with the Comte d'Orvillers, the commander-in-chief of the Brest fleet. In consequence of these proceedings, Jones claimed the honor of having received the first salute to the American flag, as he did that of having first hoisted the flag itself. It is certain he is mistaken as to the former of these claims, unless he means the particular flag adopted by Congress, June, 1777; for a serious difficulty occurred in consequence of a Dutch governor's having saluted an American vessel of war in the West Indies, the year previously. Still, the motive and the feeling were the same, and it was certainly a point gained to obtain a salute from a French commander-in-chief at the time mentioned.

While lying among the French ships, Jones seems to have had a good deal of communication with its flag officers. He even went so far as to submit certain plans to them for expeditions to America, a general war being now certain, and his projects show an active and fertile mind. These qualities, indeed, form the great and distinctive features of his character, one military scheme being no sooner disposed of than he turned his thoughts to another with untiring ingenuity.

April 10th, 1778, the *Ranger* again went to sea alone, Jones having relinquished all hope of doing any thing, for the present at least, without achieving it with his own limited means. It is usual to ascribe more credit to the great cruise that succeeded than to this of the *Ranger*, and yet Jones probably never showed more of his real character than in the enterprise which he now undertook. We shall first relate the events as they occurred, and then give a summary of their character and importance.

On the 14th, the *Ranger* took a vessel, loaded with flaxseed, and bound to Ireland. This prize secured, she shaped her course for St. George's Channel. Off Dublin she captured a London ship. The weather being favorable, Jones now determined to make a descent at Whitehaven, the place out of which he had first sailed, in order to destroy the shipping by fire. With this view, on the evening of the 18th, he was off the port, and, about ten at night, he was on the point of landing himself at the head of a party of volunteers, when the wind shifted, and began to blow so fresh, directly on shore, as to render the descent impracticable. The ship made sail to claw off the land.

The next day the *Ranger* chased a revenue wherry unsuccessfully, and, though the ship was disguised as a merchantman, it is thought the crew of the boat suspected her of being an enemy. It could not well be otherwise, indeed, since Jones, in his desire to get the boat, kept up a smart fire on her for some time. The next morning he found himself so near a coaster as to be compelled to sink her, in order to prevent the discovery of his presence. Another attempt inshore was



abandoned, the same day, on account of the state of the wind.

All this time Jones was close in with the land, visible from the shore, and looking into the different bays and roadsteads as he passed along the coast. One cutter he chased into the Clyde, going as high as the Rock of Ailsa, and he sunk a Dublin sloop, to prevent intelligence.

On the 20th, the *Ranger* was off Carrickfergus, and detained a fishing-boat that came alongside. A ship was at anchor in the road, which the prisoners said was the *Drake*, Capt. Burden, a vessel of about the size, armament and metal of the *Ranger*; though she is said to have carried two more guns. This was just such an opportunity as Jones wanted, and though he was alone on an enemy's coast, and might be said to be fighting with a halter round his neck, he at once resolved to attack his enemy at anchor, as soon as it was dark. That night, therefore, the *Ranger* stood in, with a strong breeze, with the intention of laying the *Drake* athwart hawse, grappling, and fighting it out. Owing to the darkness, however, and the anchor's hanging, the *Ranger* brought up about half a cable's length on the *Drake's* quarter, instead of the position desired, and Jones at once saw the expediency of abandoning the design. He ordered the cable cut, on the instant, so as to give the appearance of its having parted in snubbing, made sail, and began to beat out of the loch. As no warlike demonstration had yet been made, singular as it may seem, this was done without molestation from the *Drake*. It was Jones' intention to work to windward, and to renew the attempt the same night, but it blew so fresh that he was glad to get an offing on any

terms. The wind increased to a gale, and he stood over toward the coast of Scotland to find a lee.

As soon as the weather moderated, Jones determined to renew the attempt on Whitehaven. On the night of the 22d he got off that port again, though not as close in as he wished, in consequence of the lightness of the wind. At midnight he left the ship, having with him, in two boats, thirty-one volunteers. Day began to dawn just as the party reached the outer pier. Jones now divided his men. One party was sent, under Lieut. Wallingford, to set fire to the shipping on the north side of the harbor, while he went himself with the other to do the same on the south. There was a small fort on Jones' side, with a few men in it as a guard. He scaled the walls, found the men in the guard-house, where he secured them, and spiked the guns. Jones now took a single officer and went a distance of a quarter of a mile to another battery, the guns of which he also spiked.

On his return from the distant battery, Jones expected to find the ships on fire. So far from this, however, nothing material had been done. Mr. Wallingford had altogether abandoned his portion of the enterprise, the candle on which he relied having burnt out just as it was time to use it. The same accident had occurred on his own side of the harbor also. It was now broad daylight, and the alarm had been given, but Jones would not abandon his design. A candle was procured from a house, and a fire was kindled in the steerage of a large ship. As this vessel lay surrounded by a hundred and fifty or two hundred other craft, all high and dry, the tide being out, there is no question that

a good fire, fairly kindled, would have destroyed the whole.

The great object of Jones was now to repair the loss of time. The sun had risen, and the people of the place were already in motion, though confused and in alarm. The fire burnt but slowly, and search was made for combustibles to aid it. At length a barrel of tar was found and poured upon the flames. Jones then collected his men, and ordered them to embark from the end of the pier. By this time the inhabitants of the place were out in thousands, and some of the men ran towards the pier. Jones met the last with a presented pistol, ordering them off, at the risk of their lives. Such was the influence of courage and steadiness, that these men retreated, leaving the pier in possession of this handful of enemies. As the flames now burst out of the steerage and began to ascend the rigging, and the sun had been up an hour, Jones thought it prudent to retire. He had remained some time on the pier all alone, and embarked without molestation, though the eminences around were covered with spectators.

The boats retired without difficulty. Attempts were made to fire on them from the batteries, but the guns were all spiked. One or two pieces, however, had escaped, or, as Jones believed, ship's guns were dragged down upon the pier, and began to play upon the adventurers without effect. No person was injured in the affair, and only one man was missing. This person is supposed to have deserted, and to have given the alarm; such a man coming to several houses with the news that a ship had been set on fire. Nor was any material damage done to the shipping, the people of the place

succeeding in extinguishing the flames, before they reached the other vessels. Jones took three prisoners, whom he brought off as a sort of trophy.

The same day the *Ranger* crossed the Solway, and made a landing at St. Mary's Isle, where is the seat of the Earls of Selkirk. Jones had but a single boat on this occasion, and he landed again in person. His object was to seize Lord Selkirk, fancying that a prisoner of his rank might be useful in affecting the treatment of the Americans, who were then in the English prisons. Ascertaining, soon after he had landed, that Lord Selkirk was not at home, Jones returned to his boat. But the men complained of being again disappointed, and, after some discussion, their captain assented that they might go to the house and ask for plate. They were limited to accepting such as was offered. The truth is not to be concealed, that an officer was at the head of this party, but many of the officers of that period were men taken from trading vessels, and were actuated by motives that were little honorable to them. Lady Selkirk received the officers of this party herself, none of the men being suffered to enter the house. Some plate, valued at about £100,\* was delivered, and the party retired, doing no other harm.

In the present day, such an act would be entirely unjustifiable. No American officer would dare to be

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\* The connection of Jones, already mentioned, affirms that the value of the plate taken was more than \$5000. Our information was obtained from the present head of the house of Selkirk. Which is right, it is impossible to say, though it strikes us that the smaller sum is most likely to be the true one. If Jones actually paid £1000 sterling out of his own pocket, to redeem this plate, as Miss Taylor seems to think, it greatly enhances the merit of his sacrifices.

guilty of it openly; and it is to be hoped no one would wish to do it at all. Acts very similar to it, however, have been committed on our own coasts within the last thirty years, if not with the connivance of officers, at least in their presence. If we go back a century earlier, it was the common mode of warfare of the Drakes and other commanders of the English service. As it was, Jones was sensible of its unworthiness, and he subsequently purchased the plate and restored it to its owner. Owing to the difficulties of communication, nearly or quite ten years elapsed before Lord Selkirk actually recovered his property, but he acknowledges that he got it at last, and expressed his satisfaction with the course pursued by Jones.

A letter written by Jones to Lady Selkirk, on this occasion, has been often published, and has been greatly praised. It has much of the exaggerated and false taste of the writer, while it shows creditable sentiments. Its great fault is a want of simplicity, a defect that seems to have pervaded Jones' character. That Jones committed a fault in allowing the plunder at all is undeniable, though he seems to have yielded solely to a temporary expedient, reserving to himself the intention to repair the wrong at the earliest occasion. Sordid he was not; and admitting the redemption to have been an after-thought even, there is no reason for believing that he was any way influenced by a wish to make money. With such an end in view, a man of his enterprise would scarcely have limited his efforts to accepting the little plate that was offered. He would have stripped the house.

The landing at St. Mary's Isle occurred on the 23d

April, and the following morning the *Ranger* once more appeared off Carrickfergus, where Jones saw symptoms that the *Drake* was preparing to come out. That the character of the American ship was not known, however, is clear from the fact that the *Drake* sent a boat out to reconnoitre. This boat was decoyed alongside, and her officer and crew captured. From his prisoners Jones ascertained that intelligence of what had occurred at Whitehaven reached Carrickfergus the previous night, and no doubt was entertained that the ship which had appeared off the one place was the vessel that had made the attempt on the *Drake* in the other. The latter vessel had weighed the lost anchor of the *Ranger*; and it was now ascertained that she had received many volunteers on board, and was coming out in quest of her enemy. The only doubt, therefore, which could exist among the English was whether the vessel now in the offing was the same as that which had made the two previous attempts.

When the *Drake* got under way, she was accompanied by several boats filled with persons who were disposed to be witnesses of the action. Jones hove-to and waited for his enemy, amid a scene that might well have disturbed the self-confidence of a man of less fortitude. He was in the narrow waters of the most powerful naval power on earth, with the three kingdoms in plain view. Alarm smokes were raised on each side of the channel, in great numbers, showing that his foes were up and doing. He had already given occasion for extraordinary activity, and an enemy that had enjoyed time to get perfectly ready, and which, to say the least, was always his equal in force, was coming out from her

moorings purposely to engage him. This, according to a favorite expression of Jones himself, was literally going into "harm's way."

The tide was not favorable, and the English ship came out very slowly. The Ranger's drift was to windward, and her helm was put up several times, in order to run down toward her enemy, when she would throw her main-top-sail aback, and lie with her courses in the brails. As soon as the amateurs ascertained that the boat which was towing astern of the strange ship was that sent out by the Drake, they all bore up and ran back into the loch. At length, long after the turn of the day, the English ship succeeded in weathering the headland, and was enabled to lay a straight course into the offing. She now set her colors, and the Ranger showed what it was then the fashion of England to call the "rebel flag." Jones filled and stood off the land, under easy canvas, to lead his enemy out mid-channel: The Drake followed, gradually closing, until she got within hail.

Jones had at length gained his point, and was in momentary expectation of commencing an action with an enemy's ship of equal force. While he awaited her fire, he was hailed, with a demand to know who and what he was. The answer was given by the master, under Jones' direction—"This is the American continental ship Ranger," he said; "we wait for you, and beg you will come on. The sun is little more than an hour high, and it is time to begin." This cool invitation was scarcely given before the Ranger fell broad off and delivered her fire. The Drake answered this attack, the two ships closing and running off before a

light wind. It was soon apparent that the *Ranger* was getting the best of it; her adversary's spars and sails beginning to suffer. Still the action was animated and well maintained for just one hour and four minutes, when the *Drake* called out for quarter; her ensign having been previously shot away.

This battle was fairly fought, side by side, and the victory not only gallantly but neatly won. Jones states, in his account of the cruise, that no one on board the *Drake* placed her people, including the volunteers, at less than one hundred and sixty, while some admitted there must have been one hundred and ninety souls on board. He estimated the loss of the *Drake*, in killed and wounded, at forty-two, though this exceeds the English statement by nearly half. The volunteers must have rendered the official account of the English very problematical, and there was somewhat of conjecture in that of Jones. Captain Burden fell by a musket-shot in the head, though he was found alive on taking possession of the prize. The English first lieutenant, also, was mortally wounded. The *Drake's* fore and main-topsail-yards were both down on the cap—main-top-gallant yard and gaff were hanging up and down, the jib was in the water, and, otherwise, the ship had sustained much injury aloft.

The *Ranger* suffered far less. She had two men killed and six wounded. Mr. Wallingford, the lieutenant who landed at Whitehaven, was one of the former, and a seaman among the wounded subsequently died. The gunner was hurt, and Mr. Powers, a midshipman, lost an arm. Jones remarks, in one of his letters, that he gave the dead a "spacious grave."



The weather continued good, and the repairs proceeded actively. At first Jones intended to steer the direct course for France, but the wind coming foul, he changed his purpose, and passed up channel again. The evening of the 25th, or that of the day after the engagement, the two ships were off the bay of Belfast, once more, and here Jones dismissed the fishermen he had taken. He gave them a boat, money, and other necessaries, and lent them a sail of the Drake's, as a hint to those ashore concerning the fate of that vessel.

On the 8th of May, the *Ranger*, with the *Drake* in company, arrived safely at Brest. Some bad weather had been encountered on the passage, but no event worthy of being mentioned occurred, unless it be that Jones felt himself bound to arrest his first lieutenant, Simpson, for disobedience of orders, in managng the prize. This affair gave him a good deal of trouble subsequently, though nothing of serious moment grew out of it. The *Ranger* appears to have been well manned but badly officered, as would be likely to happen with a vessel fitted in an eastern American port, at that early day.

A great sensation was produced by this cruise of the *Ranger*. It lasted but twenty-eight days; only one week passed between the arrival off the Isle of Man and the action with the *Drake*. Every hour of this time was passed in ceaseless activity. One enterprise was no sooner ended than another was begun. The reader has only to cast an eye at the map, to understand the boldness with which the ship moved. Her audacity probably caused her impunity, for there was scarcely a more critical position, as to mere localities, in

the narrow seas, than that into which Jones carried her. It is true, he knew every foot of the way, but he must have known the dangers of his path, as well as its disadvantages. The attempt on Whitehaven betokened a military mind, though it would scarcely be justified under any other principles of hostility than those so much in vogue with the English themselves. It was merited retaliation, and only failed through the incompetence of subordinates. Throughout the whole of this cruise, indeed, Jones displayed the highest species of courage; that of justly appreciating his own resources, and of not exaggerating dangers, a union of spirit and judgment that ever produces the best commanders.

Jones has been censured for having selected the region of his birth as the scene of his exploits. While it has been admitted that he had a perfect moral and political right to espouse the cause of his adopted country, it has been urged that he ought to have refrained from selecting, as the scene of his exploits, the very port out of which he had formerly sailed. We apprehend that this is the reasoning of a sickly and superficial sentimentality, rather than of healthful sentiment. Had he captured and destroyed fifty sail belonging to Whitehaven, at sea, nothing would have been thought of the occurrence; but to destroy the same, or any other number, in their port is ranked as an error, and by some it is classed with crimes! Others have even fancied that a desire to revenge himself for imaginary wrongs led him to the coast of Scotland, and to Whitehaven, and that, under the pretence of serving public interests, he was, in truth, avenging private griefs. A calm consideration of the facts will show the injustice of these charges.

Jones was ordered to France. He was ordered to cruise against England, on the English coast. In this latter particular, he followed the precedents of Wickes and Conyngham. In selecting the scene of his exploits, he went into a sea with which he was familiar, an immense advantage of itself, and one, in a military point of view, he would have been censurable for neglecting, under the circumstances. If it were justifiable to retaliate for the enemy's burnings, it was proper to do so under the greatest advantages, and at the least risk to those employed on the service, and this could be done but by the greatest intimacy with the localities. To say that an officer is not to turn his knowledge to account in this way, because it was acquired under the sanction of ordinary intercourse and a state of peace, is like saying that Jones should not use the knowledge of navigation acquired in an English school to the injury of an English vessel. If he had a right to bear arms at all, in such a contest, he had a perfect right to use all the means practiced in civilized warfare, in effecting his objects.

That private feelings were kept out of view, in this short but brilliant cruise, is seen from the fact that no injury was done, or attempted on shore, when the means offered. It would have been as easy to set fire to the house, on St. Mary's Isle, as to carry off the plate. The shipping alone was fired at Whitehaven, and generally the conduct of Jones showed a spirit of generous hostility, rather than one of vindictive resentment. In a civil war, men must thus use the local information acquired in youth, or neglect their duties. No class of warriors do this more than sailors, who con-

stantly avail themselves of knowledge obtained in the confidence of friendly intercourse to harass their enemies. It is proper to add that the letter of Jones to Lady Selkirk, apologizing for taking the plate, was dated the day the *Ranger* anchored at Brest.

The cruise of the *Ranger* brought Jones much reputation. Still he had many causes of complaint, being greatly in want of funds. His difficulties were, in truth, the difficulties of the country and the times, rather than of any intention to harass him. He was fortunate enough to make many important friends, and was much caressed in the naval circles of Brest. His recent success gave a species of authority to his bold opinions, and it was not long ere various schemes were entertained for employing him on other expeditions against the enemy. The Duc de Chartres, afterward the celebrated Egalité, interested himself to obtain the *Indien*, still, for Jones, the ship being then at the disposal of the King of France. All Jones' projects had a far-sighted reach, as was shown in his wish to burn the shipping at Whitehaven, which he says would have greatly distressed Ireland for coal. Some of his schemes were directed to convoys, others to the destruction of shipping, and some again to descents on the coast. Even Franklin entertained the hope of getting possession of the *Indien* for him, after all; a plan for which was actually arranged with the French Minister of Marine. An exchange of prisoners was agreed on, with a view to man the vessel, one of the important results which attended the late cruise. It is an evidence how much the public appreciated that cruise, that the Prince of Nassau, an

officer who subsequently caused Jones much trouble, had an idea of sailing under his orders.

The breaking out of the war between England and France defeated many of Jones' hopes, though it rendered the connection of the Americans with the latter country much more simple than it had been. Holland objected to giving up the *Indien*, and thus put an end to all his expectations from that quarter. To increase his vexations, the difficulty with his first lieutenant remained unsettled, notwithstanding his own efforts to obtain a court-martial, it being the opinion of the commissioners and others, that Jones had himself released his subordinate from arrest in a way that precluded a trial. This matter terminated by Simpson's sailing for America, in command of the *Ranger*, leaving Jones in France to push his projects of higher aim.

For some time, Jones expected to receive different frigates from the French Minister, which were to serve under the American flag. Many difficulties arose to disappoint him, until all the various plans were concluded by the scheme actually adopted. As this enterprise was connected with the great action of Jones' life, it is necessary to explain it a little in detail.

M. Le Ray, a banker of Paris much connected with America, and who, from owning the estate of Chaumont, was styled Le Ray de Chaumont, had taken an active part in Jones' plans. Under his direction, an arrangement, or *concordat*, to the following effect was made. The French officers employed were to receive American commissions for the cruise, and rank and command were to be according to seniority. This provision left Jones at the head of the squadron, he being

the oldest American captain connected with the expedition. Succession was provided for, with the exception of the command of the *Cerf*, a cutter, the first lieutenant of which craft was to succeed his own captain, in the event of his removal or loss. The distribution of prize money was to be in the proportions regulated by the laws of the two countries, respectively, and the prizes were to be sent in to the order of M. Le Ray.

In addition to the express provisions of this *concordat*, which was signed by all the commanders and M. Le Ray, it was understood that the latter, as apparent agent of the King of France, should furnish certain vessels, which were to revert to their former owners after the cruise, and that the American commissioners were to order the *Alliance*, a new frigate which had recently come to Europe, to join the squadron.

There is still something mysterious about the character of this celebrated expedition. There is no doubt that Jones believed that he was to be fairly employed as a naval captain of an allied power, in command against the common enemy, in conformity with the ordinary practice on such occasions; but it is by no means certain that this was his real position. It is true, that the commissioners gave legality to the enterprise, but there are certain reasons for thinking that private cupidity may have had more connection with it than is usual with public measures. Intrigue was so common and so elaborate in France, that one is hardly safe in forming any precise opinion under the circumstances, though nothing is more apparent than the fact that Jones' squadron was not composed of ships of war belonging to France, united with ships of war belonging

to America, in order to carry out the purposes of ordinary warfare. Still, most of the expense appears to have been borne by the French government, and joint orders were received from the public functionaries of the two countries. Jones had a strong distaste for the *concordat*, which probably gave the whole affair too much of the character of a privateering compact, and he subsequently declared that he would not have signed it, had it not been presented at the last moment, by M. Le Ray, himself, under circumstances that rendered a refusal difficult.

Under the arrangement made, a squadron was finally, though very imperfectly, equipped. It contained five vessels, or three frigates, a brig, and a cutter. The ships were the Duke of Duras, the Alliance, and the Pallas; the brig was called the Vengeance, and the cutter the Cerf, or Stag. Of all these crafts, but two were regularly constructed for war, the Alliance 32, and the Stag 12. The Alliance was an exceedingly fast American-built ship of the class of large thirty-twos. All the other vessels were French.

After all his delays and disappointments, Jones could get no better vessel for his own pennant than the Duc de Duras, an Indiaman, then fourteen years old. She proved in the end to be both dull and rotten, though she was purchased as fast and sound. She was a long, single-decked ship, and was pierced for twenty-eight guns on her main-deck. Her armament was intended for eighteens. This would have placed her about on a level, as to force, with the English thirty-eights of that day, supposing that she carried ten or twelve light guns on her quarter-deck and fore-castle. The eighteens

were yet to be cast, however, and failing to appear, Jones put twelves in their places. To supply this material deficiency, he caused twelve ports to be cut in the gun-room, or below, where he mounted six eighteens, intending to fight them all on one side in smooth water. Eight nines and sixes were placed above, making a total armament of forty-two guns; or of twenty-four in broadside, supposing the six eighteens to be fought together. Three hundred and eighty souls composed her crew. The last was a motley set, including natives of nearly every known maritime Christian nation, and having no less than one hundred and thirty of them enlisted in the character of soldiers.

The Alliance had an ordinary American crew, while the other vessels appear to have been purely French. To render the whole more incongruous, however, the Alliance had a Frenchman for a captain; a person of the name of Landais, whom Congress had appointed in compliment to its new ally. M. Landais had been educated in the navy of his native country, but had left it in consequence of an irascible temper, that was constantly getting him into trouble, and which proved to be of great disservice to this expedition in the end. Some persons even called his sanity in question.

Jones found a few native Americans of whom to make sea officers and petty officers for the Duc de Duras, but he mentions in one of his statements that altogether they did not exceed thirty. He changed the name of his vessel, however, to the Goodman Richard, or le Bon Homme Richard, in compliment to Franklin, as near an approach to nationality as that circumstance would well allow.



This motley squadron sailed from Groix, June 19th, 1779, or more than a year after Jones' return from his cruise in the *Ranger*. All that precious time had been wasted in endeavoring to obtain a command. The first object was to convoy some vessels southward, which duty was successfully performed. An accident occurred, however, by means of which the *Alliance* ran into the *Richard*, injuring both vessels so much as to render it necessary to return to port. The vessels separated, by orders, to do this, leaving the *Richard* alone for a day or two. While thus situated, two English cruisers were made, and Jones offered battle, but it is supposed the enemy mistook him for a ship of the line, as they carried a press of canvas to escape. The occurrence is of no importance, except to show that the people of the *Richard* were ready to fight; Jones praising the alacrity they manifested.

The rottenness of the old Indiaman does not appear to have been discovered until after she got back to the roads of Groix, in order to be repaired. While the work was in progress, a court-martial sat, and broke the first lieutenant of the *Richard*. About this time, a cartel arrived at Nantes, bringing in more than a hundred exchanged American seamen, from Mill prison. A short time before this exchange was made, Mr. Richard Dale, late a master's mate of the U. S. brig *Lexington*, had made his escape from the same prison, and had joined Jones in his old capacity. This gentleman, a native of Virginia, and subsequently the well-known naval captain of his name, was now made first lieutenant of the *Richard* by Jones, who had blank commissions by him. The men of the cartel were ap-

plied to, and many of them entered, thus giving the Richard a respectable body of Americans to help to sustain the honor of the flag she wore. Among the exchanged prisoners were two gentlemen of the name of Lunt, both natives of New Hampshire, and distant relatives. Henry Lunt was made second lieutenant of the Richard, while Cutting Lunt, his kinsman, is sometimes called the third lieutenant, and sometimes the master. Both these officers were respectable men, and appear to have given Jones satisfaction, until adverse circumstances deprived him of their services. In consequence of this arrangement, it is believed that every quarter-deck sea-officer of the Richard was a native American, Jones himself and one midshipman excepted.

It is a proof of the native goodness of Jones' heart, that, while lying at l'Orient, surrounded by perplexities, he sent a bill for £30 to his relatives in Scotland. This was not his only remittance, by several; and, as money was far from being plenty with him in that day, they show the strength of his affections, and his desire to serve his sisters.

When all was ready to go out again, two privateers, the Monsieur and the Grandeville, put themselves under Jones' orders, raising his force to seven sail. As the Monsieur was frigate-built, and carried forty guns, her junction was thought a matter of no slight importance.

On the 10th August, Jones issued some general orders to his captains, laying great stress on the point of not parting company; the commonest of all embarrassments with an irregular force at sea. The Richard had not proved a fast ship: the Pallas, a light 20 gun

ship, was decidedly dull, having also been built for a merchantman; the Vengeance was barely respectable, while the Cerf was every way a noble cutter, though of trifling force. The Alliance, one of the fastest ships that ever floated, had been badly ballasted by Mons. Landais, on some philosophical principles of his own, and lost her qualities for that cruise. Such, then, was the character of the force, with which Jones once more ventured into the narrow seas, in quest of glory.

The orders under which Jones sailed on his next and most remarkable cruise, directed him to go to the westward of Scilly, and to pass the west coast of Ireland, doubling the extremity of Scotland, and remaining some time on the Dogger Bank. By returning to his port of departure, this would have been making the complete circuit of Great Britain and Ireland, most of the time keeping the land aboard. The instructions, however, ordered him to put into the Texel for further orders. It was understood that this last destination was pointed out in the hope of putting the *Indien* under Jones, that ship still remaining in Holland, in a species of political durance. She was not released, until England declared war against Holland, when the arrangement was made with South Carolina, as already mentioned.

The squadron left the roads of Groix, the second time, early on the morning of August 15th, 1779. One day out, it recaptured a large Dutch ship, laden with French property. In consequence of some misunderstanding with the commander of the *Monsieur*, which grew out of the disposition of this prize, that ship separated from the other vessels, which saw her

no more. The *Monsieur* was subsequently captured by the enemy, and, as is believed, on this cruise. On the 20th, a brig, from Limerick to London, was taken, and ordered in.

The 23d, the squadron was off Cape Clear, having doubled Scilly, and passed up the west coast of England, in the intervening time. Here it fell calm, and Jones sent several of the *Richard's* boats to seize a brig that was lying some distance to the north-west. As evening approached, he found it necessary to place his own barge in the water, containing a cockswain and six men, to keep the ship's head off shore. The brig was captured, and towed toward the squadron. Just at this moment, the men in the barge cut the tow-line, and pulled for the shore. Several shots were fired at the fugitives, but without effect. Seeing this, Mr. Cutting Lunt, who appears to have been with the prize, took four soldiers in a boat, and pursued the deserters, becoming lost in a fog. The *Richard* fired guns, as signals to the master, but he never returned. Counting himself, there were seventeen persons in his boat, making a total loss to the *Richard*, including the fugitives, of twenty-four men. It is now known that, on the morning of the 23d, (civil time,) the seven men landed at Ballinskellix, in the county of Kerry, and that the other boat landed at the same place, the same day, about one, in pursuit. Mr. Lunt and his people were arrested, and sent to Mill prison. Jones intimates that he understood his master died in that place of confinement, but, in this, he was misinformed. Mr. Lunt was liberated, in the course of a year or two, and was subsequently lost at sea. This was Cutting Lunt. it will

be remembered; his kinsman, Henry Lunt, still remaining in the ship, as her second lieutenant. Through the reports of the deserters and prisoners, the character of the squadron, which was plainly visible as soon as the fog dispersed, became known on shore, and its presence created great uneasiness. The linen ships were supposed to be Jones' object, and precautions were taken accordingly. It is worthy of remark, that Jones states, the master saw the *Cerf*, inshore, whither she had been sent to reconnoitre, and to look for the missing boats, but the cutter showed English colors, and fired at the boat, which induced Mr. Lunt to land, as a last resort. To add to the misfortune, the cutter herself got separated in the fog, and did not rejoin the squadron.

It was at this time, that Jones had a serious quarrel with his second in command, M. Landais. Insubordination soon began seriously to show itself; the conduct of the *Cerf* being very unaccountable. She went back to France. It is probable that the loss of so many men induced the French officers to distrust the fidelity of the *Richard's* crew; and it is known that this distrust influenced the conduct of the *Pallas*, on a most trying occasion, a few weeks later. On the 26th, the *Grandeville* was sent in, with a prize. This reduced the force of the squadron to four vessels, viz., the *Richard*, *Alliance*, *Pallas*, and *Vengeance*.

It was the intention of Jones to remain a week longer off Cape Clear, but Capt. Landais seemed so apprehensive of the approach of a superior force, that he yielded to the opinion of his subordinate. On the 26th, it blowed fresh; the commodore accordingly made the

signal to stand to the northward, the Alliance parting company the same night. On the 31st, the Richard, Pallas, and Vengeance, were off Cape Wrath, the north-western extremity of the island of Great Britain, where the former captured a heavy Letter-of-Marque, of twenty-two guns, laden with naval stores for the enemy's vessels on the American lakes. While this ship was chasing, the Alliance hove in sight, and joined in the chase, having another Letter-of-Marque in company, a prize. These two ships were manned from the Alliance, at Landais' request; and the latter sent them into Norway, contrary to orders, where both were restored to the English by the Danish government. On the night of the 8th, the Alliance again parted company, in a gale of wind.

Jones kept well off the land, the weather being thick, and the wind foul. On the 13th, however, the Cheviot Hills, in the south-eastern part of Scotland, became visible, and the commodore now seriously set about the execution of some of his larger plans. His intention was to land at Leith, the port of Edinburgh itself, and, not only to lay the place under contribution, but to seize the shipping he might find in the Forth. He had hopes that even the Scottish capital might be frightened into a temporary submission. This was a highly characteristic project, and one worthy of the military audacity of the man. Its great merit, in addition to its boldness and importance, was its strong probability of success. The late Com. Dale, who was to act a most important part in the enterprise, and who was a man of singular simplicity and moderation of character and temperament, assured the writer that he

never could see any reason why the attack should have been defeated, beyond the obstacle that actually arose. Jones himself intimates that his two *colleagues*, present, (for so he bitterly styled his captains, in consequence of the terms of the *concordat*,) threw cold water on his views, until he pointed out to them the probable amount of the contributions of two such places as Leith and Edinburgh. A delay occurred, moreover, in consequence of the momentary absence of the *Pallas* and *Vengeance*, which vessels had given chase to the southward, a circumstance that compelled the *Richard* to quit the Forth, after she had entered it alone, and this at a moment when she might have secured a twenty-gun ship and two cutters, all of which were lying in Leith roads, unsuspecting of danger; though it would have compelled him to abandon the other and principal objects of the attempt. In order to join his consorts, and consult his captains, therefore, Jones was compelled to quit the Forth, after having once entered it. It appears he had found a man ready to give him information, but the golden opportunity was lost, in consequence of the doubts and misgivings of his subordinates.

Still Jones determined to make the attempt. On the 15th, the *Richard*, *Pallas*, and *Vengeance*, entered the Forth in company, turning up with the tide, against a head wind. By this time the alarm had been given on shore, and guns were mounted at Leith, to receive the strangers. A cutter had been watching the squadron for several hours, also; but Jones deemed all this immaterial. The ships had got up as high as Inchkeith, the island which shelters the roads seaward, and the boats were in the water and manned. Mr. Dale, who was to

superintend and command the maritime part of the debarkation, had received his instructions, and was on the point of descending into his boat, when a squall struck the ships, and induced an order to take the people from the boats, to clue up and clue down. Jones held on against the wind as long as he found it possible, but, the squall turning to a gale, he was compelled to bear up before it, and was driven out of the Frith again, at a much faster rate than he had entered it. The gale was short, but so severe that one of the prizes in company foundered. It moderated in the afternoon, but Jones having plainly seen the cutter watching him, conceived it too late to hope for a surprise, his only rational ground for expecting success.

It is a proof how much doubt existed concerning the true character of Jones' vessels, among the people on shore, that a member of parliament sent off, to the Richard, a messenger, to ask for powder and shot; stating that he had heard Paul Jones was on the coast, and that he wished to be ready for him. A barrel of powder was sent in answer, but the "honorable gentleman" was told the vessel had no shot of the size he requested. On this occasion, the ships were seen turning up the Forth, as they stood in quite near to the north shore, and, it being Sunday, thousands were out viewing the scene, which caused a great clamor, and made a deep impression.\*

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\* The Edinburgh Review, in an article on Cooper's History of the Navy, which has been pretty effectually answered, gives its readers reason to suppose that Jones' appearance on the coast produced no uneasiness. Sir Walter Scott told the writer he well remembered the feeling excited by this event, and that it was widespread and general. As Scott was born in 1769, his recollection might be relied on.



Jones had now fresh projects to annoy the enemy; designs on Hull or Newcastle, as is thought. His captains, however, refused to sustain him, and he was reluctantly obliged to abandon his plans. His object was glory; theirs appears to have been profit. It ought to be mentioned, that all the young officers sustained the commodore, and professed a readiness to follow wherever he would lead. Jones had a respect for the opinion of Capt. Cottineau, of the *Pallas*, and it is believed he yielded more to his persuasions than to those of all the rest of his commanders. This officer seemed to think any delay of moment would bring a superior force against them. The commodore viewed the matter more coolly, well knowing that the transmission of intelligence, and the collection of three or four vessels, was a matter that required some little time.

Between the 17th and 21st, many colliers and coasters were captured. Most of them were sunk, though one or two were released, and a sloop was ransomed by the *Pallas*, contrary to orders. On the latter day, the ships were off Flamborough Head, where the *Pallas* chased to the north-east, leaving the *Richard* and *Vengeance* in pursuit of vessels in a directly opposite quarter. Jones overtook and sunk a collier, late in the afternoon. Several craft then hove in sight, and one was chased ashore. Soon after, a brig from Holland was captured, and, at daylight, next morning, a considerable fleet was seen inshore, which kept aloof, on account of the appearance of the *Bon Homme Richard*. Finding it impossible to decoy them out, Jones used some artifices to delude a pilot, and two boats came alongside.

The pilots were deceived, and gave Jones all the information they possessed.

As it was now impracticable to bring the shipping out of the Humber, on account of the state of the wind and tide, and the Pallas not being in sight, the commodore turned his attention to looking for his consorts. He hauled off the land, therefore, making the best of his way back to Flamborough Head, after passing several hours in endeavoring to entice the ships out of the Humber.

In the course of the night of the 22d, two ships were seen, and chased for several hours, when, finding himself near them, Jones hove-to, about three in the morning, waiting for light. When the day returned, the strangers were found to be the Pallas and the Alliance; the latter of which had not been seen since she parted company off Cape Wrath.

After communicating with his consorts, Jones chased a brig that was lying-to to windward. About meridian, however, a large ship was observed coming round Flamborough Head, when Mr. Henry Lunt, the second lieutenant of the Richard, was thrown into one of the pilot boats, with fifteen men, and ordered to seize the brig, while the Richard made sail toward the strange ship. Soon after, a fleet of forty-one sail was seen stretching out from behind the Head, bearing N. N. E. from the Richard. The wind was light at the southward, and these vessels were a convoy from the Baltic, turning down the North Sea, towards the Straits of Dover, bound to London. This placed Jones to windward and a little in shore, if the projection of the headland be excepted.

As soon as the commodore ascertained that he was in the vicinity of this fleet, he made a signal of recall to the pilot boat, and another of a general chase to his squadron. The first was probably unseen or disregarded, for it was not obeyed: and the officer and men in the pilot boat remained out of their vessel during most of the trying scenes of that eventful day. As twenty-four officers and men had been captured, or had deserted, off Cape Clear, these sixteen increased the number of absentees to forty; if to these we add some who had been sent away in prizes, the crew of the *Richard*, which consisted of but three hundred and eighty, all told, the day she sailed, was now diminished to little more than three hundred souls, of whom a large proportion were the *quasi* marines, or soldiers, who had entered for the cruise.

Jones now crossed royal yards and made sail for the convoy. He had intelligence of this fleet, and knew that it was under the charge of Capt. Pearson, of the *Serapis* 44, who had the *Countess of Scarborough* 20, Capt. Piercy, in company. As the scene we are about to relate is one memorable in naval annals, it may be well to mention the force of the vessels engaged.

That of the *Richard* has been already given. The *Pallas* mounted thirty guns, of light calibre, and was perhaps more than a third heavier than the *Scarborough*, the vessel she subsequently engaged. The *Alliance* was a large thirty-two, mounting forty guns, mostly twelve pounders. She had a full, but indifferent crew of about 300 souls, when she left the Roads of Groix, of which near, if not quite, fifty were absent in prizes.

Of the *Vengeance*, which had no part in the events of the day, it is unnecessary to speak.

On the part of the enemy, many of the convoy were armed, and, by acting in concert, they might have given a good deal of occupation to the *Pallas* and *Vengeance*, while the two men-of-war fought the *Richard* and *Alliance*. As it was, however, all of these ships sought safety in flight. The *Serapis* was a new vessel, that both sailed and worked well, of a class that was then a good deal used in the North Sea, Baltic, and the narrow waters generally; and which was sometimes brought into the line, in battles between the short ships that were much preferred, in that day, in all the seas mentioned. She was a 44, on two decks; having an armament below of 20 eighteens; one of 20 nines, on the upper gun-deck; and one of 10 sixes, on her quarter-deck and fore-castle. This is believed to have been her real force, though Jones speaks of her, in one place, as having been pierced for 56 instead of 50 guns. The former was the usual force of what was called a fifty-gun ship, or a vessel like the *Leander*, which assailed the *Chesapeake* in 1807. Sands, the most original writer of authority on the subject of Paul Jones, or of any reasoning powers of much weight, infers from some of his calculations and information that the *Serapis* had 400 souls on board her at the commencement of the action which is now to be related. The English accounts state her crew to have been 320; a number that is quite sufficient for her metal and spars, and which is more in conformity with the practice of the English marine. The *Indiamen*, stated by Sands to have been obtained by Capt. Pearson, in Copenhagen, may have

been 15 Lascars, who are known to have been on board, and to have been included in the 320 souls. It is not probable that the crews of the *Richard* and *Serapis* differed a dozen in number. The *Countess of Scarborough* was a hired ship in the British navy, differing in no respect from a regular man-of-war, except in the circumstance that she belonged to a private owner instead of the king. This was not unusual in that marine, the circumstance being rather in favor of the qualities of the vessel, since the admiralty, on the coast of England, would not be likely to hire any but a good ship. Her officers and people belonged to the navy, as a matter of course. There is a trifling discrepancy as to the force of the *Scarborough*, though the point is of no great moment, under the circumstances. Jones states that she was a ship mounting 24 guns on *one* deck, while other accounts give her armament as 22 guns in all. She probably had a crew of from 120 to 150 men.

As soon as the leading English vessels saw that strangers, and probably enemies, were to the southward, and to windward, they gave the alarm, by firing guns, letting fly their top-gallant sheets, tacking together, and making the best of their way in toward the land again. At this moment the men-of-war were astern, with a view to keep the convoy in its place; and being near the shore, the authorities of *Scarborough* had sent a boat off to the *Serapis*, to apprise her commander of the presence of Paul Jones' fleet. By these means, the two senior officers were fully aware with whom they had to contend. Capt. Pearson fired two guns, and showed the proper signals, in order to call in his leading ships,

but, as is very customary with merchant vessels, the warning and orders were unattended to, until the danger was seen to be pressing. While the merchantmen were gathered in behind the Head, or ran off to leeward, the Serapis signaled the Scarborough to follow, and stood gallantly out to sea, on the starboard tack, hugging the wind.

Jones now threw out a signal to his own vessels to form the line of battle. The Alliance, which ought to have dropped in astern of the Richard, paid no attention to this order, though she approached the enemy to reconnoitre. In passing the Pallas, Capt. Landais remarked that if the larger of the enemy's ships proved to be a fifty-gun ship, all they had to do was to endeavor to escape! This was not the best possible disposition with which to commence the action. Soon after the Pallas spoke the Richard, and asked for orders. Jones directed her to lead toward the enemy, but the order was not obeyed, as will be seen by what followed.

The wind being light, several hours passed before the different evolutions mentioned could be carried into execution. As soon as Capt. Pearson found himself outside of all his convoy, and the latter out of danger, he tacked in shore, with a view to cover the merchantmen. This change of course induced Jones to ware and carry sail, with a view to cut him off from the land. By this time it was evening, and this sudden change of course, on the part of the Serapis, seems to have given rise to a distrust, on the part of Capt. Cottineau, of the Pallas, concerning the control she was under. There were so many disaffected men in the Richard, English and other Europeans, that the security of the

ship appears to have been a matter of doubt among all the other vessels. When those on board the *Pallas*, therefore, perceived the *Richard* crowding sail inshore, they believed Jones was killed by his own people, and that the mutineers had run away with the ship, intending to carry her into a British port. With this impression, Capt. Cottineau hauled his wind, tacked, and laid the *Pallas*' head off shore. In consequence of this manœuvre, and of the *Vengeance*'s being far astern, nothing like a line was formed on this occasion.

Jones' object was to cut his enemy off from the land. Keeping this in view, he pressed down in the *Richard*, regardless of his consorts, passing the *Alliance* lying-to, out of gun-shot, on the weather quarter of the principal English ship. It was now dark, but Jones watched his enemy with a night-glass, and perceiving that he could cut off the *Serapis* from getting under the guns of Scarborough Castle, he continued to approach the Englishman under a press of sail. Soon after the *Pallas* wore round and followed. The *Vengeance* had directions to order the pilot-boat back, and then to pick up the convoy; but as these last were inshore, and tolerably safe, she seems to have done little, or nothing. In the action that ensued, she took no part whatever.

It was half-past seven, or eight o'clock, when the *Richard* and *Serapis* drew near to each other. The former was to windward, both vessels being on the larboard tack. The *Serapis* hailed, demanding "What ship is that?" "I can't hear what you say," was returned from the *Richard*. "What ship is that?" repeated the Englishman—"answer immediately, or I shall be under the necessity of firing into you." The

Richard now delivered her broadside, which was returned from the Serapis so promptly as to render the two discharges nearly simultaneous. In an instant, the two ships were enveloped in smoke and darkness. The Richard backed her topsails, in order to deaden her way and keep her station to windward. She then filled, and passed ahead of the Serapis, crossing her bows, becalming the Serapis partially. The latter was a short ship, and worked quick. She was, moreover, a good sailer, and Capt. Pearson keeping his luff, as soon as his canvas filled again, he came up on the weather quarter of Jones, taking the wind out of his sails; both vessels fighting the other broadsides, or using the starboard guns of the Serapis and the larboard of the Richard. It will be remembered that the Richard had six eighteens mounted in her gun-room. As the water was smooth, Jones relied greatly on the service of this battery, which, in fact, was his principal dependence with an adversary like the Serapis. Unfortunately two of these old, defective pieces burst at the first discharge, blowing up the main-deck above them, beside killing and wounding many men. The alarm was so great as to destroy all confidence in these guns, which made but eight discharges in all, when their crews abandoned them. This, in addition to the actual damage done, was a most serious disadvantage. It reduced the Richard's armament at once to 32 guns, or, as some authorities say, to 34; leaving her with the metal of a 32 gun frigate, to contend with a full-manned and full-armed 44. The combat, now, was in fact between an eighteen-pounder and a twelve-pounder ship; an inequality of metal, to say nothing of that in guns,



that seemed to render the chance of the *Richard* nearly hopeless.

Half an hour was consumed in these preliminary evolutions, the wind being light, and the vessels nearly stationary a part of the time. When the *Richard* first approached her adversary, it will be remembered she was quite alone, the *Vengeance* having been left leagues behind, the *Alliance* lying-to, out of gun-shot, to windward, and the *Pallas* not bearing up until her commander had ascertained there was no mutiny on board the commodore, by seeing him commence the action. All this time the *Countess of Scarborough* was coming up, and she now closed so near as to be able to assist her consort. The Americans affirm that this ship did fire at least one raking broadside at the *Richard*, doing her some injury. On the other hand, Capt. Piercy, her commander, states that he was afraid to engage, as the smoke and obscurity rendered it impossible for him to tell friend from enemy. It is possible that both accounts are true, Capt. Piercy meaning merely to excuse his subsequent course after having fired once or twice at the *Richard*. At all events, the connection of this vessel with the battle between the two principal ships must have been very trifling, as she soon edged away to a distance, and, after exchanging a distant broadside or two with the *Alliance*, she was brought to close action by the *Pallas*, which ship compelled her to strike, after a creditable resistance of an hour's duration. This vessel fully occupied the *Pallas*, first in engaging her, then in securing the prisoners, until after the conflict terminated.

When the *Serapis* came up on the weather quarter

of the *Richard*, as has been mentioned, she kept her luff, passing slowly by, until she found herself so far ahead and to windward, as to induce Capt. Pearson to think he could fall broad off, cross the *Richard*'s fore foot, and rake her. This manœuvre was attempted, but finding there was not room to effect her purpose, the *Serapis* came to the wind again, as fast as she could, in order to prevent going foul. This uncertain movement brought the two ships in a line, the *Serapis* leading. It so far deadened the way of the English ship, that the *Richard* ran into her, on her weather quarter. In this situation neither vessel could fire, nor could either crew board, the collision being necessarily gentle, and nothing touching but the jib-boom of the American. In this state the two vessels remained a minute or two.

While in this singular position, the firing having entirely ceased, and it being quite dark, a voice from the *Serapis* demanded of the *Richard*, if she had struck. Jones answered promptly, "I have not yet begun to fight." As the ships had now been engaged nearly, or quite, an hour, this was not very encouraging, certainly, to the Englishman's hope of victory, though he immediately set about endeavoring to secure it. The yards of the *Serapis* were trimmed on the larboard tack, and her sails were full as the *Richard* touched her; the latter ship bracing all aback, the two vessels soon parted. As soon as Jones thought he had room, he filled on the other tack, and drew ahead again. The *Serapis*, however, most probably with a view of passing close athwart, either the *Richard*'s fore foot or stern, luffed into the wind, laid all aback forward, and keeping her helm down while she shivered her after sails, she

attempted to break round off on her heel. At this moment, Jones seeing his enemy coming down, thought he might lay him athwart hawse, and drew ahead with that object. In the smoke and obscurity, the moon not having yet risen, each party miscalculated his distance, and just before the *Serapis* had begun to come up on the other tack, her jib-boom passed in over the *Richard's* poop, getting foul of the mizzen rigging. Jones was perfectly satisfied, by this time, that he had no chance in a cannonade, and gladly seized the opportunity of grappling. He had sent the acting master for a hawser as soon as he perceived what was likely to occur, but it not arriving in time, with his own hands he lashed the enemy's bowsprit to the *Richard's* mizzen-mast, by means of the *Serapis's* rigging that had been shot away, and which was hanging loose beneath the spar. Other fastenings soon made all secure.\*

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\* Capt. Mackenzie, in his life of Paul Jones, has the following, in a note, p. 183, vol. 1, viz.: "As considerable difference will be observable between the account of this battle, given in Mr. Cooper's 'Naval History,' and the above, (meaning his own account of the action,) it is proper to state that Mr. Cooper has followed Mr. Dale's description of the manœuvres antecedent to the ship's being grappled; whilst in the present account more reliance has been placed on those of the two commanders who directed the evolutions. Mr. Dale was stationed on the *Richard's* main-deck, in a comparatively unfavorable position for observing the manœuvres. The evolution of box-hauling his ship, ascribed by Mr. Cooper to Capt. Pearson, would, under the circumstances, have been highly unseamanlike."

In answer to this, the writer has to say, that he nowhere finds any reason for thinking that either of the commanders contradicts his account; and as the late Com. Dale, in a long personal interview, minutely described all the manœuvres of the two vessels, as he has here given them, he feels bound to believe him. The argu-

The wind being light, the movements of the two vessels were slow in proportion. It was owing to this circumstance, and to the fact that the Serapis was just beginning to gather way as she came foul, that the col-

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ment that Mr. Dale could not see what he described, is fallacious, since an officer in command of a gun-deck, finding no enemy on either beam, would naturally look for him, and by putting his head out of a forward port, Mr. Dale might have got a better view of the Serapis than any above him. But Com. Dale states a thing *distinctly and affirmatively*, and with such a witness, the writer feels bound much more to respect his direct assertions, than any of the very extraordinary theories in history, of which Capt. Mackenzie has been the propagator. The manœuvres were probably discussed, too, between the younger officers, after the surrender of the Serapis. The writer dissents, also, to Capt. Mackenzie's views of seamanship. Bringing ships round *before the wind*, in the manner described, was far more practised in 1779 than it is to-day. It was more practised with the short ships of the narrow seas than with any other. The *river vessels*, in particular, frequently did it twenty or thirty times in a single trip up the Thames, or into the Nore. The writer has seen it done himself a hundred times in those waters. Many reasons may have induced Capt. Pearson to practice what, with a Baltic and London ship, must have been a common manœuvre, especially with a master on board who was doubtless a channel pilot. He might have wished at first to preserve the weather-gage; he might not have desired to take the room necessary to ware with his helm hard-a-weather, or might have attempted to tack, and failing on account of the lightness of the wind, or the want of sufficient headway, brought his ship round as described. For the writer, it is sufficient that a seaman and a moralist like Richard Dale has deliberately told him in detail, that this manœuvre was practiced, to upset the vague conjectures of a historian of the calibre of Capt. Mackenzie. A published statement from Com. Dale is given by another writer, in which that truth-loving and truth-telling old officer is made to say, "The Serapis wore short round on *her heel*, and her jib-boom ran into the mizzen rigging of the Bon Homme Richard." This is giving in brief what he gave to the writer in detail.

lision itself did little damage. As soon as Capt. Pearson perceived he was foul, he dropped an anchor under foot, in the hope that the *Richard* would drift clear of him. The fastenings having been already made, this result was not obtained; and the ships tending to the tide, which was now in the same direction with the wind, the latter brought the stern of the *Serapis* close in, alongside of the bows of the *Richard*. In this position the ships became so interlocked, by means of their spars, spare anchors, and other protruding objects, for the moment, as to become inseparable.

As the stern of the *Serapis* swung round, her lower deck ports were lowered, in order to prevent being boarded. The ships' sides touching, or at least being so close as to prevent the ports from being opened again, the guns were fired inboard, blowing away the lids. This was renewing the action, under circumstances which, in ordinary cases, would have soon brought it to a termination. Wherever a gun bore, it necessarily cleared all before it, and, in reloading, the rammers were frequently passed into a hostile port, in order to be entered into the muzzles of their proper guns. It is evident that such a conflict could be maintained only under very extraordinary circumstances.

The eighteens of the *Serapis* soon destroyed every thing within their range, nor was it long before the main-deck guns of the *Richard* were, in a great measure, silenced. A considerable number of the men who had been at the eighteens of the *Richard's* gun-room, had remained below after their pieces were abandoned, but the heavy fire of the *Serapis's* lower guns soon started them up, and joining some of those who had been driven

away from the twelves, they got upon the fore-castle. As the Richard was a longer ship than the Serapis, this point was comparatively safe, and thence a fire of musketry was kept up on the enemy's tops and decks. These men, also, threw grenades. The tops, too, were not idle, but kept up a smart fire of muskets, and the men began to resort to grenades also.

In this stage of the action, the Serapis had the cannonading nearly to herself. All her guns, with the exception of those on the quarter-deck and fore-castle, appear to have been worked, while, on the part of the Richard, the fire was reduced to two nines on the quarter-deck, two or three of the twelves, and the musketry. The consequences were, that the Richard was nearly torn to pieces below, while the upper part of the Serapis was deserted, with the exception of a few officers. Capt. Pearson himself appears to have sent his people from the quarter-deck guns. An advantage of this sort, once gained, was easily maintained, rendering it virtually impossible for the losing party to recover the ground it had lost.

The moon rose about the time the ships came foul. Until this occurred, the Alliance had not been near the principal combatants. She now passed some distance to leeward, and crossed the bows of the Richard and the stern of the Serapis, firing at such a distance as rendered it impossible for her to make sure of her enemy, even if she knew which was which. As soon as her guns ceased to bear, she up helm, and ran a considerable distance farther to leeward, hovering about until the Scarborough submitted. Capt. Landais now spoke the Pallas, when Capt. Cottineau begged him to go to

the assistance of the *Richard*, offering, at the same time, to go himself if the *Alliance* would take charge of his prize. All these facts appear under oath in the course of the controversy which grew out of the events of this memorable night.

Ashamed to remain idle at such a moment, and in the face of such remonstrances, Capt. Landais hauled up, under very easy canvas, however, for the two combatants, and making a couple of stretches under his topsails, he passed the bows of the *Serapis* and stern of the *Richard*, opening with *grape*, the last shot to be used under such circumstances; then keeping away a little, he certainly fired into the *Richard*'s larboard quarter, or that most distant from the enemy. Some of the witnesses even affirm that this fire was maintained until the *Alliance* had actually passed the *Richard*'s beam, on her way to leeward.

These movements of the *Alliance* induced Sands aptly to term that frigate the comet of this bloody system. It is difficult to account for her evolutions, without supposing treachery, or insanity, on the part of her commander. For the latter supposition there are some grounds, his subsequent deportment inducing the government to put him out of employment, as a man at least partially deranged. Still it is difficult to suppose the officers would allow their men to fire into the *Richard*'s quarter, as mentioned, unless they mistook the ship. On the other hand, it is affirmed by the witnesses that three lanterns were shown on the off side of the *Richard*, the regular signal of reconnoissance; that fifty voices called out, begging their friends to cease firing, and this, too, when so near that the remonstrances

must have been heard. By direction of Jones, an officer hailed, too, and ordered Landais to lay the enemy aboard. A question was then put to ascertain whether the order was understood, and an answer was given in the affirmative.

The effect of this transit of the Alliance was very disastrous to the Richard. Her fire dismounted a gun or two on board the latter ship, extinguished several lanterns, did a good deal of mischief aloft, and induced many of the people to desert their quarters, under the impression that the English on board the Alliance had got possession of the ship, and were aiding the enemy. It is, indeed, an important feature in the peculiarities of this remarkable cruise, and one that greatly enhances the merit of the man who used such discordant materials, that the two principal vessels distrusted each other's ability to look down revolt, and were distrusted by all the rest, on account of the same supposed insecurity. It may be added as one of the difficulties in explaining Capt. Landais' conduct, that the moon had now been up some time, and that it was very easy to distinguish the ships by their off sides; that of the Serapis having two yellow streaks, dotted as usual with ports, while the Richard was all black.

Not satisfied with what he had done, Capt. Landais shortly after made his re-appearance, approaching the Richard on her off side, running athwart her bows this time, and crossing the stern of her antagonist. On this occasion, it is affirmed, her fire commenced when there was no possibility of reaching the Serapis, unless it were through the Richard; and her fire, of grape especially, was particularly destructive to the men collected



on the Richard's fore-castle. At this spot alone, ten or twelve men appear to have been killed or wounded, at a moment when the fire of the Serapis could not possibly injure them. Among those slain, was a midshipman of the name of Caswell, who affirmed with his dying breath that he had been hit by the shot of the Alliance. After this last exploit, Capt. Landais seemed satisfied with his own efforts, and appeared no more.

While these erratic movements were in course of execution by the Alliance and her eccentric, if not insane, commander, the two ships engaged lay canopied by smoke, a scene of fierce contention, and of accumulated dangers. The alarm of fire was succeeded by reports that the Richard was sinking. To these sources of apprehension, soon followed that of the dread of a rising within. The accession of water in the hold induced the master-at-arms to release the English prisoners on board, who were more than a hundred in number. As if this were not enough, the ships began to take fire from the explosions of the guns and grenades, and the combatants were frequently called from their quarters, in order to extinguish the flames. Capt. Pearson states, that the Serapis was on fire no less than twelve times, while the ships lay grappled; and, as to the Richard, in addition to several accidents of this nature that were promptly suppressed, for the last hour she was burning the whole time, the flames having got within her ceilings.

Jones was not a little astonished to see more than a hundred English mariners rushing up from below, at a moment when a heavy ship of their country was lashed alongside, and deliberately pouring her fire into his

own vessel. Such a circumstance might have proved fatal, with a man less resolute and self-possessed. Lieut. Dale had been below, in person, to ascertain the state of the hold, and it was found that several heavy shot had struck beneath the water line, and that the danger from that source was in truth serious. Profiting by the alarm that prevailed among the prisoners, the commodore set the Englishmen at work at the pumps, where they toiled with commendable zeal near an hour! Had they been so disposed, or cool, most of them might have escaped on board the Serapis.

The precise situations of the two vessels, and of the Richard in particular, are worthy of a passing remark. As for the Serapis, her injuries were far from great. She had suffered from the fire of her opponent at the commencement of the fight, it is true, but the bursting of the Richard's eighteens, and her own superior working and better sailing had given her such essential advantages as, added to her heavier fire, must have long before decided the affair in her favor, but for the circumstance of the two vessels getting foul of each other. The quiet determination of Jones not to give up, might have protracted the engagement longer than usual, but it could hardly have averted the result. The vessels were no sooner square alongside, however, than the English ship's heavy guns swept away every thing in their front. This superiority in the way of artillery could not be overcome, and continued to the close of the engagement. Under any thing like ordinary circumstances, this ascendancy must have given the victory to the English, but Jones was a man calculated by nature, and his habits of thinking, to take refuge against

a defeat in extraordinary circumstances. He had succeeded in driving the enemy from above board, and was, in this stage of the action, diligently working two nine-pounders, in the hope of cutting away the Serapis' main-mast. Had he succeeded in this effort, no doubt he would have cut the lashings, and, obtaining a more favorable position on the bow or quarter of his enemy, settled the matter with his main-deck battery. Still, it required many shot, of the weight of his, to bring down so large a spar, with most of its rigging standing, and in smooth water. No one knows what would have been the result, but for the coolness and judgment of a seaman, who belonged to the main-top. As the English had been cleared out of their tops by the greater fire of the Richard's musketry, this man lay out on the main-yard, until he found himself at the sheet-block. Here he placed a bucket of grenades, and began deliberately to throw them upon the Serapis' decks, wherever he saw two or three men collected. Finding no one on the quarter-deck, or forecastle, to annoy, he tossed his grenades into the hatches, where they produced considerable confusion and injury. At length, he succeeded in getting one or two down upon the lower gun-deck, where one of them set fire to some loose powder. It appears that the powder boys had laid a row of cartridges on the off side of this deck, in readiness for use, no shot entering from the Richard to molest. To this act of gross negligence, Capt. Pearson probably owed the loss of his ship. The lower gun-deck of the Serapis had been perfectly safe from all annoyance, from the moment the ships got foul, no gun of the Richard's bearing on it, while the deck above

protected it effectually from musketry. To this security, it is probable, the dire catastrophe which succeeded was owing. The powder that ignited set fire to all these uncovered cartridges, and the explosion extended from the main-mast aft. It silenced every gun in that part of the ship, and indeed nearly stripped them of their crews. More than twenty men were killed outright, leaving on many of them nothing but the waistbands of their duck trowsers, and the collars and wristbands of their shirts. Quite sixty of the Serapis' people must have been placed *hors de combat*, in a moment, by this fell assault. The reader may imagine its effects on a lower gun-deck, choked with smoke, with the ship on fire, amid the shrieks and groans of the living sufferers.

It is now known that the English would have struck, soon after this accident occurred, had not the master of the London Letter of Marque, captured off Cape Wrath, passed out of a port of the Richard into one of the Serapis' and announced that the American ship was in a still worse situation, having actually released her prisoners, as she was on the point of sinking. About this time, too, another incident occurred, that aided in sustaining the hopes of Capt. Pearson. Two or three of the warrant officers of the Richard, when they found the ship in danger of sinking, had looked in vain for Jones, and Mr. Dale being below at that moment, examining into the state of the pumps, they determined that it was their duty to strike the colors, in order to save the lives of the survivors. Luckily, the ensign had been shot away, and the gunner, who had run up on the poop to lower it, called out for quarter. Hearing

this, Capt. Pearson demanded if the *Richard* had struck. Jones answered for himself in the negative, but in such a way that he was not either heard or understood, and the English actually mustered a party of boarders to take possession of their prize. As this was giving Jones' men a better chance with their muskets, the English were soon driven below again, with loss. Some of the latter, however, appeared on the sides of the *Richard*.

These reverses turned the tide of battle in favor of the Americans. The latter got a gun or two more at work, and, while the fire of their adversaries was sensibly diminishing, their own began to increase. The spirit of the Englishman drooped, and he finally hauled down his colors with his own hands, after the ships had been lashed together nearly, if not quite, two hours and a half. The main-yard of the *Serapis* was hanging a-cock-bill, the brace being shot away, and the brace pendant within reach. Lieut. Dale seized the latter and swung himself over upon the quarter-deck of the *Serapis*. Here he found Capt. Pearson quite alone, and received his submission. At this instant, the first lieutenant of the English ship came up from below, and inquired if the *Richard* had struck, her fire having now entirely ceased. Mr. Dale explained to this officer how the case stood, when, finding his own commander confirmed it, the lieutenant offered to go below, and to stop the guns that were still at work in the *Serapis*. Mr. Dale objected, however, and these two officers were immediately passed over to the quarter-deck of the *Richard*. A party of officers and men had followed Mr. Dale from his own ship, and one of them, a Mr.

Mayrant, of South Carolina, one of the *Richard's* midshipmen, was actually run through the thigh by a boarding spike; the blow coming from a party of boarders stationed on the main-deck. This was the last blood spilt on the occasion, the firing being stopped immediately afterward.

Thus ended the renowned conflict between the *Serapis* and the *Bon Homme Richard*; one of the most remarkable of naval annals, in some of its features, though far from being as comparatively bloody, or as well fought in others, as many that may be cited. Commodore Dale, who was familiar with the facts, always placed the combat between the *Trumbull* and *Watt*, before that between these two ships, in the way of a cannonade; nor was there much difference in the comparative loss of the English vessels, the *Watt* having about half her crew killed and wounded, which was not far from the casualties of the *Serapis*. Still, this battle must ever stand alone, in a few of its leading incidents. There is no other instance on record of two vessels, carrying such batteries, remaining foul of each other for so long a period. It could have happened in this case, only, through the circumstances that the *Richard* had the combat nearly all to herself above board, while the *Serapis* was tearing her to pieces below decks. The respective combatants were, in truth, out of the range of each other's fire, in a great degree; else would the struggle have been brought to a termination in a very few minutes. The party that was first silenced must have soon submitted; and, as that was virtually the American ship, the victory would have belonged to the English, in any other circumstances than those which

actually occurred. As for the cannonading that Jones kept up for more than an hour on the main-mast of the *Serapis*, it could have had no material influence on the result, since the mast stood until the ship had struck, coming down just as the two vessels separated.

An examination into the injuries sustained by the respective combatants, proves the truth of the foregoing theory. As for the *Richard*, she had suffered a good deal during the first hour, or before the vessels closed, receiving several heavy shot between wind and water. Some shot, too, it would seem to be certain, were received in the same awkward places, from the fire of the *Alliance*, after the ships had grappled. But, the most extraordinary part of her injuries were those which were found from the main-mast aft, below the quarter-deck. Perhaps no vessel ever suffered in a degree approaching that in which the *Richard* suffered in this part of her. Her side was almost destroyed by the guns of the *Serapis*, and nothing prevented the quarter-deck, main-deck and poop from literally falling down upon the lower-deck, but a few top-timbers and upper futtocks that had fortunately escaped. This left Jones and his companions fighting on a sort of stage; upheld by stanchions that were liable at any moment to be carried away. Nothing, indeed, saved these supports, or the men on the deck above them, but the fact that they were all so near the enemy's guns, that the latter could not be trained, or elevated sufficiently high to hit them. It was the opinion of Com. Dale that the shot of the *Serapis*, for the last hour of the action, must have passed in at one side of the *Richard*, in this part of the ship, and out at the other, without touching any

thing, the previous fire having so effectually cleared the road!

The loss of men, in each ship, was fearfully great, and singularly equal. A muster-roll of the *Richard* has been preserved, which shows that, out of 227 souls on board when the ship sailed, exclusively of the soldiers, or marines, 83 were killed, or wounded. As many of these 227 persons were not in the action, while a few do not appear on this roll, who were on board, by placing the whole number of this portion of the crew at 200, we shall not be far out of the way. About 120 of the soldiers were in the combat, and this proportion would make such an additional loss, as to raise the whole number to 132. These soldiers, however, suffered in the commencement of the action more than the rest of the people, more especially a party of them that had been stationed on the poop; and, the reports of the day making the loss of the *Richard* 150 altogether, we are inclined to believe it was not far from the truth. This was very near one half of all the men she had engaged.

On the part of the English, Capt. Pearson reported 117 casualties, admitting, however, that there were many more. Jones thought his own loss less than that of the *Serapis*, and there is reason to think it may have been so, in a trifling degree. It is probable that something like one half of all the combatants suffered in this bloody affair, which is a very unusual number for any battle, whether by sea or land. Many of those who suffered by the two explosions—that of the *Richard*'s eighteens, and that of the *Serapis*' cartridges—died of their injuries.



To return to the state of the two vessels, and the events of the night: Jones no sooner found himself in possession of his prize, than he ordered the lashings cut in order to separate the vessels. This was done without much difficulty, the wind and tide, in a few minutes, carrying the *Richard* clear of her late antagonist. The *Serapis* was hailed, and ordered to follow the commodore. In order to do this, her head-yards were braced sharp aback, to cause the vessel to pay off, her main-mast having come down, nearly by the board, bringing with it the mizzen top-mast. The wreck was cleared, but the ship still refused to answer her helm. Excited by this singular state of things, Mr. Dale sprang from a seat he had taken, and fell his length upon deck. He had been wounded in the foot, and now ascertained for the first time that he was unable to walk. Luckily, Mr. Lunt, with the pilot boat, had come alongside, as soon as the firing ceased, and was ready to take his place. The fact being communicated to this officer that the *Serapis* was anchored, the cable was cut, and Jones' orders obeyed. It is proper to add that the party in the pilot boat were of great service, as soon as they got on board again.

The vessels of the squadron now collected together, and fresh men were obtained from her consorts, to attend to the critical wants of the *Richard*. That ship, it will be remembered, was not only on fire, but sinking. Gangs of hands were obtained from the other vessels, to work the pumps, as well as to assist in extinguishing the flames, and the night passed in strenuous efforts to effect their purposes. So critical was the condition of the vessel, however, that many men threw themselves

into the water, and swam to the nearest ship, under an apprehension that the *Richard* might at any moment be blown up. In the course of this eventful night, too, eight or ten Englishmen, who had formed a part of Jones' own crew, stole a boat from the *Serapis*, and deserted, landing at Scarborough. Despair of ever being able to escape into a neutral or friendly port, was doubtless their motive; and, in the circumstances, the reader can see the vast disadvantages under which Jones had achieved his success. A careful attention to all the difficulties, as well as dangers, that surrounded him, is necessary to a just appreciation of the character of our subject, whose exploits would have been deemed illustrious, if accomplished with means as perfect as those usually at the disposal of commanders in well established and regular marines. It is not to be forgotten, moreover, that Jones was personally so obnoxious to the anger of the English, as to render it certain that his treatment would be of the severest nature, in the event of his capture, if, indeed, he were allowed to escape with life. It was surely enough to meet an equal force of English seamen, on the high seas, favored by all the aids of perfect equipments and good vessels; but, here, a desperate battle had been fought in sight of the English coast, against an enemy of means to render success doubtful, and with a reasonable probability that even victory might be the means of destroying the conqueror.

Many a man will face death manfully, when he presents himself in the form of a declared enemy, in open fight, who will manifest a want of the highest moral qualities which distinguish true courage, when driven to a just appreciation of the risks of an unseen source

of alarm. It is this cool discrimination between real and imaginary difficulties and dangers, which distinguishes the truly great commander from him who is suited only to the emergencies of every-day service; and when, as in the case of Jones, this ability to discriminate, and to resist unnecessary alarms, is blended with the high military quality of knowing when to attempt more than the calculations of a severe prudence will justify, we find the characteristics of the great land or sea captain.

Daylight afforded an opportunity of making a full survey of the miserable plight in which the *Richard* had been left by the battle. A survey was held, and it was soon decided that any attempt to carry the ship in was hopeless. It may be questioned if she could have been kept from sinking in smooth water, so many and serious were the shot-holes; though, after getting the powder on deck by way of security, and contending against them until ten next morning, the flames were got under. The fire had been working insidiously within the ceiling, or this advantage, immaterial as it proved in the end, could not have been gained. It was determined, after a consultation, to remove the wounded, and to abandon the ship. Jones came to this decision with the greatest reluctance, for he had a strong and natural desire to carry into port all the evidence of the struggle in which he had been engaged; but his own judgment confirmed the opinions of his officers, and he reluctantly gave the order to commence the necessary duty.

The morning of the 24th, or that of the day which succeeded the battle, was foggy, and no view of the sea

was had until near noon. Then it cleared away, and the eye could command a long range of the English coast, as well as of the waters of the offing. Not a sail of any sort was visible, with the exception of those of the squadron and its prizes. So completely had the *audace* of Jones, to use an expressive French term that has no precise English translation, daunted the enemy, that his whole coast appeared to be temporarily under a blockade.

The two pilot boats were very serviceable in receiving the wounded. After toiling at the pumps all the 24th and the succeeding night, the *Richard* was left in the forenoon of the 25th, the water being then as high as the lower deck. About ten, she settled slowly into the water, the poop and mizen-mast being the last that was ever seen of the old *Duc de Duras*, a ship whose reputation will probably live in naval annals as long as books are written and men continue to read.

Jones now erected jury-masts in the *Serapis*, and endeavored to get into the *Texel*, his port of destination. So helpless was the principal prize, however, that she was blown about until the 6th October, before this object could be effected. With a presentiment of what would have been best, Jones himself strongly desired to go into *Dunkirk*, for which port the wind was fair, where he would have been under French protection; but the *concordat* emboldened his captains to remonstrate, and they proceeded to *Holland*.

The arrival of the *soi-disant* American squadron in a neutral country, accompanied by two British men-of-war, as prizes, gave rise to a great political commotion. The people of the Dutch nation were opposed to the

English, and in favor of America, but the government, or its executive at least, and the aristocracy, as a matter of course, felt differently. We shall not weary the reader with the details of all that occurred. It will be sufficient to say, that it was found necessary to hoist French flags in most of the ships, and to put the prizes even under the protection of the *Grand Monarque*. Jones, for a time, got rid of Landais, who was sent for to Paris, and he transferred himself and his favorite officers to the Alliance. This vessel, the only real American ship in the squadron, continued to keep the stars and stripes flying. At one time matters proceeded so far, however, that ships of the line menaced the frigate with forcing her out to sea, where thirty or forty English cruisers were in waiting for her, if she did not lower the as yet unacknowledged ensign. All this Jones withstood, and he actually braved the authorities of Holland, under these critical circumstances, rather than discredit the flag of the country he legitimately served. A French commission was offered to himself, but he declined receiving it, always affirming that he was the senior American sea-captain in Europe, and he claimed all the honors and rights of his rank. His prizes and prisoners were taken from him, in virtue of the *concordat*, and through orders from Dr. Franklin, but the Alliance was an American ship, and American she should continue as long as she remained under his orders!

At length, after two months of wrangling and mortification, Jones prepared to sail. He had been joined by the celebrated Capt. Conyngham, who went passenger in his ship for France. He left the *Texel* on the

27th December, and a letter written by himself, just as he discharged the pilot, stated that he was fairly outside, with a fair wind, and his *best American ensign flying*. The last was a triumph indeed, and one of which he was justly proud.

The run of the Alliance from the Texel, *through the British Channel*, while so closely watched, has been much vaunted in certain publications, and Jones himself seemed proud of it. It is probable that its merits were the judgment and boldness with which the passage was planned and executed. Com. Dale, a man totally without exaggeration, spoke of it as a bold experiment, that succeeded perfectly because it was unexpected. The enemy, no doubt, looked for the ship to the northward, never dreaming that she would run the gantlet at the Straits of Dover.

Jones hugged the shoals as he came out, and kept well to windward of all the blockading English vessels. In passing Dover he had to go in sight of the shipping in the Downs. As the wind held to the eastward, this he did at little risk. He was equally successful at the Isle of Wight, a fleet lying at Spithead; and several times he eluded heavy cruisers, by going well to the eastward of them. The Alliance went into Corunna, to avoid a gale. Thence she sailed for France, arriving in the roads of Groix on the 10th of February. This was the only cruise Jones ever made in the Alliance. Capt. Landais had injured the sailing of the ship, by the manner in which he stowed the ballast, and this it was that induced her present commander to go in so early, else might he have made a cruise as brilliant as any that had preceded it. It is matter of great regret

that Jones never could get to sea in a vessel worthy of his qualities as a commander. The *Ranger* was dull and crank; the *Alfred* was no better; the *Providence* was of no force, and the reader has just seen what might be expected from the *Richard*. The *Alliance* was an excellent ship of her class, though not very heavy; but, just as accident threw her in Jones' way, he was compelled to carry her into port, where she was taken from him.

The history of Jones' life, after he joined the navy, with the exception of the short intervals he was at sea, is a continued narrative of solicitations for commands, or service, and of as continual disappointments. During the whole war, and he sailed in the first squadron, Jones was actually at sea a little short of a year. The remainder of his seven years of service was employed in struggling for employment, or in preparing the imperfect equipments with which he sailed. Could such a man have passed even half his time on board efficient and fast cruisers, on the high seas, we may form some estimate of what he would have effected, by the exploits he actually achieved. By the capture of the *Serapis*, and the character of his last cruise generally, Jones acquired a great reputation, though it did little for him, in the way of obtaining commands suitable to his rank and services.

Our hero had obtained some little circulation in Parisian society, by his capture of the *Drake*, though there is surprisingly little sympathy with any nautical exploits in general, in the brilliant capital of France. But the exploits of the *Bon Homme Richard* overcame this apathy toward the things of the sea, and

Jones became a lion, at once, in the great centre of European civilization. It would be idle to deny that this flattery and these attentions had an influence on his character. New habits and tastes were created, habits and tastes totally in opposition to those he had formed in youth; and these are changes that rarely come late in life altogether free from exaggeration. The correspondence of Jones, which was very active, and in the end became quite voluminous, proves, while his mind, manners and opinions were in several respects improved by this change of situation, that they suffered in others. He appears to have had an early predilection for poetry, and he seems to have now indulged it with some freedom in making indifferent rhymes on various ladies. Some of his biographers have placed his effusions on a level with those of the ordinary *vers de société*, then so much in vogue; but they seem to forget that these were very indifferent rhymes also. In that gay and profligate society to which he was admitted, it was scarcely possible that a bachelor of Jones' temperament should altogether escape the darts of love. His name has been connected with that of a certain Delia, also with that of a certain Madame T——, and also with that of a lady of the name of Lavendahl. This Madame T—— is said to have been a natural daughter of Louis XV., a circumstance that may, or may not, infer rank in society. The attachment to the last, however, has been thought a mere platonic friendship. Some pains have been taken to show that these were ladies of high rank, but a mere title is not now, nor was it in 1779, any proof of a high social condition in France, unless the rank were as high as that of a *duchesse*.



That Jones was a lion in Paris, is a fact beyond question, but much exaggeration has accompanied the accounts of his reception. His return occurred in the midst of an exciting war, and it is scarcely possible that his exploits should be overlooked by the government, or the *beau monde*, but they were far from occupying either, in the manner that has been mentioned by certain of his panegyrists.

After a visit to Paris, he returned to the coast, where new difficulties arose with Landais. By a decision of one of the commissioners, that officer was restored to the command of the Alliance, and the quarrel was renewed. But the brevity of this sketch will not permit us to give an account of all the discussions in which Jones was engaged, either with his superiors or with his subordinates. It is difficult to believe that there was not some fault in the temperament of the man, although it must be admitted that he served under great disadvantages, and never had justice done to his talents or his deeds in the commands he received. The end of this new source of contempt was Landais putting Jones' own officers, Dale and others, ashore, and sailing for America, where he was laid on the shelf himself, and his ship was given to Barry.

The immediate nautical service on hand was to get several hundred tons of military stores to America. With this duty Jones had been intrusted, and he now begged hard that his prize, the *Serapis*, might be borrowed for that purpose. He doubtless wished to show the ship in this country, as his plan was to arm her *en flute* merely, and to give her convoy by a twenty-gun ship, called the *Ariel*, which the French government

had consented to lend the Americans. On reaching America, he hoped to get up a new expedition, with the *Serapis* for his own pennant.

This arrangement could not be made, however, and Jones was compelled to receive smaller favors. As a little consolation, and one to which he was far from being indifferent, the King of France sent him, about this time, (June, 1780,) the cross of military merit, which he was to carry to the French minister in America, who had instructions to confer it on him on some suitable occasion. At the same time, he was informed that Louis XVI. had directed a handsome sword to be made, with suitable inscriptions, which should be forwarded to him as soon as possible. This was grateful intelligence to a man so sensitive on the subject of the opinions of others, and doubtless was received as some atonement for his many disappointments.

By the beginning of September, Jones was ready to sail for America, in the *Ariel*. He had got together as many of his old *Richard's* as possible for a crew, and had crammed the vessel in every practicable place with stores. He lay a month in the roads of Groix, however, with a foul wind. On the 8th October, he went to sea, but met a gale that very night, in which his ship was nearly lost. He was obliged to anchor at no great distance to windward of the Penmarks, where the *Ariel* rolled her lower yard-arms into the water. She could not be kept head to sea with the anchors down, but fell off with a constant drift. Cutting away the fore-mast relieved her, but now she pitched the heel of the main-mast out of the step, and it became necessary to cut away that spar, to save the ship. This brought down

the mizen-mast, as a matter of course, when the vessel became easier. For two days and near three nights did the Ariel continue in her crazy berth, anchored in the open ocean, with one of the most dangerous ledges of rocks known, a short distance under her lee, when she was relieved by a shift of wind. Jury-masts were erected, and the vessel got back to the roads from which she had sailed.

In speaking of this gale, in a letter to one of his female friends, Jones quaintly remarks, "I know not why Neptune was in such anger, unless he thought it *an affront in me to appear on his ocean with so insignificant a force.*" It is in this same letter that he makes the manly and high-toned remark, apropos of some imputed dislike of a certain English lady, "The English nation may *hate me, but I will force them to esteem me too.*"

In the gale Jones was supported by his officers. Dale and Henry Lunt were with him, as indeed were most of the officers of the Richard who survived the action, and the risks of this gale were thought to equal those of their bloody encounter with the Serapis. Dale spoke of this time as one of the most, if not the most, serious he had met with in the course of his service, and extolled the coolness and seamanship of Jones as being of the highest order. The latter, indeed, was a quick, ready seaman, never hesitating with doubts or ignorance.

It is worthy of being mentioned, that while lying at Groix, repairing damages, a difficulty occurred between Jones and Truxtun, about the right of the latter to wear a pennant in his ship; he being then in command of a

private armed vessel. It appears Truxtun hoisted a *broad* pennant, and this at a time when he had no right to wear a narrow one, Congress having passed a law denying this privilege to private vessels. These fiery spirits were just suited to meet in such a conflict, and it is only surprising Jones did not send a force to lower Truxtun's emblem for him. His desire to prevent scandalous scenes in a French port alone prevented it.

Jones did not get out again until the 18th December, when he made the best of his way to America. The *Ariel* appears to have made the southern passage. In lat. 26, N. and long. 59, she made an English frigate-built ship, that had greatly the superiority over her in sailing. Jones, according to his own account of the matter, rather wished to avoid this vessel, his own ship being deep and much burdened, his crew a good deal disaffected, and the stranger seeming the heaviest. After passing a night in a vain attempt to elude him, he was found so near the next day as to render an action inevitable, should the stranger, now believed to be an enemy, see fit to seek it. Under the circumstances, therefore, Jones thought it prudent to clear ship. The stranger chased, the *Ariel* keeping him astern, in a way to prevent him from closing until after nightfall. As the day declined, the *Ariel* occasionally fired a light gun at the ship astern, crowding sail, as if anxious to escape. By this time, however, Jones was satisfied he should have to contend with a vessel not much, if any, heavier than his own, and he shortened sail, to allow the stranger to close. Both ships set English colors, and as they drew near, the *Ariel* hauled up, compelling the stranger to pass under her lee, both vessels at quar-

ters, with the batteries lighted up. In this situation, each evidently afraid of the other, a conversation commenced that lasted an hour. Jones asked for news from America, which the stranger freely communicated. He said his ship was American built, and had been lately captured from the Americans and put into the English service. Her name was stated to be the *Triumph*, and that of her commander *Pindar*. Jones now ordered this *Mr. Pindar* to lower a boat and come on board. A refusal brought on an action, which lasted a few minutes, when the stranger struck. The fire of the *Ariel* was very animated, that of the *soi-disant Triumph* very feeble. The latter called out for quarter, saying half his people were killed. The *Ariel* ceased firing, and as she had passed to leeward before she commenced firing, the stranger drew ahead and tacked, passing to windward in spite of the chasing fire of her enemy.

Jones was greatly indignant at this escape. He always considered, or affected to consider, the *Triumph* a king's ship of equal force, though she was probably nothing more than a light armed and weakly manned *Letter-of-Marque*. By some it has even been imagined the *Triumph* was an American, who supposed he was actually engaged with an English vessel of war. Different writers have spoken of this rencontre as a handsome victory; but *Com. Dale*, a man whose nature seemed invulnerable to the attempts of any exaggerated feeling, believed the *Ariel's* foe was an English *Letter-of-Marque*, and attributed her escape to the cleverness of her manœuvres. That her commander violated the laws of war, and those of morality, is beyond a question.

Shortly after this affair, Jones discovered a plot among the English of his crew to seize the ship, and twenty of the most dangerous of the mutineers were confined. It was not found necessary, however, to execute any of them at sea, and the ship reached Philadelphia, on February 18th, 1781, making Jones' absence from the country a little exceeding three years and three months.

Notwithstanding certain unpleasant embarrassments awaited Jones, on his return to America, after the brilliant scenes in which he had been an actor, he had no reason to complain of his reception. Landais had actually been dismissed as insane, and this, too, principally on the testimony of Mr. Lee, the commissioner who had reinstated him in the command of the Alliance; a circumstance that, of itself, settled several of the unpleasant points that had been in dispute. But the delay in shipping the stores had produced much inconvenience to the army, and Congress appointed a committee formally to inquire into the cause. The result was favorable to Jones, and the committee reported resolutions, that were adopted, expressive of the sense Congress entertained of Jones' service, and of the gratification it afforded that body to know the King of France intended to confer on him the order of military merit. In consequence of this resolution, the French minister gave a fête, and, in presence of all the principal persons of the place, conferred on Jones the cross of the order. In the course of the examinations that were made by Congress, forty-seven interrogatories were put to Jones, and it is worthy of remark, that his answers were of a nature to do credit to both his principles and his head.

This affair disposed of, nothing but the grateful respect which followed success, awaited our hero, who justly filled a high place in the public estimation. The thanks of Congress were solemnly voted to him, as his due.

A question now seriously arose in Congress, on the subject of making Jones a rear-admiral. He had earnestly remonstrated about the rank given him when the regulated list of captains was made out, and there was an *éclat* about his renown, that gave a weight to his representations. Remonstrances from the older captains, however, prevented any resolution from passing on this question, and Jones was finally rewarded by a unanimous election, *by ballot*, in Congress, appointing him to the command of the *America 74*, a ship then on the stocks. As this was much the most considerable trust of the sort within the gift of the government, it speaks in clear language the estimation in which he was held.

The *America* was far from being ready to launch, however. Still Jones was greatly gratified with the compliment. He even inferred that it placed him highest in rank in the navy, the law regulating comparative rank with the army, saying that a captain of a ship of more than forty guns should rank with a colonel, while those of forty guns ranked only with lieutenants-colonel; and the *America* being the only ship that carried or rated more than forty guns, he jumped to the conclusion that he out-ranked the eight or ten captains above him, whose commissions had higher numbers than his own. It is probable this reasoning would have given way before inquiry. A cap-

tain in command of a squadron, now, ranks temporarily with a brigadier-general. The youngest captain on the list may hold this trust, yet, when he lowers his pennant, or even when he meets his senior in service, though in command of a single ship, the date or number of the commission determines the relative rank of the parties.

It is worthy of remark that Jones, before he quitted Philadelphia, exhibited his personal accounts, by which it appeared that he had not yet received one dollar of pay, and this for nearly five years' service; proof of itself that he was not without private funds, and did not enter the navy a mere adventurer. On the contrary, he is said to have advanced considerable sums to government, and in the end to have been a loser by his advances. But who was not, that had money to lose, and who sustained the cause that triumphed in that arduous struggle?

It would be useless here to follow Jones, step by step, in connection with his new command. He joined the ship in the strong hope of having her at sea in a few months; but this far exceeded the means of the country. As he travelled toward Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, where the *America* was on the stocks, he wore his cross of the order of Military Merit, which did well enough at head quarters, when he paid a visit to Washington. There, however, it was hinted to him he had better lay it aside on entering the New England states, a portion of the country in which personal distinctions were, and are peculiarly offensive to the people. One cannot object to this particular instance of the feeling, for the citizen of a nation that rejects such rewards in its own



political system, ought to have too much self-respect to accept them from a foreign state; but an affectation of humility, rather than its reality, forms a part of the social faith of this section of the republic. Thus it is that we see the manly practice of self-nomination frowned on, while nowhere else are lower arts practiced to obtain nominations by others than among these fastidious observers of a proud political modesty. Exaggerations, whether in religion, morals, manners, speech, or appearance, always result in this; the simplicity of truth being as far removed from the acting they induce, as virtue is remote from vice. Nothing in nature can be violated with impunity, her laws never failing to vindicate their ascendancy in some shape or other.

Jones reached Portsmouth, at the close of August, 1781. The duty of superintending a vessel on the stocks, in the height of a war, was particularly irksome to a man of his temperament, and Portsmouth was a place very different from Paris. He was more than a year thus engaged, during most of which time he did not quit his post. In the course of the summer of 1782, however, the French lost a ship called the *Magnifique*, in the harbor of Boston, and Congress determined to present the America to the King of France, as a substitute. This deprived Jones of his command, just as he was about to realize something from all his labors. Fortune had ordered that he was never to get a good ship under the American flag, and that all his exploits were to derive their lustre more from his own military qualities than from the means employed.

November 5th, 1781, the America was launched; the same day Jones transferred her to the French of-

ficer who was directed to receive her. At the time he did this, he believed he was to be employed on a second expedition. He expected, indeed, to get his old flame, the *Indien*, which was called the South Carolina, and was lying at Philadelphia. Her arrangement with South Carolina was nearly up, and Congress had claims, by means of which it was hoped she might yet be transferred to her original owners. Matters went so far that Com. Gillan, who commanded the ship, was arrested; but the vessel got to sea under Capt. Joyner, and was captured by three English frigates, a few hours out; not without suspicions of collusion with the enemy.

There were now no means of employing Jones afloat, and he got permission to make a cruise in the French fleet, for the purpose of acquiring some knowledge of a fleet. He sailed in the *Triomphante*, the flag-ship of M. de Vaudreuil. M. de Viomenil, with a large military suite, was on board, and sixty officers dined together every day. It is characteristic of Jones, that he should mention that the French general was put into the *larboard* state-room, while he himself occupied the *starboard*! This might have been done on account of his being a stranger, and strictly a guest; or it might have been done because M. de Viomenil knew nothing of naval etiquette on such points, while Jones attached great importance to it.

This cruise doubtless furnished many new ideas to a man like Jones, but its military incidents were not worthy of being recorded. Peace was made in April, 1783, and Jones left the fleet at Cape François, reaching Philadelphia, May 18th. His health was not good,

and he passed the summer at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for the benefit of a cold bath. He now had a project of retiring to a farm, but, it is probable, the quiet, dull condition of the country, under the reaction of peace, did not suit him, for he applied to Congress for a commission as agent to look after the prizes made on his great cruise, particularly those which had been given up to the English by the Danes. Armed with such authority, he sailed for France, November 10th, in the Washington, late General Monk, the ship Barney had so gallantly taken in the Hyder Ally, and which he then commanded. This vessel was the last relic of the navy of the Revolution, being the only vessel then owned by the government, or at least employed. Jones landed at Dover, from which place he proceeded to London, and thence to Paris, making the whole journey in five days; tolerable proof he did not relish the country. Had he been known, it is by no means probable that he would have escaped without insult, for no man had ever alarmed the English coast so thoroughly in these later times. Nevertheless, he is said to have appeared on 'Change, while in London, and to have been recognised. He also went to one of the theatres, though a face must be much known to make that a very hazardous thing.

Jones was two years engaged in settling his prize questions in France. This was done after a great deal of vexation, and his active mind then turned to a voyage of commercial enterprise, that included the North-west Coast, Japan, the Sandwich Islands, and the ends of the earth, in its plans. The celebrated Ledyard was to be his supercargo, and Jones commander-in-chief. Disco-

very, science, and honor, were to be united with profit, and the whole was to have a character of high motives. Like so many others of our hero's projects, this also failed for want of means.

In 1787, Jones determined to go to Denmark, to push his demands on that government in person. He had actually got as far as Brussels, when he was unexpectedly called to America, in consequence of some new difficulty connected with his compensation. The new constitution was not yet framed, and the affairs of the confederation presented embarrassments at every turn to all the public servants. This visit to America was made in the spring, and Jones remained in this country until autumn. October 18, 1787, Congress voted him a gold medal, in honor of his services while at the head of the squadron of the *concordat*. A letter to the King of France, in his favor, was also written by that body; one of the highest honors it ever paid a citizen. It is singular that Jones, on his return to Europe, manifested an apprehension of being seized by some of the English ships, though a general peace prevailed, and it is not easy to see under what pretence such an outrage could have been committed. It would have been just as legal to arrest Washington, had *he* been found on the high seas. There was certainly no love between the parties, and England, in that day, did many lawless things; but it may be questioned if she would have presumed to go as far as this. Jones did not quit America, until November 11th, 1787, which was the last day he ever had his foot on the western continent.

In January, 1788, Jones received some new credentials for Denmark, and shortly after he proceeded to

Copenhagen. He is known to have been in that capital early in March. Previously to quitting Paris, some proposals had been made to Jones to enter into the service of Russia, which were now renewed, through Baron Kreudener, Catherine's minister in Denmark. In April, our hero, in consequence of the negotiations which had commenced on this subject, determined to go to St. Petersburg. As regards his application to the Danish Court, it resulted in fair promises. The demand amounted to £50,000 sterling, and Jones was put off with fine speeches and personal compliments, and had a patent sent after him, entitling him to a pension of 1500 Danish crowns, in consideration of "the respect he had shown to the Danish flag, while he had commanded in the North Seas." It seems to us impossible to understand this as any other than a direct bribe, ingeniously covered up, to induce Jones not to press his demands. The agent who is sent to recover claims, in which others are interested, cannot accept compensation for himself, unless it include the interests of all the parties concerned. Jones himself did not, at first, seem to know in what light he was to view this pension, and for several years he did not ask for the money. The arrears were inventoried in his will, though it appears nothing was ever paid on them. Nothing was ever received, either, for the prizes. It must be confessed, Denmark paid her debts at a cheap rate.

Jones had been well received at all the courts where he presented himself. Immediately on his arrival at St. Petersburg, Catherine made him a rear-admiral. His passage across the Gulf of Finland had been perilous and romantic, and threw an *éclât* around his ap-

proach, that was not unsuited to his established character. He reached St. Petersburg, April 23d, (old style,) and he left it to join Prince Potemkin, in the Black Sea, on the 7th May, with his new commission in his pocket. His reception by Potemkin was flattering, but our admiral did not conceal from himself that his brother flag-officers felt any thing but joy at seeing him. The cabals against him commenced the first hour of his arrival, nor do they appear to have ceased until the day of his departure. The motley force assembled under the Imperial flag, included officers of many different nations, some of whom much affected superiority over one whom the English, in particular, took every occasion to malign.

The history of Jones' service under the Russian flag is a revolting account of intrigues, bad management, and disappointment. The operations were far from trifling in their extent, and there were several engagements, in all of which the Turks suffered, but nothing was effected of the brilliant and decisive character that marked the proper exploits of Paul Jones. Such a man ought not to have served under a chief like Potemkin, for nothing is more certain than that, in any glory, the favorite would seize the lion's share. Still Jones distinguished himself on more than one occasion, though our limits will not admit of entering into details. In one or two actions he was much exposed, and manifested high personal resolution; perhaps as much so as on any other occasions of his life.

It has been seen that Jones left St. Petersburg, May, 1788; in December he had returned, virtually in disgrace. This event has often been ascribed to the

enmity of the English officers in the Russian marine ; never to any official act of Jones himself. It was, in truth, owing to the personal displeasure of Potemkin, one with whom a man of our rear-admiral's disposition would not be likely long to agree. Catherine received Jones favorably, as to appearances at least, and, for a short time, he had hopes of being again employed.

But the enemies of Jones had determined to get rid of him, and it is believed they resorted to an infamous expedient to effect his ruin in the estimation of the empress. A girl who entered his apartment, to sell some light articles, charged him with an attempt to violate her person. Inquiry subsequently gave reason to believe the whole thing a trick, and Jones always protested his entire innocence ; but sufficient clamor was made to render his further sojourn in Russia, for the moment at least, unpleasant. Catherine was evidently satisfied that injustice had been done him, but she did not care to offend Potemkin. Jones was permitted to travel, retaining his rank and appointments. His furlough, which Jones himself, oddly enough, more than once calls his "parole," extended to two years, but was doubtless meant to be unlimited in its effect. Catherine had previously conferred on him the ribbon of St. Anne.

Jones left St. Petersburg, in July, 1789, after a residence of about fifteen months in Russia. He traveled south, by Warsaw, where he remained some time, after which he visited Holland. About this time his constitution began sensibly to give way. It is probable that the disappointments he had met with in the north preyed upon his feelings, his enemies being as active as ever

in circulating stories to his disadvantage. His finances were impaired, too, and he appears to think that his pecuniary compensation from Russia had been light. Now it was that he would gladly have received the arrears of his pension from Denmark, a pension that certainly he ought never to have seemed to accept. In his justification, however, he says that both Jefferson and Morris advised him to profit by the liberality of the Danish Court ; but, in all cases, a man should decide for himself in a matter touching his own honor. Others frequently give advice, that they would reject in their own acts.

In 1790, Jones was at Paris, well received by his friends ; but no longer a lion, or a subject of public attention. He manifested strong interest in his Scottish relations this season, and speaks of the education of his nephews and nieces. But it is to the credit of Jones, that, throughout his whole career, and while most flattered with the attentions of the great, he never forgot to be affectionate and kind to his sisters. It was a blank year to him, however, his time being mostly occupied in endeavoring so to settle his affairs as to procure funds. In March, 1791, he addressed the empress, stating that his "parole" had nearly expired, and desiring to be ordered to return. All his letters and communications show that his spirit was a good deal broken, and the elasticity of his mind partially gone. He still thought of and reasoned about ships, but it was no longer with the fire and earnestness of his youth. The events in progress at Paris may have had some influence on him, though nowhere does he speak of



them in his letters. His silence, in this respect, is even remarkable.

The new American Constitution went into operation in 1789; and Jones rightly enough predicted that this event would produce a regular and permanent marine. His hopes, however, outstripped the facts; the results which he hoped would affect himself, and that soon, occurring several years later. He expected, and with reason, so far as his claims were concerned, to be commissioned an admiral in the new marine; but he did not live to see the marine itself established. One ray of satisfaction, however, gleamed on his last days, the government of Washington giving him reason to expect a diplomatic appointment, to arrange certain difficulties with some of the Barbary powers. The appointment came shortly after Jones was laid in his grave; proving beyond a question that he possessed the confidence of some of the wisest and best men of America, as long as he lived.

Jones' health had been impaired for some years. The form which his disease assumed—jaundice—renders it probable that the state of his mind affected his health. Dropsy supervened, and in July, 1792, he was thought so ill, as to send for Mr. Morris, and other friends, in order to make his will. For two days he was so much swollen as not to be able to button his vest; this it was that induced him to make his will. It was signed about eight o'clock, in the evening of the 18th, and he was then left, seated in his chair, by the friends who had witnessed it. Shortly after, he walked into his bed-room, by himself. It was not long before his physician came to see him. The bed-room was entered,

and Jones was found lying on his face, on the bed, with his feet on the floor, quite dead.

The death of Jones was honorably noticed in France. The National Assembly sent a deputation of twelve of its members to attend the funeral, and other honors were shown his remains. He was interred in a cemetery that no longer exists, but which then was used, near la Barriere du Combat, for the interment of Protestants. It is probable that no traces of his grave could now be found.

The estate left by Jones was respectable, though far from large. Still he could not be said to have died in poverty; though so much of his estate was in claims, that he often wanted money. Among other assets mentioned in his will were \$9000 of stock in the Bank of North America, with sundry unclaimed dividends. On the supposition that two years of dividends were due, this item alone must have amounted, with the premium, to something like £2000 sterling. He bequeathed all he owned to his two sisters, and their children.\*

There can be no question that Paul Jones was a great man. By this we mean far more than an enterprising

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\* Those who take an interest in such details, may be pleased to know that the heirs of Paul Jones realized about \$40,000 from his estate, though much of it was lost. Among other assets, was the sword presented to him by Louis XVI. This sword is said to have cost 500 louis d'or, near \$2400. As there has been some controversy respecting it, growing out of a hasty and ill-considered statement of Capt. Mackenzie's, we will give the history of the transaction, as it has been communicated to us by Miss Janette Taylor, Jones' niece, in part, and in part ascertained from other sources.

Jones made no bequest of the sword, which became the property of his ten heirs. It was sent to Scotland, where it was a bone of contention, and was the cause of an unpleasant legal proceeding

and dashing seaman. The success which attended exploits effected by very insufficient means, forms the least portion of his claims to the character. His mind aimed at high objects, and kept an even pace with his elevated views. We have only to fancy such a man at the head of a force like that with which Nelson achieved the victory of the Nile—twelve as perfect and well commanded two-decked ships as probably ever sailed in company—in order to get some idea of what he would have done with them, having a peerage or Westminster Abbey in the perspective. No sea captain, of whom the world possesses any well authenticated account, ever attempted projects as bold as those of Jones, or which discovered more of the distinctive qualities of a great mind, if the character of his enemy be kept in view, as well as his own limited and imperfect means. The battle between the *Serapis* and the *Richard* had some

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between Mrs. Taylor and a brother-in-law. At last it was determined to present the sword to Robert Morris, as a testimonial of his services to its original owner. How it passed from Mr. Morris to Com. Barry is a disputed point. Capt. Mackenzie has said it was presented to the navy, to be worn by its senior officer; but this cannot have been true, without making Barry unfaithful to his trust, and without any visible reason, as he undoubtedly bequeathed it to Dale, in his will; Dale, who never was the senior officer of the navy, and who was not in the navy at all when the bequest was made. Mr. Morris, in the letter acknowledging the gift, remarks, that, being a civilian, he had given the sword, not to the navy, but to a naval officer. Nothing is said of any conditions. Barry bequeathed it to Dale, as the man of all others—Jones' family excepted—who had the best right to it, and it is now the property of his son, Capt. Montgomery Dale, of the navy. It is not our intention to express any opinion on the subject of the person who has now the best moral right to use this sword, though we think the legal right of Capt. Dale is indisputable.

extraordinary peculiarities, beyond a question, and yet, as a victory, it has been often surpassed. The peculiarities belong strictly to Jones; but we think his offering battle to the Drake, alone in his sloop, in the centre of the Irish Channel, with enemies before, behind, and on each side of him, an act of higher moral courage than the attack on the Serapis. Landais' extraordinary conduct could not have been foreseen, and it was only when Jones found himself reduced to an emergency in this last affair, that he came out in his character of indomitable resolution. But all the cruises of the man indicated forethought, intrepidity, and resources. Certainly, no sea captain under the American flag, Preble excepted, has ever yet equaled him, in these particulars.

That Jones had many defects of character is certain. They arose in part from temperament, and in part from education. His constant declarations of the delicacy of his sentiments, and of the disinterestedness of his services, though true in the main, were in a taste that higher associations in youth would probably have corrected. There was, however, a loftiness of feeling about him, that disinclined him equally to meanness and vulgarity; and as for the coarseness of language and deportment that too much characterized the habits of the sea, in his time, he appears never to have yielded to them. All this was well in itself, and did him credit; but it would have been better had he spoken less frequently of his exemption from such failings, and not have alluded to them so often in his remarks on others.

There was something in the personal character of Jones that weakened his hold on his contemporaries, though it does not appear to have ever produced a want

of confidence in his services or probity. Com. Dale used to mention him with respect, and even with attachment; often calling him Paul, with a degree of affection that spoke well for both parties. Still, it is not to be concealed that a species of indefinite distrust clouded his reputation even in America, until the industry of his biographers, by means of indisputable documents and his own voluminous correspondence, succeeded in placing him before the public in a light too unequivocally respectable to leave any reasonable doubts that public sentiment had silently done him injustice. The power of England, in the way of opinion, has always been great in this country, and it is probable the discredit that nation threw on the reputation of Jones, produced an influence, more visible in its results than in its workings, on his standing even with those he had so well served.

Notwithstanding the many proofs furnished by himself, of a weakness on the subject of personal consideration, Jones gave some proofs of a high feeling of self-respect. His cards bore the simple, but proud name of "Paul Jones," without any titles or official rank. His associations, too, were unquestionably high, at one period of his life. Even Englishmen of rank and reputation drew accurate distinctions between his real character and career, and those which were so assiduously imputed to him by Grub Street writers. The Duke of Dorset, the English ambassador at Paris, freely received him, and he is said to have lived on terms of intimacy with Lord Wemys, Admiral Digby, and others of like condition.

In person, Jones was of the middle stature, with a

complexion that was colorless, and with a skin that showed the exposure of the seas. He was well formed and active. His contemporaries have described him as quiet and unassuming in his manners, and of rather retiring deportment. The enthusiasm which ran in so deep a current in his heart, was not of the obtrusive sort; nor was it apt to appear until circumstances arose to call it into action; then, it seemed to absorb all the other properties of his being. Glory, he constantly avowed, was his aim, and there is reason to think he did not mistake his own motives in this particular. It is perhaps to be regretted that his love of glory was so closely connected with his personal vanity; but even this is better than the glory which is sought as an instrument of ruthless power.

If an author may be permitted to quote from himself, we shall conclude this sketch by adding what we have already said, by way of summary, of this remarkable man, in a note to the first edition of the History of the United States Navy, viz.: "In battle, Paul Jones was brave; in enterprise, hardy and original; in victory, mild and generous; in motives, much disposed to disinterestedness, though ambitious of renown and covetous of distinction; in his pecuniary relations, liberal; in his affections, natural and sincere; and in his temper, except in those cases which assailed his reputation, just and forgiving." That these good qualities were without alloy, it would be presumptuous to assert; but it appears certain that his defects were relieved by high proofs of greatness, and that his deeds were no more than the proper results of the impulses, talents, and native instincts of the man.

## MELANCTHON TAYLOR WOOLSEY.

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THE subject of this sketch was a native of New York, in which state his family has long been resident. His father was Melancthon L. Woolsey, an officer of the Revolution, and subsequently known as General Woolsey, and collector of Plattsburg. His mother was a lady of the well-known family of Livingston, and a daughter of a divine of some eminence. The Woolseys were from Long Island, where they were very respectably connected; while, by his mother, young Woolsey, in addition to his Livingston descent, certainly one of the most distinguished of America, was connected with the Platts, Breeses, and other families of respectability, in the interior of his native state. The present Capt. Breese and the subject of this notice were cousins once-removed.

Young Woolsey was born about the year 1782, his parents having married near the termination of the war of the Revolution. His early education was that usually given to young gentlemen intended for the professions, and the commencement of the year 1800 found him a student in the office of the late Mr. Justice Platt, then a lawyer of note, residing at Whitesborough, in Oneida County, and the member of Congress for his district. This was the period when the present navy may be

said to have been formed, the armaments of 1798 and 1799 having substantially brought it into existence. Young Woolsey, being of an athletic frame and manly habits, had early expressed a desire to enter the service, a wish that was gratified through the influence of Mr. Platt, as soon as that gentleman attended in his seat in Congress, which then sat in Philadelphia. We ought to have mentioned that Mr. Justice Platt was the husband of a sister of his pupil's mother, and consequently was the latter's uncle by marriage.

As the warrant of Mr. Woolsey was dated in 1800, he was about eighteen years of age when he first entered the service. He was ordered to the *Adams* 28, Capt. Valentine Morris, which vessel was bound to the West India station. The *Adams*, which was familiarly known to the service by the name of the "Little Adams," to distinguish her from the *John Adams*, was a vessel of great sailing qualities, and was one of the favorite ships of the navy. She was so sharp, and yet so slightly built, that it has been said it was not easy to write in her cabin, on account of the tremor, when she was going fast through the water. The *Adams* met with some success on this cruise, capturing no less than five French privateers, though neither was of a force to make any resistance. These vessels were named *l'Heureuse Rencontre*, *le Gambeau*, *la Renommée*, the *Dove*, and *le Massena*. This was active service, and proved a good school for all the young men who served in the ship. Young Woolsey was conspicuous for attention to his duty, and was a general favorite. When the cruise was up, the ship returned to New York.

Woolsey learned a great deal of the elementary por-



tions of his profession during the few months he served in the Adams. He was of an age to see the necessity for exertion, as well as to comprehend the reasons of what he saw done, and few midshipmen made better use of their time.

Young Woolsey was transferred to the Boston 28, Capt. McNiell, as soon as the Adams was paid off. This was the ship, commander, and cruise, that have since given rise to so many rumors and anecdotes in the service. Although the proper place to record the more material incidents of this singular cruise, as well as the striking personal peculiarities of Capt. McNiell himself, will be in the biography of that officer, one or two that were connected with the subject of this sketch may be related here.

In dropping out of the East River into the Hudson, the pilot got the Boston on a reef of rocks that lie near the Battery. Woolsey, who had made himself a good deal of a seaman while in the Adams, was rated as a master's mate on board the Boston, and he was sent ashore with a boat, with orders to go to the navy-agent, in order to direct him to send off a lighter, with spare anchors and cables. On landing, he met the navy-agent on the battery, and communicated his orders. The latter asked Mr. Woolsey to proceed with his boat a short distance, in order to tow a lighter round to a point where it could receive the ground-tackle needed. Supposing he should be conforming to the wishes of his captain, and knowing that, in consequence of meeting the navy-agent on the Battery, he might still return to the ship sooner than he was expected, the young officer complied. As soon as the duty was over, Woolsey

returned on board the *Boston*, repaired to the cabin, and reported all that he had done. His captain heard him with grave attention. When the midshipman had got through with his story, and expected to be applauded for his judicious decision, the reasons for which he had paraded with some little effort, Capt. McNiell looked intently at him, and uttered, in a slow, distinct manner, the words, "D—d yahoo!" Woolsey remonstrated, with some warmth, but the only atonement he received was a repetition of "D—d yahoo!" uttered in a more quick and snappish manner.

This little affair was very near driving our young officer out of the ship; but his good sense got the better of his pride, and he came to the wise decision not to let his public career be affected by his private feelings. Ships were then difficult to be found; the cruise promised to be both instructing and agreeable, in other respects; and large allowances were always made for Capt. McNiell's humor. We say the wise decision, since an officer is usually wrong who suffers a misunderstanding with a superior to drive him from his vessel. So long as he is right and does his duty, he can always maintain his position with dignity and self-respect.

The *Boston* was the ship that carried Chancellor Livingston and suite to France, when the former went as a minister to negotiate the treaty for the cession of Louisiana. The passage was pleasant enough, until the ship got near her port, when she was caught in a fearful gale, that blew directly on shore, and came very near being lost. Every one admitted that the frigate was saved by the steadiness and seamanship of the old

officer who commanded her. He carried sail in a way that astounded all on board, but succeeded in clawing off the land. We have heard Woolsey say that he carried on the ship so hard that the muzzles of the quarter-deck guns were frequently under water. In a word, the struggle seemed to be between the power of the elements and the resolution and perseverance of a single man, and the last prevailed.

After landing the minister, the *Boston*, in pursuance of her instructions, proceeded to the Mediterranean, where she was to join the squadron under the orders of Com. Dale. But it did not suit the caprices of Capt. McNiell to come within the control of a superior, and he managed in a way to avoid both of the officers who commanded while the ship was out. He gave convoy, and for a short time was off Tripoli, blockading, but the *Constellation* appearing before that port, he immediately left it, and did not return. Woolsey used to relate a hundred laughable anecdotes concerning this cruise, during which Capt. McNiell committed some acts that hardly could be excused by the oddity of his character. While the ship was on the African coast, the captain sent for the pilot, a Frenchman, in order to ascertain the position of a particular reef, or a shoal, about which he had some misgivings. Woolsey entered the cabin on duty just as this consultation was held. The Frenchman was pointing to the chart, and he said, a little at a loss to indicate the precise spot, "*Là-là, Monsieur.*" "*Là-là-là, b—r là, where's the reef?*" demanded McNiell.

On another occasion, while the ship lay at Malaga, Woolsey was sent on shore, at nine, for the captain,

who had dined that day with the consul. Sweden was at war with Tripoli, at that time, as well as ourselves, and a Swedish squadron was then at Malaga, the admiral and captains also dining with the consul on this occasion. McNiell was seated between the admiral and one of his captains, when Woolsey was shown into the dining-room. The young man reported the boat. "What do you say?" called out Capt. McNiell. Woolsey repeated what he had said. McNiell now leaned forward, and, his face within two feet of that of the admiral, he called out, "These bloody Swedes keep such a chattering, you must speak louder."

But these were trifles in the history of this extraordinary man, and we only relate them on account of their connection with the subject of this sketch. After remaining abroad near or quite a twelve-month, the *Boston* returned home, where her commander was discharged from the service, and the ship was laid up in ordinary, never to be re-commissioned. She was subsequently burned at the taking of Washington.

We do not happen to possess the proofs to say whether Woolsey returned to America in the *Boston*, or whether he joined one of the ships of Com. Morris' squadron, at Gibraltar. We cannot find any evidence that Capt. McNiell ever joined either commodore, and it is not easy to see how one of his midshipmen could have got into another ship without such a junction. At any rate, Woolsey was certainly in the *Chesapeake*, as one of her midshipmen, while Com. Morris had his pennant flying in her, and he went with that officer to the New York, acting Capt. Chauncey. On the passage between Gibraltar and Malta, the *Enterprise* in

company, occurred the explosion on board the New York, by means of which that frigate came very near being lost. Woolsey always spoke in the highest terms of the coolness and decision of Chauncey, on this trying occasion, by which alone the vessel was saved. As it was, nineteen officers and men were blown up, or were seriously burned, fourteen of whom lost their lives. The sentinel in the magazine passage was driven quite through to the filling-room door, and only a single thickness of plank lay between the fire and the powder of the magazine, when the flames were extinguished.

Woolsey went off Tripoli again, in the New York, and was present when Porter made his spirited attack on the wheat-boats ashore, and in the abortive attempt that was subsequently made at cannonading the town. We are not certain whether Mr. Woolsey returned home in the Adams, with Com. Morris, or whether he continued out on the station until the New York's cruise was up. There could not have been much difference in the time, however, our young officer serving afloat in the Adams, Boston, Chesapeake, New York, and, we believe, in the Adams, again, with little or no interruption, from the time he entered the service, in 1800, to the close of the year 1803. During these cruises, Woolsey made himself a sailor, and a good one he was for the time he had been at sea, and the opportunities he had enjoyed.

In consequence of having been attached to the previous squadron, or that of Com. Morris, Woolsey had not the good fortune to belong to that of Preble, which so much distinguished itself in the succeeding year. His next service was in the Essex 32, Capt. James

Barron, a ship that was then justly deemed one of the best ordered in the navy. The Essex formed one of the vessels that were placed under the orders of Com. Samuel Barron, and she arrived out shortly after the explosion of the Intrepid ketch. When Com. Rodgers assumed the command of the force in the Mediterranean, the Essex was one of his squadron, which consisted of no less than twenty-four sail, gunboats included. Thirteen of these vessels appeared in company before the town of Tunis, dictating the terms of a treaty of indemnity to that regency. The Essex was of the number.

In the course of the exchanges that were made, Capt. Campbell took command of the Essex. About this time Woolsey received an acting appointment as a lieutenant, and when Capt. Campbell again exchanged with Com. Rodgers, the latter coming home, and the former remaining out in command, Woolsey went, with a large proportion of the officers of the Essex, to the Constitution 44.

In the Constitution, then the commanding ship, Woolsey remained on the Mediterranean station, until near the close of the year 1807. He had, for his messmates, Charles Ludlow, William Burrows, and various other young men of merit. None of the lieutenants, Ludlow excepted, were commissioned, but they were all held in abeyance, with orders to Com. Campbell to report on their qualifications and conduct. That officer was so well satisfied with his young men, however, that in the end each of them got his proper place on the list. In that day, lieutenants were frequently very young men, and it sometimes happened that their frolics partook more of the levity of youth than is now

apt to occur, in officers of that rank. One little incident, which occurred to Woolsey while he was under the command of Com. Campbell, tells so well for the parties concerned, that we cannot refrain from relating it; more especially as the officer whose conduct appeared to the most advantage in the affair is still living, and it may serve to make his true character known to the country.

Com. Campbell had brought with him, to his ship, a near relative, of the name of Read. This young gentleman was one of the midshipmen of the frigate, while Woolsey and Burrows were two of her lieutenants. On a certain occasion, when the latter was "filled with wine," he became pugnacious, and came to *voies de fait* with his friend Woolsey. The latter, always an excellently tempered man, as well as one of great personal strength, succeeded in getting his riotous messmate down on the ward-room floor, where he dictated the terms of peace. As such an achievement, notwithstanding Burrows' condition, could not be effected without some tumult and noise, the fact that two of the ward-room officers had come to something very like blows, if not actually to that extremity, necessarily became known to their neighbors in the steerage. From the steerage, the intelligence traveled to the cabin, and, next morning, both Woolsey and Burrows were placed under arrest. As between the two parties to the scene nothing further passed or was contemplated, they were particularly good friends, and the offender no sooner came to his senses than he expressed his regrets, and no more was thought of the affair. Capt. Campbell himself was willing to overlook it, when he learned

the true state of things, and all was forgotten but the manner in which it was supposed the commodore obtained his information. That the last came from some one in the steerage was reasonably certain, and the ward-room officers decided that the informer must have been Mr. Read, on account of his near consanguinity to the commanding officer. On a consultation, it was resolved to send Mr. Read to coventry, which was forthwith done.

For a long time, Mr. Read was only spoken to by the gentlemen of the ward-room on duty. They even went out of their way to invite the other midshipmen to dine with them, always omitting to include the supposed informer in their hospitalities. Any one can imagine how unpleasant this must have been to the party suffering, who bore it all, however, without complaining. At length Woolsey, while over a glass of wine in the cabin, ascertained from the commodore himself the manner in which the latter had obtained his knowledge of the fracas. It was through his own clerk, who messed in the steerage.

The moment an opportunity offered, Woolsey, than whom a nobler or better-hearted man never existed, went up to young Read on the quarter-deck, and, raising his hat, something like the following conversation passed between them.

“You must have observed, Mr. Read, that the officers of the ward-room have treated you coldly, for some months past?”

“I am sorry to say I have, sir.”

“It was owing to the opinion that you had informed



Com. Campbell of the unpleasant little affair that took place between Mr. Burrows and myself.”

“I have supposed it to be owing to that opinion, sir.”

“Well, sir, we have now ascertained that we have done you great injustice, and I have come to apologize to you for my part of this business, and to beg you will forget it. I have it from your uncle, himself, that it was Mr. ——.”

“I have all along thought the commodore got his information from that source.”

“Good Heaven! Mr. Read, had you intimated as much, it would have put an end at once to the unpleasant state of things which has so long existed between yourself and the gentlemen of the ward-room.”

“That would have been doing the very thing for which you blamed me, Mr. Woolsey—turning informer.”

Woolsey frequently mentioned this occurrence, and always in terms of high commendation of the self-denial and self-respect of the midshipman. We had it, much as it is related here, from the former's mouth. It is scarcely necessary to tell those who are acquainted with the navy that the young midshipman was the present Commodore George Campbell Read, now in command of the coast of Africa squadron.

The Constitution was kept out on the station some months longer than had been intended, in consequence of the attack that was made on the Chesapeake, the ship that was fitted out to relieve her. This delay caused the times of the crew to be up, and the frigate

was kept waiting at Gibraltar in hourly expectation of this relief. Instead of receiving the welcome news that the anchors were to be lifted for home, the commodore was compelled to issue orders to return to some port aloft. These orders produced one of the very few mutinies that have occurred in the American marine, the people refusing to man the capstan bars. On this trying occasion, the lieutenants of the ship did their duty manfully. They rushed in to the crowd, brought out the ringleaders by the collar, and, sustained by the marine guard, which behaved well, they soon had the ship under complete subjection. This was done too, as the law then stood, with very questionable authority. Subsequent legislation has since provided for such a dilemma, but it may be well doubted if the majority of the Constitution's crew could have been legally made to do duty on that occasion. So complete, however, was the ascendancy of discipline, that the officers triumphed, and the ship was carried wherever her commander pleased.

Nor was this all. When the Constitution did come home, she went into Boston. Instead of being paid off in that port, which under the peculiarities of her case certainly ought to have been done, orders arrived to take her round to New York. When all hands were called to "up anchor," her officers fully expected another revolt! but, instead of that, the people manned the bars cheerfully, and no resistance was made to the movement. The men, when spoken to in commendation of their good conduct, admitted that they had been so effectually put down on the former occasion, that they entertained no further thoughts of resistance.

Woolsey did his full share of duty in these critical circumstances, as, indeed, did all of her lieutenants.

Woolsey had greatly improved himself not only in his profession, but in his mind generally, during his different Mediterranean cruises. Shortly after the *Constitution* was paid off, he repaired to Washington, where he remained some time, employed in preparing a system of signals. The year 1808 was one during which the relations between this country and England very seriously menaced war. The government, in anticipation of such an event, saw the necessity of making some provisions of defence on lakes Ontario and Champlain. Woolsey, during his stay at Washington, had so far gained the confidence of the Department, that he was selected to superintend at the construction of, and to command the first regular armaments ever made under the Union, on these inland waters. It was decided to build a brig of sixteen guns on Lake Ontario, and two gun-boats on Champlain. Five officers were detached for this service, including Lieut. Woolsey, who had command on both lakes. Lieut. John Montresor Haswell was sent to Champlain, with Messrs. Walker and Hall, while Woolsey took with himself, to Ontario, Messrs. Gamble and Cooper. It is believed that all these gentlemen are now dead, with the exception of the last, who is here making an imperfect record of some of the service of his old friend and messmate.

The port of Oswego was selected as the place where the brig was to be constructed. The contractors were Christian Bergh and Henry Eckford, both of whom afterwards became known to the country as eminent

constructors and shipwrights. The brig was called the Oneida, and she was laid down on the eastern point that formed one side of the outlet of the river. In 1808 Oswego was a mere hamlet of some twenty, or five-and-twenty, houses, that stood on a very irregular sort of a line, near the water, the surrounding country, for thirty or forty miles, being very little more than a wilderness. On the eastern bank of the river, and opposite to the village, or on the side of the stream on which the Oneida was built, there was but a solitary log-house, and the ruins of the last English fort.

The arrival of a party of officers, together with a strong gang of ship-carpenters, riggers, blacksmiths, &c., produced a great commotion in that retired hamlet, though port it was, and made a sensible change in its condition. For the first time, money began to be seen in the place, the circulating medium having previously been salt. The place was entirely supported by the carrying of the salt manufactured at Salina. Eight or ten schooners and sloops were employed in this business, and the inhabitants of Oswego then consisted of some four or five traders, who were mostly ship-owners, the masters and people of the vessels, boatmen who brought the salt down the river, a few mechanics, and a quarter-educated personage who called himself doctor.\*

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\* The reader can form a sort of idea of the knowledge of the men who then practiced medicine, and who called themselves "doctors" on the frontiers, by the following anecdote. Colonel, then Ensign, Gardner of the "old sixth," had been a student of medicine with Hosack, previously to his entering the army. "*Faute de mieux*," he prescribed for the men under his orders, and the writer of this article, in the familiarity of a messmate, used to say the G of his surname stood for "Galen." When Mr.

Woolsey and his party hired a house and commenced housekeeping, their mess being soon increased by the arrival of a small detachment of the Old Sixth Infantry, under the orders of Lieut. Christie, subsequently the Colonel Christie who died in Canada, during the campaign of 1813. Ensign Gardner accompanied the party. This gentleman rose to the rank of Colonel also, acting as adjutant-general to the division of Gen. Brown in the celebrated campaign of '14, and has since been deputy postmaster-general, auditor of the Post-office Department, &c., &c.

This joint mess made a most merry winter of it. Woolsey was its head by rank, and he was its soul in spirits and resources. Balls, dinners, and suppers were given

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Gardner joined the mess, the "doctor" mentioned in the text was absent, nor did he return until the army officers had been some time at Oswego. The "doctor" and the "mess" were next door neighbors, the former living in a small building that joined the mess-house, cooking for himself, &c., &c. Many a time did the late Capt. Gamble and the writer risk breaking their necks, to crawl out on the doctor's wing and drop snow-balls and other "cooling ingredients," by means of the chimney, into the doctor's mess. The first evening of this personage's return to Oswego, he made his appearance in the mess, where he was cordially received, and formally introduced to the ensign by the writer.

"By the way, Galen, let me make you acquainted with our neighbor, Hippocrates, of whom you have heard us speak so often."

Woolsey, Gamble, and Gardner smiled at the sally, but the smile was converted into a roar when the little doctor held out his hand to Gardner, and answered, with a simplicity that was of proof—

"Don't you mind what Cooper says, *Mr. Galen*; he is always at some foolery or other, and has nicknamed me Hippocrates; why I do not know, but my real name is —."

to the better portion of the inhabitants, and, from being regarded with distrust as likely to interfere with the free-trade principles that the embargo then rendered very decided on all the Canada frontier, Woolsey became highly popular and beloved. He had nothing to do, in fact, with the smugglers, his duty being strictly that of a man-of-war's man.

In the mean time, things did not drag on the point. Eckford was present, in person, and he went into the forest, marked his trees, had them cut, trimmed, and hauled, and in the frame of the Oneida in a very few days. The work advanced rapidly, and a small sloop of war, that was pierced for sixteen guns, soon rose on the stocks. Understanding that the floor-timbers of the salt-droggers never decayed, Woolsey had the frame of this brig filled in with salt, using the current coin of the place for that purpose. In that day, every thing was reduced to the standard value of salt, at Oswego. A barrel of salt on the wharf was counted at two dollars; and so many barrels of salt were paid for a cow, so many for a horse, and one barrel for a week's board of the better quality. The living was excellent, salmon, bass, venison in season, rabbits, squirrels, wild-geese, ducks, &c., abounding. The mess, however, pronounced cranberries the staple commodity of the region. They were uniformly served three times a day, and with venison, ducks, &c., made a most delicious accompaniment. Woolsey was a notable caterer, keeping his mess in abundance. The house had been a tavern, and the bar was now converted into a larder, the cold of that region serving to keep every thing sweet. It did the eye good to examine the collection that was

made in this corner by Christmas! At the fireside, Woolsey was the life of the mess in conversation, anecdote, and amusement. He would have been a treasure on such an expedition as that of Parry's.

One day, an inhabitant of Oswego came running into the mess-house to say that a Lieut. R—, from Kingston, was then on board the brig, in disguise, examining her. The officers were at the table, and Woolsey coolly expressed his regrets that Mr. R. had not let him know of his visit, that he might have had the pleasure of his company at dinner. As the gentleman evidently wished to be incog., however, he could not think of disturbing him. This visit was the precursor of the construction of a ship at Kingston, of a force to overcome the Oneida. The English vessel was called the Royal George, mounted twenty-four guns, and was much larger than the American brig. She subsequently figured in Sir James Yeo's squadron, under the name of the Montreal. A few months later, while the Royal George was still on the stocks, Woolsey had occasion to go to Kingston. He was invited by a friend in that place to pay a visit to the navy-yard, and, putting on his uniform, he went. While on board the new ship, the very officer who had been at Oswego came up and remarked it was contrary to orders to allow foreign officers to examine the vessel. Woolsey apologized, said he was ignorant of the rule, and would retire.

"I have the honor of seeing Mr. R—, I believe," he added, as he was about to quit the ship.

The other admitted he was that person.

"I regret I did not know of the visit you did us the

favor to make on board the Oneida, until it was too late to be of any service to you. The next time, I trust, you will apprise us of your intention, when I shall be extremely happy to let you see all we have that is worth the trouble of examining, and of showing you some of the hospitalities of the place."

It is scarcely necessary to say that the lieutenant looked very foolish, and Woolsey had his revenge. It is proper to add that this personage did not belong to the Royal, but to the Provincial Navy, and was a man of confessedly inferior manners and habits.

The Oneida was launched early in the spring, and was immediately equipped for the lake. Erskine's arrangement, as it was called, occurring soon after, however, she was not immediately used. Woolsey now determined to get a view of Niagara, as he did not know at what moment he might be ordered back to the sea-board. Manning and provisioning the brig's launch, therefore, he and Mr. Cooper sailed from Oswego, late in June, 1809. The commencement of this little voyage was favorable, and it was thought the boat would reach the river in the course of eight-and-forty hours; but the winds proved very variable, and came out fresh ahead. Instead of making the passage in the anticipated two days, the launch was a week out, encountering much bad weather. Relying on his sails, Woolsey had taken but four men, and this was not a force to do much with the oars, so that turning to windward was the business most of the time. Three times the boat beat up to a headland, called the Devil's Nose, and twice it was compelled, by the wind and sea, to bear up, before it could weather it. Four nights



were passed in the boat, two on the beach, and one in a hut on the banks of the Genessee, a few miles below the falls, and of course quite near the present site of Rochester.

All the south shore of Ontario, with here and there some immaterial exception, was then a wilderness! Four days out, the provisions failed, and there was actually a want of food. It was not easy to starve so near the forest, certainly, but the men had been improvident, and a fast of a few hours threw Woolsey on his resources. Even the last cracker was eaten, and fish could not be taken. One old seaman had passed forty years on the lake, and he knew the position of every dwelling that stood near its shore. There might then have been a dozen of these little clearings between the Oswego and the Niagara, and one that contained three or four log-houses was known to be some two or three leagues distant. There was no wind, and the launch was pulled up to a beach where it was easy to land, and at a point at no great distance from these houses. It was so late, however, that it was not thought expedient to search for the habitations that evening. The whole party was about to bivouac supperless, when Mr. Cooper accidentally came across a hedge-hog, which he killed with the sword of a cane. On this animal all hands supped, and very good eating it proved to be.

The next morning, the two gentlemen, accompanied by the old laker and another man, set out in quest of the log-huts, which stood a mile or two inland. One was found at the end of an hour, but no one was near it. It was inhabited, however, and in a pantry were found two loaves of bread, and a baking of dried

whortleberry pies, as well as some milk. Necessity having no law, one loaf, two of the pies, and a gallon of milk were sequestered, two silver dollars being left in their places. After breakfasting, and sending the old man to the boat with some food, the two officers followed their pilot toward the other cabins. These were also found, and in them the mistress of the mansion already invaded. A full confession of what had been done followed, and a proposal was made to purchase the remainder of the pies. This alarmed the good woman, who returned with the party forthwith, but who took things more composedly when she got her hand on the silver. So difficult was it to obtain flour in those isolated clearings that she could not be tempted to sell any thing else, and the party returned to the boat, with about a fourth of a meal remaining in their possession. A breeze springing up, sail was made, and Woolsey proceeded.

Hunger and head winds again brought the adventurers to a stand. A solitary dwelling was known to be at no great distance inland from the point where the boat now was, and again the party landed. The boat entered by a narrow inlet into a large bay, that was familiarly called Gerundegutt, (Irondoquoit,) and was hauled up for the night. The whole party bivouacked supperless.

In the morning, the two officers and three of the men went in quest of the house, which was found, a mile or two inland. The man who lived here was a cockney, who had left London some fifteen years before, and pitched his tent, as he said himself, twenty miles from his nearest neighbors. He went forty miles to mill, by

his account, making most of the journey in a skiff. He had neither bread nor flour to spare, nor would money tempt him. He had four or five sheep, but his wife remonstrated against parting with one of them; she wanted the fleeces to spin, and they had not yet been sheared. Woolsey, however, persuaded the man to have the sheep penned, when the sailors caught a wether, and began to feel his ribs. The animal was pronounced to be in excellent condition. A half eagle was now exhibited, and old Peter, the pilot, got his knife out, ready for work. The woman remonstrated, on a high key, and the cockney vacillated. At one moment he was about to yield; at the next, the clamor of the woman prevailed. This scene lasted near a quarter of an hour, when Woolsey commenced an attack on the lady, by paying compliments to her fine children, three as foul little Christians as one could find on the frontier. This threw the mother off her guard, and she wavered. At this unguarded moment, the man accepted the half eagle, about five times the value of the wether, as sheep sold at that season, in the settled parts of the country, uttered a faint, "Well, captain, since you wish it—" and a signal from Woolsey caused the animal's throat to be cut incontinently. At the next instant the woman changed her mind; but it was too late, the wether was bleeding to death. Notwithstanding all this, the woman refused to be pacified until Woolsey made her a present of the skin and fleece, when the carcass was borne off in triumph.

This sheep was all the food the party had for that day, and it was eaten without salt or bread. Woolsey contrived to make a sort of soup of it, over which he

laughed and feasted, keeping everybody in good humor with his jokes and fine temper. Some scrapings of flour were thrown into the pot, and Woolsey called his dish a "noodle soup."

These things are related more to show the state of the Ontario frontier five-and-thirty years since, than for any great interest they possess of themselves. Provisions were almost of as much importance among the dwellers of the forest, as with the mariner at sea; money itself, though of rare occurrence among them, becoming nearly valueless compared with flour, in particular. Even the Oswego currency, salt, did not abound among them, the difficulties of transportation rendering it of importance to husband the smallest article of subsistence. The party could get no salt to eat with their mutton.

The day the sheep was purchased, the launch went out, and began to turn to windward, in squally weather and against a foul wind. In crossing Genessee Bay it came near filling in a squall, and it was found necessary to bear up for the river. Here the party passed another night, in a solitary log cabin, at, or near the point where the steamers and other craft must now make their harbor. A little bread was got in exchange for some sheep, and milk was purchased. But six hungry sailors seemed to create a famine wherever they went, and next morning the launch went out, though the wind was still foul. Then came the tug at the Devil's Nose, which has been mentioned, and the running to leeward to lie to in smooth water. At length the wind came off the land, when the remainder of the distance was run without much difficulty.

It was just as the day broke, that the party in the launch made the mouth of the Niagara. The lantern was still burning in the light-house; the two forts, the town of Newark, and the appearance of cultivation on every side, had an effect like that of enchantment on those who had been coasting a wilderness for a week. Even Oswego, though an old station, had little the air of a peopled country, but the region along the banks of the Niagara had been settled as long as that on the banks of the Hudson, and the transition was like that of suddenly quitting the forest to be placed in the midst of the labors of man. It was the Fourth of July, and the launch entered the river with an American ensign set. It proceeded to Newark, where the two officers took up their quarters for a week. In an hour a deputation from Fort Niagara came across to inquire who had brought the American ensign, for the first time, in a man-of-war's boat, into that river. On being told, a formal invitation was given to join the officers on the other side in celebrating the day.

Woolsey and his party remained some time in and about the Niagara. He passed up on the upper lake, and paid a visit on board the Adams, a brig that belonged to the War Department, which was subsequently taken by the British, at Hull's surrender, named the Detroit, and cut out from under Fort Erie, by Elliott, in 1812. The return to Oswego was less difficult, and was accomplished in two days. These were the first movements by American man-of-war's men that ever occurred on the great lakes—waters that have since become famous by the deeds of M'Donough, Perry, and Chauncey.

Although the Oneida was put out of commission,

Woolsey still remained in charge of the station that had thus been created. In 1810, his brig was again fitted out, and she continued in service until the declaration of war. In the spring of '12, Woolsey seized an English schooner that was smuggling, brought her in, and had her condemned. This was the vessel that was subsequently lost under Chauncey, under the name of the Scourge. A characteristic anecdote is related of Woolsey, in connection with the sale of some of the effects taken on board this vessel. Every thing on board her was sold, even to some trunks that had belonged to a female passenger. Woolsey took care that the hardship of the case of this lady should be made known, in the expectation no one would be found mean enough to bid against her agent. But in this he was mistaken. When the agent bid five dollars, a blood-sucker of a speculator bid ten—"Twenty!" shouted Woolsey, seating himself on one of the trunks, in a way that said, "I'll have them, if they cost a thousand." This movement drove off the miserable creature, and Woolsey presented the lady her trunks, free of charges.

At the declaration of war, in 1812, which came so unlooked for on the country, and which would not have been made at the time it was but for a concurrence of unexpected circumstances, Woolsey was still in command on Lake Ontario, with the rank of lieutenant. His whole force consisted of the Oneida brig, while the enemy could muster a small squadron of several sail, among which was the Royal George, a ship heavy enough to engage two such vessels as the American brig, with every chance of success. As soon as the Oneida was actively employed, the naval station had

been removed from Oswego to Sackett's Harbor, where she was lying at the declaration of war. On the 19th of July, the enemy appeared in the offing, with the Royal George, Earl of Moira, Duke of Gloucester, Seneca, and Simcoe. The two first were ships, the third was a brig, and the two last schooners. As soon as apprised of the presence of this force, Woolsey got the Oneida under way, and went out, with the view of passing the enemy, and escaping to the open lake, in the hope of being able to separate his enemies in chase. But finding this impossible, he beat back into the harbor, and anchored his brig directly opposite to its entrance, under the bank that is now occupied by Madison Barracks. The utmost activity was shown in making this arrangement, and in landing all the guns on the off side of the brig, and in placing them in battery on the bank.

Finding that the enemy was slowly working up on the outside of the peninsula, Woolsey now repaired in person to a small work that had been erected on the high land above the navy-yard, and made his preparations to open on the English from that point. A long thirty-two had been sent on for the Oneida, but never mounted, being much too heavy for that brig, of which the armament consisted of twenty-four pound carronades. This gun Woolsey had caused to be mounted on its pivot, in the work named, and, as soon as the enemy got within range, he opened on them with it. The English had captured a boat in the offing, and sent in a demand for the surrender of the Oneida and the Lord Nelson, under the penalty of destroying the place, in the event of refusal. This demand Woolsey

answered with his long Tom, when a cannonading that lasted two hours succeeded. As the enemy kept at long shot, little damage was done, though the English were supposed to have suffered sufficiently to induce them to bear up and abandon the attempt. Although this affair was not very bloody, Woolsey did all that circumstances would allow; he preserved his brig, and saved the town. He was assisted by a small body of troops in the work. If the enemy did not press him harder, the fault was their own; he had not the means of acting on the offensive.

The government deciding to increase its force on Lake Ontario, Com. Chauncey was ordered to assume the command. Woolsey continued second in rank all that season, however, retaining the command of the Oneida. He was in charge of this brig in the spirited dash that Chauncey made against Kingston, in November, on which occasion the Oneida was warmly engaged, receiving some damage, and having four of her crew killed and wounded. This attack virtually closed the war on the lake for the season, as the affair of Sackett's Harbor had commenced it.

Both parties building in the course of the winter, it was found necessary to send several officers to Ontario, who ranked Lieut. Com. Woolsey. As this was done only to take charge of new vessels, he ever after was employed in command, when employed at all. Woolsey was second in command, however, at the attack on York, retaining his own brig, the commodore having hoisted his pennant in the Madison. Woolsey was also present at the landing and the attack on the batteries of Fort George, still commanding the Oneida, with the



rank of lieutenant. As Perry was present on this occasion, our subject was only third in rank among the sea-officers engaged.

Shortly after the landing at Fort George, Woolsey was promoted to be a commander, though he did not learn the fact for some time. His name appears as the seventh in a batch of fifteen. Two of his juniors, Trenchard and Elliott, were already on Lake Ontario, and several of his seniors were shortly afterward sent there. In all the manœuvring, and in the skirmishes which took place between Commodores Chauncey and Yeo, during the summer of '13, Woolsey still remained in charge of the *Oneida*, older officers and post-captains coming up with fresh crews for the larger vessels. Sinclair had the *Pike*, and Crane the *Madison*, leaving Woolsey the fourth in rank present.

When the squadron returned to port, Woolsey found his new commission, and he was transferred to a large new schooner, called the *Sylph*, Lieut. Brown succeeding him in his old command, the *Oneida*. The *Sylph* was a large, fast-sailing schooner, that carried an awkward armament of four heavy pivot-guns amidships, mounted to fire over all. Woolsey was in this vessel, on the 25th September, when Chauncey so nobly brought the whole English squadron to close action, supported for a considerable time only by *Bolton*, in the *Governor Tompkins*, and the *Asp*, a schooner that the *Pike* had in tow. This was one of the sharpest affairs of the war, as long as it lasted, and would have been decisive had the *Madison* and *Sylph* been able to close; or, had not Sir James Yeo run through his own

line, and taken refuge under the batteries of Burlington Heights.

As is usual, when success does not equal expectation, most of the superior officers received more or less censure, for supposed mistakes on this occasion. It is now well known that a complete defeat would have befallen the enemy had he been hotly pressed, and that he was seriously worsted as it was; but it is easy to discover the avenues to success, after the road has been once thoroughly traveled. It is a fact worthy of being remembered, that not an English vessel was taken in battle, during the whole of the war of 1812, with two very immaterial exceptions, unless she offered freely to engage. The exceptions were the two small craft taken at the close of Perry's victory on Lake Erie, in which the whole English force had, in the first instance, very gallantly offered battle.

Woolsey did not escape criticism in this affair, any more than other commanders. His schooner did not prove of as much service as she might have been, on account of the awkwardness of her armament, which was changed to broadside guns, as soon as the squadron went into port again. Woolsey alleged that he was compelled to tow a large schooner, as was the fact with the *Madison*. Neither dared to cast off the tow, in the presence of the commodore, and the latter had sufficient reasons for not ordering them to do so. Woolsey very frankly admitted, however, that he impaired the sailing of the *Sylph*, by surging on the tow-line in the hope it would part; a false step, that dropped his schooner so far astern that she greatly embarrassed him by her yawing. It is by no means certain Sir James Yeo would

have engaged at all, could the whole of the American force have closed at the same time, and he always had Burlington Bay under his lee.

A few days after this action, Chauncey chased to the eastward, under a crowd of canvas, with the mistaken notion that the English had got past him in the night. In the afternoon of the 5th October, seven sail were made ahead, and it was supposed the British squadron was leading down the lake. An hour later, the vessels ahead were made out to be schooners, when the commodore signalled the Sylph and Lady of the Lake to cast off their tows. This was no sooner done than these two fast schooners shot swiftly ahead. Seeing their danger, the enemy set fire to the dullest craft, and separated. The Pike now cast off her tow, and she soon succeeded in capturing three of the enemy. Woolsey soon after joined with a fourth, and, continuing on, next morning he brought a fifth out from the Ducks. The prizes were gun-vessels, and near 300 prisoners were made in them, including a detachment of troops. Two of these vessels were the schooners Chauncey had lost in his action with Sir James, earlier in the season. This affair substantially closed the cruising service of that year.

Woolsey got a new vessel for the season of 1814. She was a large brig of twenty-two guns, called the Jones, and proved a fast and good vessel. Previously to the equipment of this vessel, however, he was sent to superintend the transportation of guns and cables, from Oswego to the Harbor, by water. This was very delicate service, as the enemy had obtained the temporary command of the lake, by building. He was at the

Oswego Falls, engaged in this duty, when the English made their descent at Oswego. Woolsey showed much address on this occasion. The enemy possessing so many means of obtaining information, he was compelled to resort to artifice—spreading a report that the direction of the stores was to be changed. Allowing sufficient time for this rumor to reach the enemy, he caused as many guns and cables to be run over the falls as he had boats to carry them in, and immediately went down the river. At dusk, on the evening of the 20th May, the look-outs seeing nothing in the offing, he went out with a brigade of nineteen heavy boats. The night proved to be dark and rainy, and the men toiled until daylight at the oars. When light returned, the boats were at the mouth of Big Salmon River. Here the party was met by a small detachment of Indians; a party of riflemen, under Major Appling, having formed the guard from Oswego. It was found that one boat had parted company in the night. This boat, as it was afterward ascertained, attempted to pass the blockading squadron, and to go direct to the Harbor by water. It was captured by the English.

Woolsey went on, and entered Big Sandy Creek, with his charge, agreeably to a previous understanding. In the mean time, Sir James Yeo, learning the situation of the brigade, from the crew of the captured boat, sent a strong party, covered by three gun-boats, to capture it. The English entered the creek with confidence, throwing grape and cannister into the bushes ahead of them, from some very heavy carronades. Woolsey set about discharging his guns and cables, in order to secure them, while Major Appling placed his command in am-

bush, a short distance below the boats. As the English advanced they were met by a most destructive fire, and every man of their party was captured. Among the prisoners were two captains, four sea lieutenants, and two midshipmen. The stores were safely conveyed to the Harbor, and Chauncey was enabled to raise the blockade, as soon as he could arm his new ships.

After the American squadron got out, Woolsey commanded the *Jones* 22. He was only the sixth in rank on the lake this summer, there being several captains present, beside two commanders that were his seniors. The *Jones* was kept in the squadron until Chauncey had swept the lake, but the commodore going off Kingston with a diminished force, in the hope of tempting Sir James to come out, he ordered Woolsey to cruise between Oswego and the Harbor, in order to keep the communication between these two important points free. At a later day Woolsey was sent to join Ridgely, who was blockading the Niagara. On this station the *Jefferson* and the *Jones* experienced a tremendous gale, in which the former had to throw some of her guns overboard.

The last service on the lake that season, was in transporting the division of Gen. Izard to the westward. Shortly after, Chauncey collected all his force at the Harbor, and prepared to repel an attack, which it was expected the English would make, having got their two-decker out.

Peace being made the succeeding winter, most of the officers and crews were transferred to the seaboard. Woolsey, however, was left in charge of the station, where he remained for many years. There was a vast

amount of property to take care of, and a little fleet of dismantled vessels. This continued for several years, but gradually the charge was reduced, officer after officer was withdrawn, ship after ship was broken up, until, in the end, the trust was one that might well be confided to a subordinate. In 1817, Woolsey was promoted to be a captain, and not long after he married a lady of the name of Tredwell, a member of the Long Island family of that name.

Woolsey passed the flower of his days on Lake Ontario. No doubt this was of disservice, by withdrawing him, for many years, from the more active duties of his profession. But he liked, and was liked in, that quarter of the country, and family ties came in aid of old associations to keep him there. After remaining something like fifteen years in the lake service, however, he got the *Constellation* frigate, then attached to the West India Squadron. Com. Warrington had his pennant in his ship, most of the time, and there being very little difference in the dates of the commissions of these two officers, Woolsey always spoke with feeling of the extreme delicacy with which he was treated by his superior. On his return from this station, he had charge of the Pensacola Yard.

After quitting Pensacola, Woolsey preferred his own claims for a squadron, and he was sent to the coast of Brazils, where he commanded, with a broad pennant, the usual term. This was the last of his service afloat, or, indeed, ashore. His health began to decline, not long after his return, and he died in 1838.

Commodore Woolsey was of the middle height, sailor-built, and of a compact, athletic frame. His counte-

nance was prepossessing, and had singularly the look of a gentleman. In his deportment, he was a pleasing mixture of gentleman-like refinement and seaman-like frankness. His long intimacy with frontier habits could not, and did not, destroy his early training, though it possibly impeded some of that advancement in his professional and general knowledge, which he had so successfully commenced in early life. He was an excellent seaman, and few officers had more correct notions of the rules of discipline. His familiar association with all the classes that mingle so freely together in border life, had produced a tendency, on his excellent disposition, to relax too much in his ordinary intercourse, perhaps, but his good sense prevented this weakness from proceeding very far. Woolsey rather wanted the grimace than the substance of authority. A better-hearted man never lived. All who sailed with him loved him, and he had sufficient native mind, and sufficient acquired instruction, to command the respect of many of the strongest intellects of the service.

The widow of Com. Woolsey still lives. She has several children, and we regret to say, like those of her sex who survive the public servants of this country, she is left with few of the world's goods to console her. Woolsey's eldest son is in the navy, and has nearly reached the rank of lieutenant.

## OLIVER HAZARD PERRY.

THE family of Perry has now been American for near two centuries. The first of the name on this side of the Atlantic, was a native of Devonshire, who emigrated to the new world about the middle of the seventeenth century, settling at Plymouth, in Massachusetts. Being of the sect of Friends, however, this residence proved to be as unfavorable to the indulgence of his peculiar religious opinions, as that from which he had so lately migrated in his native island, and he was induced to go deeper into the wilderness. He finally established himself, accompanied by others of his persuasion, on Narragansett Bay, at a place called South Kingston. Here Edmund Perry, for so was the emigrant called, acquired a landed property of some extent, from the Indians, and by fair purchase, which has continued in the possession of his descendants down to our own time.

From Edmund Perry was descended, in the fourth generation, Christopher Raymond Perry, the father of the subject of this memoir, who was born in 1761. This gentleman chose to follow the sea. After serving for some time in private armed vessels of war, during the Revolution, he turned to the merchant service for employment when peace was made, being at that time





OLIVER H. PERRY.

*Painted by Michéux (H) Nassau, N. Y.*



a very young man, as is seen by the date of his birth. In the course of one of his early voyages, Mr. Perry met with a passenger of the name of Sarah Alexander, a lady of Irish birth, but of Scotch extraction, whom he married, in the year 1784. The fruits of this union were a family of sons, most, if not all, of whom have been in the naval service of the country, and of daughters, one of whom, at least, is now the widow of an officer of rank. From this marriage, indeed, have been probably derived more officers of the navy, than from any other one connection, that of the family of Nicholson excepted. The lady who so soon found herself a wife and a mother, in the country of her adoption, proved a valuable acquisition to her new relatives, and left a strong and useful impression on most of those who have derived their existence from her.

The first child of the marriage between Christopher Raymond Perry and Sarah Alexander, was the subject of this memoir. He was called Oliver Hazard, after an ancestor of that name who had died just previously to his birth, as well as after an uncle of the same appellation, who had been recently lost at sea. Oliver Hazard Perry was born on the 20th of August, 1785. The early years of the child were distinguished by no unusual occurrences. He was kept at school, at different places, but principally in the vicinity of the residences of his own family. The armaments against France, however, induced a sudden and material increase of the naval force of the country; and in June, 1798, Christopher Raymond Perry, the father of Oliver, received an appointment as a captain in the new ma-

rine. Capt. Perry's commission placed him the eighth on the list of officers of his rank, but there being no ship of a suitable size for him to take, he was directed to superintend the construction of a vessel that was soon after laid down, at Warren, in his native State. On this occasion, Capt. Perry, accompanied by his wife, removed to Warren, leaving the household in charge of their eldest son, then a boy of only thirteen. This may be said to have been Oliver Perry's first command, and it is the tradition of the family that he acquitted himself of these novel duties with great prudence, kindness and impartiality. It was certainly a high trust to repose in a boy of his tender years, and proves the complete confidence his parents had in his discretion, temper and good sense. At this period of his life, as indeed he continued to be to a much later day, the youth was obliging, active and of singularly prepossessing appearance; and is said to have been an object of great interest within the limited circle of his acquaintance.

Captain Perry's vessel was a small frigate, that was very appropriately named the General Greene. She appears on the registers of the department as a vessel of 645 tons, and rating as a 24. In the journals of the day, however, she is oftener called a 32, which was about the number of guns she actually carried, while her true rate would have properly made her a 28. This ship was not ready to sail until the spring of the year 1799. By this time her captain's eldest son had resolved to enter on a career similar to that of his father's, and, having some time previously announced his wishes, a warrant was issued to him as a midship

man. Perry's appointment was dated April 7th, 1799, and made one of a small batch which occurred about that time, generally with intervals of a day between each warrant, and which contained the names of Trippe, Robert Henly, Joseph Bainbridge, Noel Cox, &c., &c.

Soon after Perry joined his father's ship, or about the middle of May, the *General Greene* sailed to join the force in the West Indies. Capt. Perry was directed to proceed to the Havana, and to look after the trade in that quarter, as "well as that which passes down the straits of Bahama to the Spanish main." After remaining a few weeks on her station, the yellow fever broke out in the ship, and she returned to Newport about the close of the month of July. In this short cruise Perry was first initiated in his sea service, and it is a singular circumstance that it was marked by the appearance of that dire disease by which he was, himself, subsequently lost to the country.

By bringing his ship north, Capt. Perry soon purified her, and she sailed again, for the same station, a few weeks later. Thence she went off St. Domingo, to cruise against Rigaud's barges, which committed many and sanguinary outrages; his orders directing him to circumnavigate the whole island of St. Domingo. While employed on this service, the *General Greene* found several of the brigand's light craft at anchor under the protection of some batteries. The ship stood in, and anchoring, a warm cannonade commenced. In about half an hour the batteries were silenced, as was supposed with some loss, but a vessel which had the appearance of a French frigate heaving

in sight in the offing, Capt. Perry lifted his anchor, and went out to meet her, without taking possession of his conquests. The stranger proved to be a French built vessel, that had changed masters; being, at that time, in the English navy.

The General Greene next went off Jaquemel to assist Toussaint to reduce the place. The ship is said to have been very serviceable on this duty, and to have had her full share in the success which attended the expedition. In all this service, Perry was present, of course, though in the subordinate station of a young midshipman. It was the commencement of his career, and no doubt had an influence in giving him useful opinions of duty, and in favorably forming his character.

The General Greene was placed under the particular command of Com. Talbot, by special orders from the department, of the date of September 3d, 1799, but did not fall in with that officer until April of the following year, when Capt. Perry reached Cape François, the point from which he had sailed to make the circuit of the island. Here the latter officer was directed to proceed to the mouth of the Mississippi, and receive on board Gen. Wilkinson and family; that officer being then at the head of the army. The frigate arrived off the Balize about the 20th of the month, and sailed again for Newport on the 10th of May. An act of spirit manifested by the elder Perry, on his return home from the Balize, is recorded to his credit, and as affording a proof of the school in which his gallant son was educated. The General Greene had taken an American brig under convoy that was bound into the Havana. Off the latter port, an English two-decked

ship fired a shot ahead of the brig to bring her to. Capt. Perry directing his convoy to disregard the signal, and the wind being light, the Englishman sent a boat in chase of the brig. When sufficiently near, the General Greene fired a shot ahead of the boat, as a hint to go no closer. The boat now came alongside of the frigate, and the two-decker closed at the same time, when the latter demanded the reason of the General Greene's shot. The answer was that it had been fired to prevent the boat from boarding a vessel under her convoy. The English officer, who must have known that this reply, which manifested far more spirit in the year 1800 than it would to-day, was in strict conformity with maritime usage, had the prudence not to persist, and the honor of the American flag was vindicated. This circumstance, taken in connection with a few others of a similar character, which occurred about the same time, had a strong influence in elevating the reputation of the infant navy, and in erasing an unfavorable impression that had been made by the impressment of five men, two years earlier, from on board the Baltimore, 20.

The crew of the General Greene were paid off, as usual, at the end of the year; or, soon after her second return to Newport. Capt. Perry was continued in command of the ship, however, and orders were sent to prepare her for another cruise; but the negotiations for peace assuming a favorable aspect, the orders were countermanded, and the ship was carried to Washington and laid up. The peace-establishment law reduced the list of captains from twenty-eight to nine, and, as Capt. Perry was not one of those retained, he retired

from service, with Talbot, Sever, the elder Decatur, Tingey, Little, Geddes, Robinson, and others. His son Oliver, however, belonged to the one hundred and fifty midshipmen that the law directed to be retained, and his fortunes were cast for life in the service.

Young Perry was left on shore, to pursue his studies, from the time the General Greene returned from her second cruise, until the spring of the year 1802, when he was ordered to join the Adams 28, Capt. Campbell, which ship was then fitting for the Mediterranean station. This frigate, known to the navy by the *sobriquet* of the little Adams, was a vessel a hundred tons smaller than the General Greene, but was deemed one of the fastest ships the country had sent into the West Indies, during the late contest. Her present commander was an officer of gentleman-like habits and opinions, and well suited to inspire young men with the manners and maxims appropriate to their caste. The ship also enjoyed the advantage of possessing a thorough practical seaman in her first lieutenant, the late Com. Hull, who, a short time before, had filled the same station on board the Constitution 44, Com. Talbot.

The Adams sailed from Newport, June 10th, 1802, and arrived at Gibraltar about the middle of July, where she found Com. Morris, in the Chesapeake 38, who sent her up as far as Malaga with a convoy. On her return from this duty, the ship was left below to watch a Tripolitan that was then lying at Gibraltar, the remainder of the squadron going aloft. Here the Adams passed the winter, cruising in the Straits much of the time; a duty that the young men in her found



irksome beyond a question, but which they also must have found highly instructive, as nothing so much familiarizes officers to manœuvring, as handling a ship in narrow waters, and with the land constantly aboard. One of the favorite traditions of the service relates to the steady and cool manner in which Hull worked the Adams while employed on this duty, the ship being in great danger of going ashore on the rocks. Six or eight months of such service is equal, in the way of experience, to two or three years of running from port to port, in as straight lines as can be made; or of making sail in good weather, and of reducing it in bad. The Adams must have commenced her blockade of the Tripolitan about the 21st July, 1802, the day Com. Morris sailed, and remained actively engaged on this duty until relieved by the squadron, which did not reach the rock until the 23d March, 1803; this makes a period of eight months and two days. Apart from the instruction which an ambitious youth like Perry must have been conscious of obtaining under such circumstances, this blockade contained an event which is always an epoch in the life of a young officer. Perry was a favorite with his captain, and being studious, attentive to his duties, sedate and considerate beyond his years, and of a person and manner to set off all these qualities to advantage, that officer gave him an acting appointment as a lieutenant. To enhance the gift, Capt. Campbell made out his orders on the young man's birth-day. This was transferring young Perry from the steerage to the ward-room the day he was seventeen, one of the very few instances of promotion so

young, that have occurred in the American navy.\* As this promotion took place on the 21st August, 1803, and Perry's warrant was dated April 7th, 1799, it follows that, in addition to his youth, he got this important step when he had been in the service less than four years and five months.

As soon as the squadron came down to Gibraltar, the Adams was sent aloft again with a convoy. As the ship touched at many different ports on the North shore, our young lieutenant had various occasions to visit places at which she stopped, and to store his mind with the pleasing and useful information with which that region more abounds, probably, than any other portion of the globe. There is little doubt that one of the reasons why the American marine early obtained a thirst for a knowledge that is not uniformly connected with the pursuits of a seaman, and a taste which, perhaps was above the level of that of the gentlemen of the country, was owing to the circumstance that the wars with Barbary called its officers so much, at the most critical period of its existence, into that quarter of Europe. Travellers to the old world were then extremely rare, and the American who, forty years ago, could converse, as an eye-witness, of the marvels of the

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\* The writer knows of but two other instances of promotions at so very young an age. One was that of the present Capt. Cooper; and the other that of the late Lt. Augustus Ludlow, who fell in the Chesapeake. In both these instances, he thinks the gentlemen were a little turned of seventeen. Mr. Cooper, however, got a commission, which was not the case with either Perry or Ludlow. Lawrence must have been made acting when little more than eighteen, and Stewart's original appointment was made when he was only nineteen.

Mediterranean; who had seen the remains of Carthage, or the glories of Constantinople; who had visited the Coliseum, or was familiar with the affluence of Naples, was more than half the time, in some way or other, connected with the Navy.

In May, the Adams, in company with the rest of the squadron, appeared before Tripoli, but no service of importance occurred in which there is any evidence that Perry participated. Soon after, Com. Morris left the coast, and his ships separated. The Adams cruised along the south shore, rejoining the squadron at Gibraltar. This gave Perry an opportunity of seeing some of the towns of Barbary. At Gibraltar, the commodore took the Adams, in person, she being the ship which he had first commanded in the service, and came home in her, Capt. Campbell going to the John Adams, but taking no officers with him.

Perry reached America in the Adams, in November, 1803. His cruise had lasted eighteen months; much of the time the vessel being actually under her canvas. This was, in every respect, a most important piece of service to the young man, and probably laid the principal foundation of his professional character, besides contributing largely to his information and manners as a man. On his return, he is said to have devoted himself earnestly to the studies peculiar to his calling, and to have made laudable efforts to do credit to himself in his new rank. The young officers, however, who made the Mediterranean cruise in 1802 and 1803, were unfortunate as to the time of their service. The following season, or that of the summer of 1804, was the eventful period of the Tripolitan war, and this was the moment

when accident left Perry ashore, devoting himself to useful pursuits, it is true, but removing him from those scenes of active warfare in which he was so well qualified to become distinguished. From the close of November, 1803, until the summer of 1804, Perry was on furlough, and at home. One cannot know this, without regretting that a young officer of his peculiar fitness for the service which then occurred before Tripoli, should not have had it in his power to have been with Preble.

In May, or June, of the latter year, however, Lieut. Perry received orders to join the *Constellation*, at Washington, then fitting for the Mediterranean, again, under his old commander and friend, Capt. Campbell. The ship sailed in July, and on the 10th of September, or six days after the explosion of the *Intrepid*, and just as the last shot had virtually, if not actually, been fired at the town, she appeared off Tripoli, the *President 44*, Com. S. Barron, in company. The *Constellation* was subsequently employed near Derne, in sustaining the operations of Gen. Eaton, but her size rendered her of no great use on that coast.

Among the vessels off Derne, was the *Nautilus 14*, the schooner of the lamented Somers, and being in want of a first lieutenant, Capt. Campbell ordered Perry to join her in that capacity. Perry was now in his twenty-first year, and had been about six years in the navy. He had made himself a very good seaman, and was accounted a particularly efficient deck-officer. His acquirements were suited to his profession, his manners good and considerate, his appearance unusually pleasing, his steadiness of character such as to awaken confidence, and his mind, if not of an unusually high order,

was sufficient to command respect. The new situation in which he was placed, was one to put his professional qualities to the test, and he acquitted himself, notwithstanding his youth, with great credit.

Perry remained in the *Nautilus* till the autumn of 1805, when Com. Rodgers gave him an order to join the *Constitution*, as one of his own lieutenants. As this officer was very rigid in his exactions of duty, and particularly fastidious in the choice of subordinates, it was a compliment, though no sinecure, to be thus selected, and there can be no question that it was an advantage to one disposed to do his whole duty to serve under his immediate eye. In this ship Perry remained until the autumn of the succeeding year, when he went to the *Essex*, as second lieutenant, following the commodore, who was about to return home, where they arrived in October.

Perry had now acquired his profession, and obtained respectable rank. At this period of his life, he was known as one of the more promising young officers of the navy, and had his full proportion of friends in all the grades of the service. He was employed in superintending the building and equipment of gun-boats, soon after his arrival at home, and this was the period of his life when he is said to have formed the attachment which, a few years later, produced a union with the lady he married. After seeing the gun-boats equipped, he was attached to them, for some years, with the command of a division. This disagreeable service, however, finally ended. After superintending the construction of a second *batch*, for these useless craft were literally put into the water in flotillas, in

1808, he was appointed in April, 1809, to his first proper command. The vessel he got was a schooner, called *The Revenge*, which had been bought into the service, and which proved to be a very respectable cruiser of her class; her armament consisting of fourteen short and light guns. His predecessor in this schooner was Jacob Jones, who had been one of the oldest lieutenants, if not the very oldest lieutenant in the navy, at the time he commanded her. As Perry had several seniors on the list, his selection for this command is another proof of the estimation in which he was held by his superiors.

The *Revenge* had been introduced into the navy more as a despatch-boat than as a regular cruiser, but she was subsequently put into the coast squadron, and was in that situation when Perry took her. After passing the summer of 1809, and the winter of 1809-10, in this duty, cruising most of the time on the Northern and Eastern coast, Perry was ordered to take his vessel to Washington for repairs, in April of the latter year. From this place the *Revenge* sailed on the 20th of May, for the Southern coast, where she was to be stationed. While thus employed, two occasions occurred to enable Perry to prove the spirit by which he was animated, and, on both of which, he acquitted himself with credit. The first was the seizure of an American vessel that had been run away with by her master, an Englishman by birth, who had put her under English colors, as English built. The vessel was lying in the Spanish waters, off Amelia Island, and two small English cruisers were at anchor near her. The Spanish authorities consented to the seizure, which was made by the *Revenge*, sustained by three gun-boats, and the vessel

brought off in the presence of the two English cruisers. It is impossible to say whether the English officers were, or were not apprised of the true circumstances of the case, or how far they were willing to see justice done; but the spirit of Perry is not affected by these facts, as he proceeded in total ignorance of what might be their determination. While carrying his prize off to sea, an English sloop of war was met, the captain of which sent a boat with a request that the commander of the *Revenge* would come on board and explain his character. The occurrence between the *Leopard* and the *Chesapeake* was then fresh, and the utmost feeling existed in the service on the subject of British aggressions. Perry refused to quit his vessel, and prepared for hostilities. His plan was to throw all hands on board his expected foe, and to trust the chances to a hand-to-hand struggle. The *Revenge* was well manned, and so judicious and cool were his arrangements, that the probability of success was far from hopeless. The desperate resort to force, however, was avoided by the discretion of the English officer, who did not press his demand.

In August, 1810, the *Revenge* returned north, and was stationed on the coast in the vicinity of Newport. On the 8th of January, 1811, this schooner was unfortunately wrecked on Watch Hill Reef, though many of her effects were saved through the activity of her commander and his people, aided by boats from the squadron then lying in the Thames. This accident was to be attributed to the influence of the tides in thick weather, but the blame, if blame there was, fell solely on the coast pilot, who was in charge at the time. It was one of those occurrences, however, to which all

seamen are liable, and which it surpasses human means to foresee or prevent, while the duty on which the vessel was employed was performed. Perry's conduct, on this occasion, was highly spoken of at the time, and he at least gained in the estimation of the service by an event which, perhaps, tries a commander's true qualities and reputation as much as any other which can occur to him. A court, consisting of Com. Hull, Lieut. now Com. Morris, and Lieut. the late Capt. Ludlow, fully acquitted Perry of all blame, while it extolled his coolness and judgment. By this accident Perry lost a command, which he had held about twenty-one months.

On the 5th May, 1811, Perry was married to Elizabeth Champlin Mason, of Rhode Island, the lady to whom he had now been attached since the commencement of the year 1807, and to whom he had been affianced for most of the intervening time. At the time of his marriage, Perry was in his twenty-sixth year, and his bride was about twenty. Not long after, he was promoted to the rank of master and commander. Perry obtained this step when he had not been quite fourteen years in service, and at the age of twenty-six. This was a fair rate of preferment, and one that would be observed even at the present time, with a proper division of the grades, and a judicious restriction on the appointment of midshipmen, a class of officers that ought never to be so numerous as to allow of idleness on shore, and which, in time of peace, should be so limited as to give them full employment when at sea.

The declaration of war, in 1812, found Perry in command of a division of gun-boats on the Newport



station. This being a duty in which the chance of seeing any important service was very trifling, his first and natural desire was to get to sea in a sloop of war. Most of the vessels of this class, which the navy then possessed, however, were commanded by his seniors in rank, and those that were not, accident had put in the hands of officers whom it would have been ungracious to supersede. Anxious to be in a more active scene, in the course of the winter of 1812-13, he made an offer to serve on the Lakes. This offer was accepted, and in February, 1813, he was ordered to report to Com. Chauncey, at Sackett's Harbor, and to take with him such of the officers and men of his flotilla as were suited to the contemplated service.

Perry met his commanding officer at Albany, on the 28th February, and together they set out for the Harbor, which place they reached on the 3d of March. Here Perry remained until the 16th, when he was ordered to Lake Erie, with instructions to superintend the equipment of a force on those waters. On the 27th, he arrived at the port of Presque Isle, or Erie, and immediately urged on the work, which had been already commenced. There is a portion of military duty that figures but little in histories and gazettes, but which is frequently the most arduous of any on which an officer can be employed. To this class of service belong the preparations that are limited by insufficient means, the procuring of supplies, and contending with the difficulties of hurried levies, undisciplined men, and imperfect equipments. These were the great embarrassments with which Washington had to contend in the war of the Revolution, and his conquests over them entitle him

to more credit than he might have obtained for a dozen victories.

As respects the state of the Northern frontier during the last war, the reader of history is not apt fully to appreciate all the obstacles that were to be overcome in conducting the most important operations. In 1813, with very immaterial exceptions, the whole lake frontier, on the American side of those inland waters, was little different from a wilderness. The few roads which communicated with the older parts of the country, were scarcely more than avenues cut through the forests, and not always these; while the streams that it was indispensable to navigate were often obstructed by rapids and even falls, frequently filled with drift wood, and rarely aided by locks, or other similar inventions. Supplies usually had to be brought from the Atlantic towns, and most of the artisans were transported from the sea coast, into those distant wilds. Against the difficulties of this nature Perry had now to contend, and he exerted himself to the utmost. At different periods he received reinforcements of officers and men, and in the course of the spring all of his vessels were got into the water. Still a great deal remained to be done; stores, guns, munitions of war, and, to a certain extent, crews having yet to be assembled.

While thus employed, Perry received the welcome intelligence that the squadron and army below were about to make a descent on Fort George. This enterprise had been contemplated for some time, and Commodore Chauncey had promised to give our young commander the charge of the seamen that were to land.

No sooner did he get the information that the expedition was about to take place, than he left Erie, in a four-oared boat, on a dark but placid night, and after a pleasant passage of twenty-four hours he reached Buffalo. In this passage he was accompanied by a sailing master of the name of Dobbins, who was well acquainted with the lake, and who, in fact, had been his predecessor in the command on Erie, having laid down and nearly built several of the vessels that subsequently formed the fighting squadron, besides having got out most of the timber of the two principal craft, previously to Perry's having reached the lake. The British batteries were then passed in the same boat, as it descended the Niagara river. In descending the river, Perry encountered no danger, falling in with no enemy to obstruct his passage. On reaching Schlosser he landed. From Schlosser, Perry and Dobbins proceeded on foot to the falls, leaving the men with the boat. At the falls a horse was hired for him, and Perry left his companion on his way to Fort Niagara. By the evening of the twenty-fifth he got on board the Madison 24, in which ship Com. Chauncey's pennant was then flying.\*

Chauncey gave his visitor a warm reception. There was a scarcity of officers of rank on the lakes, and Perry had obtained a reputation for zeal and conduct that would be apt to render his presence acceptable on the eve of an important enterprise. When he got on board the ship, he found the officers of the squadron

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\* The reader will find many of the minor incidents related here, differing from those originally given in Graham. The corrections are made on the testimony of an eye-witness and an actor in the events.

assembled to receive their orders, and a general welcome met him. The next morning the commodore went to reconnoitre the enemy's batteries, taking Perry with him, in the *Lady of the Lake*. Arrangements were then made for the descent.

It would not be easy to write a better description of the appearance of the fleet, as it advanced to the attack on this occasion, than has been simply but graphically given by Perry himself, in one of his published letters. "The ship was under way," he says, "with a light breeze from the eastward, quite fair for us; a thick mist hanging over Newark and Fort George, the sun breaking forth in the East, the vessels all under way, the lake covered with several hundred large boats, filled with soldiers, horses and artillery, advancing toward the enemy, altogether formed one of the grandest spectacles I ever witnessed." It had been decided that a body of seamen were to be landed, under the immediate orders of Perry, but some irregularity existing in the movements of the brigades, his duties took a more extended range. As the boats pulled toward the shore, Perry saw that the soldiers, who rowed their own boats, were getting too far to leeward, for the wind had freshened; and, pointing out the circumstance to the commodore, he was desired to put them on the right course. Pulling toward the advance, Perry fortified his authority by requesting Col. Scott, who led the troops in front, to join him, and together they proceeded on the duty, which was successfully and very opportunely performed. Col. Scott now rejoined his command, and Perry pulled on board the schooner that was nearest in, covering the debarkation. Here the lookout

aloft informed him that the British were advancing toward the lake, in force. Aware that the Americans did not expect such a meeting on the shore, Perry now pulled down the whole line to reach Col. Scott, and apprise him of the resistance he was to meet. Before he could reach that point, however, the British appeared on the bank and gave a volley. This unexpected attack checked the advance but a moment; the boats being within fifty yards of the beach at the time, were soon on it, and the troops landed. Perry now went on board the *Hamilton*, a schooner of 9 guns, which vessel maintained a heavy fire of grape and canister on the enemy. Other vessels aided, and the troops forming, rushed up and carried the bank. At this moment, Maj. Gen. Lewis, who was to command in chief on shore, reached the schooner, reconnoitered the ground, and then landed, Perry following him. Throughout all this affair, the latter manifested great temper, the utmost coolness, and a zeal which was certain to carry him into the scenes of danger. Commodore Chauncey mentioned his services honorably in his despatches.

The Americans now had command of the Niagara, and Chauncey profited by it to get several small vessels, that had been bought for the service, but which still lay at Black Rock, past the position of the enemy, and up the current into Lake Erie. Perry superintended this service in person, which was immensely laborious, but was successfully performed, in little more than a day. This was clearing the way for assembling all the force on Lake Erie, at a single point, and he sailed from Buffalo for Erie about the middle of June. At this

time the command of the lake was with the enemy, and it was a great point to collect all the American vessels, in order to make head against him. This was now done, the enemy actually heaving in sight off their port as the last of the Americans arrived.

The English had long maintained a naval force on the great lakes, which was termed the provincial marine. The vessels were employed for the general purposes of a maritime police, for transporting troops, and for conveying supplies. By their means the communications were kept up with the different military posts of the interior, and the command of those inland waters was, at need, effectually secured. The Americans had not imitated this policy. On the upper lakes, however, they kept a brig, which was found almost indispensable to convey the stores needed at the more distant stations, and particularly in the intercourse with the Indians in their vicinity. This brig belonged to the war department, however, and not to the navy. For some years previously to the war she had been commanded by a gentleman of the name of Brevoort, who was then an officer in the 1st Infantry. This brig was called the Adams, and she mounted a few guns. She had fallen into the hands of the enemy at the capture of Michigan, had her name changed to that of Detroit, had been cut out from under Fort Erie the previous autumn by the Americans, and destroyed. This produced the necessity of creating an entirely new force, leaving the command of the lake with the enemy until that object could be effected.

In the face of a thousand obstacles, Perry succeeded in getting his vessels ready to go out by the early part

of August, though he was still greatly in want of officers and of men, particularly of seamen. Capt. Barclay, who commanded the enemy, lay off the port watching him, however, and there existed a serious obstacle in a bar, which extended some distance into the lake. To cross this bar in the presence of the English would have been extremely hazardous, when, fortunately, the latter unexpectedly disappeared, in the Northern board. It is said that Capt. Barclay had accepted an invitation to dine on the Canada shore, and that he passed over with this intention, probably deceived by his spies as to the state of preparation of the Americans. A reinforcement of men was certainly expected from below, and, if acquainted with this fact, the English officer may very well have supposed that his opponent would wait for it.\*

It was of a Sunday afternoon when Perry commenced his movements; a day and an hour when the measure was probably least expected. To cross the bar, it was necessary to lift the larger vessels on camels, and the work required not only great labor, but much time. It was attended with delays and embarrassments, nor was it entirely effected before the British re-appeared. Some distant firing between them and a few of the American small vessels succeeded, but with little or no damage on either side.

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\* The dinner is said to have been given to Barclay, on the 1st or 2d August, 1813, by the inhabitants of a small place called Dover. In replying to a toast, Barclay stated it was his intention to return to Erie next day, where he should find the Yankee brigs hard and fast on the bar, when it would be an easy matter to destroy them. Substantially, Perry gained the victory of the 10th September, at the bar of Erie.

Once in the lake, incomplete as were his crews and his equipments, Perry was decidedly superior to the enemy, who had not yet brought their principal vessel, the *Detroit*, into their squadron. Under the circumstances, therefore, he wisely determined to bring on an action if possible without any unnecessary delay. Getting under way with his vessels, he went off Long Point in search of the enemy, but failing to find them, as they had gone into Malden to join their new ship, he returned to the anchorage off Erie. Here he received the welcome intelligence that a party of seamen was on its way to join him, from the lower squadron. This reinforcement arrived a day or two later. It was under the orders of Capt. Elliott, who had just been promoted to the rank of master and commander.

As soon as possible after the arrival of the party from below, the squadron sailed again in quest of the enemy. After communicating with the army above, and ineffectually chasing a British cruiser, it went into Put In Bay, a haven among some islands that lie in the vicinity of Malden, and was favorably placed for watching the enemy. The malady common to these waters in the Fall of the year, had attacked the crew, and Perry himself was soon included among those on the doctor's list. His case was a very severe one, and to render the matter more grave, all three of the medical officers of the squadron were taken ill also. This was a critical situation to be in, in the face of the enemy, and the more especially, as the vessels were still short of their complements. The latter difficulty, however, was in part remedied, by receiving a hundred volunteers from the army. While lying in this port, the



men were exercised in boats, it being Perry's intention to make an attack on the enemy in that manner, should the latter fail to come out.

Early in September, Perry had so far recovered as to quit his cabin. He now went off Malden to reconnoitre, and to invite the British to meet him. After manœuvring about the head of the lake for a few days, the Americans returned to Put In Bay, on the 6th of September. It would seem Perry received an intimation at Sandusky, that it was the enemy's intention to come out and engage him, as he was short of provisions, and felt the immediate necessity of opening a communication with his supplies. Subsequent intelligence has confirmed this report, and it is now known that the battle which was fought a few days later was actually owing to this circumstance.

As Perry now fully expected that the English would at least attempt to force a passage toward Long Point, he made his final preparations for a general battle. At a meeting of some of his officers, on the evening of the 9th September, it was determined, at all events, to go out next day, and attack the enemy at anchor, should it be necessary. In order, however, that the reader may have a clear idea of the forces of the respective parties in the approaching action, as well as of their distinctive characters, it is now necessary to give lists of the two squadrons, from the best authorities it has been in our power to consult. The vessels under the command of Capt. Perry, and which were present on the morning of the 10th of September, 1813, were as follows; the Ohio, Mr. Dobbins, having been sent down the lake on duty, a few days before, viz.

	Guns.	Metal.
Lawrence, Capt. Perry,	20	2 long 12s, 18 32lb. carronades.
Niagara, Capt. Elliott,	20	2 long 12s, 18 32lb. carronades.
Caledonia, Lieut. Turner,	3	2 long 24s, 1 32lb. carronade.
Ariel, Lieut. Packett,	4	4 12s.
Somers, Mr. Almy,	2	1 long 24, 1 32lb. carronade.
Porcupine, Mr. Scnatt,	1	1 long 32.
Scorpion, Mr. Champlin,	2	1 long 24, 1 32lb. carronade.
Tigress, Lieut. Conklin,	1	1 long 32.
Trippe, Lieut. Holdup,	1	1 long 32.
Total number of guns,		54*

It is proper to add, that all the guns of all the American vessels, with the exception of those of the Lawrence and the Niagara, were on pivots, and could be used together. The vessels which carried them, however, were without bulwarks, and their crews were exposed to even musketry in a close action. Of these vessels, the Lawrence, Niagara, and Caledonia were brigs; the Trippe was a sloop; and the remainder were schooners.

The force of the British has been variously stated, as to the metal, though all the accounts agree as to the vessels and the number of the guns.† No American

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\* Mr. Dobbins, who had a large agency in equipping this force, says, the 32 of the Trippe ought to be given to another vessel, and a 24 substituted in its place.

† It is extremely difficult to get the exact truth in details of this nature. With the best intentions men make mistakes, and the historian is obliged to depend on such authority as he can get. The foregoing has been laid before the world by the English, as Capt. Barclay's official account of his own force. It may have some inaccuracies, but it is doubtless true in the main. A biography of Perry has lately appeared, written by Alexander Slidell Mackenzie, a gentleman who is connected with the family of the late Com. Perry, and who ought to have enjoyed great advantages in collecting many of his personal facts, but the work is

statement of the English metal has ever been officially made, but one was appended to Capt. Barclay's report of the engagement, which should be taken as substantially correct, though a few of its less important details have been questioned by some of the American officers, but not, so far as we have been able to ascertain, on grounds sufficient to render their own recollections certain. The English vessels were as follows, their force being, as stated by Capt. Barclay—

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written in too partisan a spirit to be at all relied on in matters relating to the battle of Lake Erie. As respects the force of the two squadrons, for instance, Capt. Mackenzie has fallen into material mistakes even in relation to the American vessels; or not only is the writer greatly misinformed, but the incidental evidence which has appeared in the course of the controversy that has arisen from this battle, is incorrect. Thus Capt. Mackenzie puts the force of the Somers at "two long thirty-twos." Mack. Per. p. 228, vol. i. Now this is contrary to the English official account, contrary to every other American account the writer can get, and contrary to the certificate of Mr. Nichols, who commanded the Somers, after Mr. Almy was sent below. This officer in explaining the silly story about Capt. Elliott's dodging a shot, says—"the quarter-gunner at *the 32*, being about to fire," &c. This language would not have been used had there been *two* thirty-twos. Capt. Elliott has more than once distinctly called the 32 a *carronade*, in speaking of this transaction to the writer, and, as the fact cannot affect any question connected with himself, his testimony is certainly good on such a point. Capt. Mackenzie gives the Scorpion *two* long guns, whereas the writer believes she had but *one*; the Caledonia *three* long guns, when she had but *two*, &c. &c. It is a fact which would seem to have been generally known to the American squadron, that the *third* gun of the Caledonia, a *32lb. carronade*, was dismounted by its recoil, and fell into the hatchway. Capt. Mackenzie's account of the British metal, the writer entertains no doubt, is materially inaccurate also, while he will not insist that the one he gives himself, from Capt. Barclay, is rigidly correct.

Detroit, Capt. Barclay, 19 guns; 2 long 24s, 1 long 18 on pivot, 6 long 12s, 8 long 9s, 1 24lb. carronade, 1 18lb. do.

Queen Charlotte, Capt. Finnis, 17 guns; 1 long 12 on pivot, 2 long 9s, 14 24lb. carronades.

Lady Prevost, Lieut. Buchan, 13 guns; 1 long 9 on pivot, 2 long 6s, 10 12lb. carronades.

Hunter, Lieut. Bignall, 10 guns; 4 long 6s, 2 long 4s, 2 long 2s, 2 12lb. carronades.

Little Belt, 3 guns; 1 long 12 on pivot, 2 long 6s.

Chippewa, Mr. Campbell, 1 long 9 on pivot.

Total number of guns, 63.

On the morning of the 10th September, the British squadron was seen in the offing, and the American vessels got under way, and went out to meet it. The wind, at first, was unfavorable, but so determined was Perry to engage, that he decided to give the enemy the weather-gage, a very important advantage with the armament he possessed, should it become necessary. A shift of wind, however, brought him out into the lake to windward, and left him every prospect of engaging in a manner more desirable to himself.

The enemy had hove-to, on the larboard tack, in a compact line ahead, with the wind at south-east. This brought his vessels' heads nearly, or quite, as high as S. S. West. He had placed the Chippewa in his van, with the Detroit, Barclay's own vessel, next to her. Then followed the Hunter, Queen Charlotte, Lady Prevost, and Little Belt, in the manner named. Perry had issued his order of battle some time previously, but finding that the enemy did not form his line as he had anticipated, he determined to make a corresponding change in his own plan. Originally, it had been intended that the Niagara should lead the American line, in the expectation that the Queen Charlotte would lead

that of the English; but finding the Detroit ahead of the latter vessel, it became necessary to place the Lawrence ahead of the Niagara, in order to bring the two commanding vessels fairly along side of each other. As there was an essential difference of force between the two English ships, the Detroit being a vessel at least a fourth larger and every way heavier than the Queen Charlotte, this prompt decision to stick to his own chosen adversary is strongly indicative of the chivalry of Perry's character, for many an officer would not have thought this accidental change on the part of his enemy a sufficient reason for changing his own order of battle on the eve of engaging. Calling the leading vessels near him, however, and learning from Capt. Brevoort, of the army, and late of the brig Adams, who was then serving on board the Niagara as a marine officer, the names of the different British vessels, Capt. Perry communicated his orders for the Lawrence and Niagara to change places in the contemplated line, a departure from his former plan which would bring him more fairly abreast of the Detroit.

At this moment, the Lawrence, Niagara, Caledonia, Ariel and Scorpion were all up, and near each other, but the Trippe, Tigress, Somers and Porcupine were still a considerable distance astern. All of the last named craft but the Porcupine had been merchant vessels, purchased into the service and strengthened; alterations that were necessary to enable them to bear their metal, but which were not likely to improve whatever sailing qualities they might possess.

It was now past ten, and the leading vessels manœvered to get into their stations, in obedience to the

orders just received. This brought the Scorpion a short distance ahead, and to windward of the Lawrence, and the Ariel a little more on that brig's weather bow, but in advance. Then came the Lawrence herself, leading the main line, the two schooners just mentioned being directed to keep to windward of her; the Caledonia, the Niagara, the Tigress, the Somers, the Porcupine and the Trippe. The prescribed distance that was to be maintained between the different vessels was half a cable's length.

The Americans were now astern and to windward of their enemies, the latter still lying gallantly with their topsails aback, in waiting for them to come down. Perry brought the wind abeam, in the Lawrence, and edged away for a position abreast of the Detroit, the Caledonia and Niagara following in their stations. The two schooners ahead were also well placed, though the Ariel appears to have soon got more on the Lawrence's beam than the order of battle had directed. All these vessels, however, were in as good order as circumstances allowed, and Perry determined to close, without waiting for the four gun-vessels astern to come up.

The wind had been light and variable throughout the early part of the morning, and it still continued light, though sufficiently steady. It is stated to have been about a two-knot breeze when the American van bore up to engage. As they must have been fully two miles from the enemy at this time, it, of course, would have required an hour to have brought them up fairly along side of the British vessels, most of the way under fire. The Lawrence was yet a long distance from the

English when the Detroit threw a twenty-four pound shot at her. When this gun was fired, the weight of the direct testimony that has appeared in the case, and the attendant circumstances, would show that the interval between the heads of the two lines was nearer two than one mile. Perry now showed his signal to engage, as the vessels came up, each against her designated opponent, in the prescribed order of battle. The object of this signal was to direct the different commanders to engage as soon as they could do so with effect; to preserve their stations in the line; and to direct their fire at such particular vessels of the British as had been pointed out to them severally in previous orders. Soon after an order was passed astern, by trumpet, for the different vessels to close up to the prescribed distance of half a cable's length from each other. This was the last order that Perry issued that day from the Lawrence to any vessel of the fleet, his own brig excepted. It was intended principally for the schooners in the rear, most of which were still a considerable distance astern. The Caledonia and Niagara were accurately in their stations, and at long gun-shot from the enemy. A deliberate fire now opened on the part of the enemy, which was returned from the long gun of the Scorpion, and soon after from the long guns of the other leading American vessels, though not with much apparent effect on either side. The first gun is stated to have been fired at a quarter before twelve. About noon, finding that the Lawrence was beginning to suffer, Perry ordered her carronades to be tried, but it was found that the brig was still too distant for the shot to tell. He now set his top-gallant-

sail and edged away more for the enemy, suffering considerably from the fire of the long guns of the Detroit in particular.

The Caledonia, the Lawrence's second astern, was a prize brig, that had been built for burden, rather than for sailing, having originally been in the employment of the Northwest Company. Although her gallant commander, Lieut. Turner, pressed down with her as fast as he could, the Lawrence reached ahead of her some distance, and consequently became the principal object of the British fire; which she was, as yet, unable to return with more than her two long twelves; the larboard bow gun having been shifted over for that purpose. The Scorpion, Ariel, Caledonia and Niagara, however, were now firing with their long guns, also, carronades being still next to useless. The latter brig, though under short canvas, was kept in her station astern of the Caledonia, only by watching her sails, occasionally bracing her main-topsail sharp aback, in order to prevent running into her second ahead. As the incidents of this battle have led to a painful and protracted controversy, which no biographical notice of Perry can altogether overlook, it may be well to add, here, that the facts just stated are proved by testimony that has never been questioned, and that they appear to us to relate to the only circumstance in the management of the Niagara, on the 10th of September, that is at all worthy of the consideration of an intelligent critic. At the proper moment, this circumstance shall receive our comments.

It will be remembered that each of the American vessels had received an order to direct her fire at a particular



adversary in the British line. This was done to prevent confusion, and was the more necessary, as the Americans had nine vessels to the enemy's six. On the other hand, the English, waiting the attack, had to take such opponents as offered. In consequence of these orders, the Niagara, which brig had also shifted over a long twelve, directed the fire of her two chase-guns at the Queen Charlotte, and the Caledonia engaged the Hunter, the vessel pointed out to her for that purpose; leaving the Lawrence, supported by the Ariel and Scorpion, to sustain the cannonading of the Detroit, supported by the Chippewa, as well as to bear the available fire of all the vessels in the stern of the English line, as, in leading down, she passed ahead to her station abreast of her proper adversary. Making a comparison of the aggregate batteries of the five vessels thus engaged at long shot, or before carronades were fully available, we get on the part of the Americans, one 24 and six 12s, or seven guns in all, to oppose to one 24, one 18, three 12s, and five 9 pounders, all long guns. This is estimating all the known available long guns of the Ariel, Scorpion and Lawrence, and the batteries of the Chippewa and the Detroit, as given by Capt. Barclay, in his published official letter, which, as respects these vessels, is probably minutely accurate; though it is proper to add that an American officer, who subsequently had good opportunities for knowing the fact, thinks that the Chippewa's gun was a 12 pounder. Although the disparity between 7 and 10 guns is material, as is the difference between 96 and 123lbs. of metal, they do not seem sufficient to account for the great disparity of the injury that was sustained by the Lawrence, more espe-

cially in the commencement of the action. We are left, then, to look for the explanation in some additional causes.

It is known that one of the *Ariel's* 12s burst early in the day. This would at once bring the comparison of the guns and metal, as between the five leading vessels, down to 6 to 10 of the first, and 84 to 123 of the last. But we have seen that both the *Lawrence* and *Niagara* shifted each a larboard bow-gun over to the starboard side, a course that almost any commander would be likely to adopt, under the circumstances of the action. It is not probable that the *Detroit*, commencing her fire at so great a distance, with the certainty that it must be some time before her enemy could get within reach of his short guns, neglected to bring her most available pieces into battery also. Admitting this to have been done, there would be a very different result in the figures. The *Detroit* fought ten guns in broadside, and she had an armament that would permit her to bring to bear on the *Lawrence*, at one time, two 24s, one 18, six 12s and one 9 pounder. This would leave the comparison between the guns as 6 are to 11, and between the metal as 84 are to 147. Nor is this all. The *Hunter* lay close to the *Detroit*, and as the vessel which assailed her was still at long shot, it is probable that she also brought the heaviest of her guns into broadside, and used them against the nearest vessel; more particularly as her guns were light, and would be much the most useful in such a mode of firing.

But other circumstances conspired to sacrifice the *Lawrence*. Finding that he was suffering heavily, and that he had got nearly abreast of the *Detroit*, Perry

furled his topgallant-sail, hauled up his fore-sail, and rounded to, opening with his carronades. The distance from the enemy at which this was done, as well as the length of time after the commencement of the fire, have given rise to contradictory statements. The distance, Perry himself, in his official letter, says was "within canister-shot," a term too vague to give any accurate notion that can be used in a critical analysis of the facts of the engagement. A canister-shot, thrown from a heavy gun, would probably kill at a mile; though seamen are not apt to apply the term to so great a range. Still they use all such phrases as "yard-arm and yard-arm," "musket-shot," "canister-shot," and "pistol-shot," very vaguely; one applying a term to a distance twice as great as would be understood by another. The distance from the English line, at which the *Lawrence* backed her topsail, has been placed by some as far as half a mile, and by others as near as 300 yards. It was probably between the two, nearer to the last than to the first; though the brig, as she became crippled aloft, and so long as there was any wind, must have been slowly drifting nearer to her enemies.

On the supposition that there was a two-knot breeze the whole time, that the action commenced when the *Lawrence* was a mile and a half from the enemy, and that she went within a quarter of a mile of the British line, she could not have backed her topsail until after she had been under fire considerably more than a half an hour. This was a period quite sufficient to cause her to suffer heavily, under the peculiar circumstances of the case.

The effect of a cannonade is always to deaden, or

even "to kill," as it is technically termed by seamen, a light wind. Counteracting forces neutralize each other, and the constant explosions from guns repel the currents of the atmosphere. This difficulty came to increase the critical nature of the Lawrence's situation, the wind falling to something very near, if not absolutely to a flat calm. This fact, which is material to a right understanding of the events of the day, is unanswerably shown in the following manner.

The fact that the gun-boats had been kept astern by the lightness of the wind, is mentioned by Perry, himself, in his official account of the battle. He also says, "at half past two, the wind springing up, Capt. Elliott was enabled to bring his vessel, the Niagara, gallantly into close action," leaving the unavoidable inference that a want of wind prevailed at an earlier period of the engagement. Several officers testify that it fell nearly calm, while no one denies it. One officer says it became "perfectly calm," and others go near to substantiate the statement. There is a physical fact, however, that disposes of this point more satisfactorily than can ever be done by the power of memories or the value of opinions. Both Perry and his sailing-master say that the Lawrence was perfectly unmanageable for a considerable time. This period, a rigid construction of Perry's language would make two hours; and by the most liberal that can be given to that of the master, must have been considerably more than one hour. It is physically impossible that an unmanageable vessel, with her sails loose, should not drift half a mile, in an hour, had there been only a two-knot breeze. The want of this drift, which would have carried the Lawrence

directly down into the English line, had it existed, effectually shows, then, that there must have been a considerable period of the action in which there was little or no wind, and corroborates the direct testimony that has been given on this point.\*

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\* In the battle of Plattsburg Bay, which took place the succeeding year, the wind was so light and baffling, that the British anchored before they got as close as they had intended to go. Still, one of their vessels, the Chubb, was crippled, and she drifted into the American line, in the first half hour of the engagement. The distance this vessel actually drifted, under such circumstances, was about as far as that at which Perry engaged the enemy, proving that the latter must also have drifted an equal distance, after he was disabled, had there been any wind. The Chubb, too, was a fore-and-aft vessel, a species of craft that would not have the drift of a square-rigged brig, as her sails would be, and probably were, lowered; nor would they hold as much wind. It is true that the English on Lake Erie were not anchored, as was the case with the Americans on Lake Champlain; but a vessel hove-to in smooth water, would not have half the drift of one that was all abroad, and the difference, as a principle, would be only one of time. If the Chubb drifted a quarter of a mile in half an hour, the Lawrence should have drifted twice that distance in twice that time. She should have drifted farther, being of light draught of water, and having the most top-hamper. Again. The drift of a vessel in the situation of the Lawrence would have been *astern* and to leeward, while that of vessels hove-to would have been *ahead* and to leeward. On the supposition that there was any wind, these last facts would effectually have prevented the Lawrence from remaining abeam of her enemies two whole hours, as is admitted to have been the case. In our former edition we did not advert to the circumstance of McDonough's being anchored, simply because we believed, with Marshall, that "a Chief Justice of the United States might be presumed to know something." We never intended to say that Perry would have reached the English line as soon as the Chubb reached the American, but that he must have reached it during the battle; meaning the *rear* of that line. The Chubb was probably in the American line within ten minutes after

Previously, however, to its falling calm, or nearly so, and about the time the *Lawrence* backed her topsail, a change occurred in the British line. The *Queen Charlotte* had an armament of three long guns, the heaviest of which is stated by Capt. Barclay to have been a 12 pounder, on a pivot, and fourteen 24lb. carronades. The latter guns were shorter than common, and, of course, were useless when the ordinary American 32lb. guns of this class could not be served. For some reason, which has not been quite satisfactorily explained, this ship shifted her berth, after the engagement had lasted some time, filling her topsail, passing the *Hunter*, and closing with the *Detroit*, under her lee. Shortly after, however, she regained the line, directly astern of the commanding British vessel. The enemy's line being in very compact order, and the distance but

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she became unmanageable, having been in our possession within the first half hour of the battle.

Capt. Pring, in his official account of this battle, excuses his not cutting the brig *Linnet's* cable, after the *Confiance* had struck, and endeavoring to escape, on the ground that his vessel was crippled, and that had he done so she would have drifted directly into the American line. "The result of doing so, (cutting the cable,) must," he says, "in a few minutes, have been her drifting alongside of the enemy's vessels close under our lee." The distance was about two cables' length, or 480 yards; 440 yards being a quarter of a mile. Those who believe that Perry engaged the enemy at a less distance than this, increase the probability of his drifting into the British line, had there been any wind. The fact that he did *not*, is conclusive on the subject of the wind. It should also be remembered that Perry, in saying that the *Lawrence* was disabled, does not in the least speak *figuratively*, but *literally*. His words are, "*every brace and bowline being shot away*, she became unmanageable, *notwithstanding the great exertions of the sailing-master.*" A square-rigged vessel, *without a brace or bowline*, is perfectly unmanageable, as a matter of course.

trifling, the Queen Charlotte was enabled to effect this in a few minutes, there still being a little wind. The Detroit probably drew ahead to enable her to regain a proper position.

This evolution on the part of the Queen Charlotte has been differently accounted for. At the time it was made the Niagara was engaging her sufficiently near to do execution with her long twelves, and, at the moment, it was the opinion on board that brig, that she had driven her opponent out of the line. As the Queen Charlotte opened on the Lawrence with her carronades, as soon as she got into her new position, a more plausible motive was that she had shifted her berth, in order to bring her short guns into efficient use. The letter of Capt. Barclay, however, gives a more probable solution to this manœuvre, than either of the foregoing conjectures. He says that Capt. Finnis, of the Queen Charlotte, was killed soon after the commencement of the action, and that her first lieutenant was shortly after struck senseless by a splinter. These two casualties threw the command of the vessel on a provincial officer of the name of Irvine. This part of Capt. Barclay's letter is not English, and has doubtless been altered a little in printing. Enough remains, however, to show, that he attaches to the loss of the two officers mentioned, serious consequences; and in a connection that alludes to this change of position, since he speaks of the prospect of its leaving him the Niagara also to engage. From the fact that the Queen Charlotte first went under the lee of the Detroit, so close as to induce the Americans to think she was foul of the quarter of that ship, a position into which she never would have been carried.

had the motive been merely to get nearer to the Lawrence, or farther from the Niagara, we infer that the provincial officer, finding himself unexpectedly in his novel situation, went so near to the Detroit to report his casualties and to ask for orders, and that he regained the line in obedience to instructions from Capt. Barclay in person.

Whatever was the motive for changing the Queen Charlotte's position in the British line, the effect on the Lawrence was the same. Her fire was added to that of the Detroit, which ship appeared to direct all her guns at the leading American brig, alone. Indeed, there was a period in this part of the action, during which most, if not all of the guns of the Detroit, the Queen Charlotte, and Hunter, were aimed at this one vessel. Perry appears to have been of opinion that it was a premeditated plan, on the part of the enemy, to destroy the commanding American vessel. It is true, that the Ariel, Scorpion, Caledonia and Niagara, from a few minutes after the commencement of the action, were firing at the English ships, but that the latter disregarded them, in the main, would appear from the little loss the three small American vessels sustained, in particular. The Caledonia and Niagara, moreover, were still too distant to render their assistance of much effect. About this time, however, the gun-boats astern got near enough to use their heavy guns, though most of them were yet a long way off. The Somers would seem to have engaged a short time before the others.

At length, Capt. Elliott finding himself kept astern by the bad sailing of the Caledonia, and his own brig so near as again to be under the necessity of bracing



her topsail aback, to prevent going into her, determined to assume the responsibility of changing the line of battle, and to pass the Caledonia. He accordingly hailed the latter, and directed that brig to put her helm up and let the Niagara pass ahead. As this order was obeyed, the Niagara filled and drew slowly head, continuing to approach the Lawrence as fast as the air would allow. This change did not take place, however, until the Lawrence had suffered so heavily as to render her substantially a beaten ship.

The evidence that has been given on the details is so contradictory and confused, as to render it exceedingly difficult to say whether the comparative calm of which we have spoken occurred before or after this change in the relative positions of the Lawrence and Caledonia. Some wind there must have been, at this time, or the Niagara could not have passed. As the wind had been light and baffling most of the day, it is even probable that there may have been intervals in it, to reconcile in some measure these apparent contradictions, and which will explain the inconsistencies. After the Niagara had passed her second ahead, to do which she had made sail, she continued to approach the Lawrence in a greater or less degree of movement, as there may have been more or less wind, until she had got near enough to the heavier vessels of the enemy to open on them with her carronades; always keeping in the Lawrence's wake. The Caledonia, having pivot guns, and being now nearly or quite abeam of the Hunter, the vessel she had been directed to engage, kept off more, and was slowly drawing nearer to the enemy's line. The gun-vessels astern were closing, too,

though not in any order, using their sweeps, and throwing the shot of their long heavy guns, principally 32 pounders, quite to the head of the British line; beginning to tell effectually in the combat.

As the wind was so light, and the movements of all the vessels had been so slow, much time was consumed in these several changes. The *Lawrence* had now been under fire more than two hours, and, being almost the sole aim of the headmost English ships, she was dismantled. Her decks were covered with killed and wounded, and every gun but one in her starboard battery was dismantled, either by shot or its own recoil. At this moment, or at about half-past two, agreeably to Perry's official letter, the wind sprang up and produced a general change among the vessels. One of its first effects was to set the *Lawrence*, perfectly unmanageable as she was, astern and to leeward, or to cause her to drop, as it has been described by Capt. Barclay, while the enemy appear to have filled, and to commence drawing ahead. The *Lady Prevost*, which had been in the rear of the British line, passed to leeward and ahead, under the published plea of having had her rudder injured, but probably suffering from the heavy metal of the American gun-vessels as they came nearer. An intention existed on the part of Capt. Barclay to get his vessels round, in order to bring fresh broadsides to bear. The larboard battery of the *Detroit* by this time was nearly useless, many of the guns having lost even their trucks, and, as usually happens in a long cannonade, the pieces that had been used were getting to be unserviceable, from one cause or another.

At this moment the *Niagara* passed the *Lawrence*

to windward, and then kept off toward the head of the enemy's line, which was slowly drawing more toward the Southward and Westward. In order to do this, she set topgallant-sails and brought the wind abaft the beam. The Caledonia also followed the enemy, passing inside the Lawrence, having got nearer to the enemy, at that moment, than any other American vessel. As soon as Perry perceived that his own brig was dropping, and that the battle was passing ahead of him, he got into a boat, taking with him a young brother, a midshipman of the Lawrence, and pulled after the Niagara, then a short distance ahead of him. When he reached the latter brig, he found her from three to five hundred yards to windward of the principal force of the enemy, and nearly abreast of the Detroit, that ship, the Queen Charlotte and the Lady Prevost being now quite near each other, and probably two cables' length to the Southward and Westward; or that distance nearly ahead of the Lawrence, and about as far from the enemy's line as the latter brig had been lying for the last hour.

Perry now had a few words of explanation with Capt. Elliott, when the latter officer volunteered to go in the boat, and bring down the gun-vessels, which were still astern, and a good deal scattered. As this was doing precisely what Perry wished, Capt. Elliott proceeded on his duty immediately, leaving his own brig, to which he did not return until after the engagement had terminated. Perry now backed the main-top-sail of the Niagara, being fairly abeam of his enemy, and showed the signal for close action. After waiting a few minutes for the different vessels to answer and to

close, the latter of which they were now doing fast as the wind continued to increase, he bore up, bringing the wind on the starboard quarter of the Niagara, and stood down upon the enemy, passing directly through his line. Capt. Barclay, with a view of getting his fresh broadsides to bear, was in the act of attempting to ware, as the Niagara approached, but his vessel being much crippled aloft, and the Queen Charlotte being badly handled, the latter ship got foul of the Detroit, on her starboard quarter. At this critical instant, the Niagara had passed the commanding British vessel's bow, and coming to the wind on the starboard tack, lay raking the two ships of the enemy, at close quarters, and with fatal effect. By this time, the gun-vessels, under Capt. Elliott, had closed to windward of the enemy, the Caledonia in company, and the raking cross-fire soon compelled the English to haul down their colors. The Detroit, Queen Charlotte, Lady Prevost and Hunter struck under this fire, being in the *mêlée* of vessels; but the Chippewa and Little Belt made sail and endeavored to escape to leeward. They were followed by the Scorpion and Trippe, which vessels came up with them in about an hour, and firing a shot or two into them, they both submitted. The Lawrence had struck her flag also, soon after Perry quitted her.

Such, in its outline, appears to have been the picture presented by a battle that has given rise to more controversy than all the other naval combats of the republic united. We are quite aware that by rejecting all the testimony that has been given on one side of the disputed points, and by exaggerating and mutilating that

which has been given on the other, a different representation might be made of some of the incidents ; but, on comparing one portion of the evidence with another, selecting in all instances that which in the nature of things should be best, and bringing the whole within the laws of physics and probabilities, we believe that no other result, in the main, can be reached, than the one which has been given. To return more particularly to our subject.

Perry had manifested the best spirit, and the most indomitable resolution not to be overcome, throughout the trying scenes of this eventful day. Just before the action commenced, he coolly prepared his public letters, to be thrown overboard in the event of misfortune, glanced his eyes over those which he had received from his wife, and then tore them. He appeared fully sensible of the magnitude of the stake which was at issue, remarking to one of his officers, who possessed his confidence, that this day was the most important of his life. In a word, it was not possible for a commander to go into action in a better frame of mind, and his conduct in this particular might well serve for an example to all who find themselves similarly circumstanced. The possibility of defeat appears not to have been lost sight of, but it in no degree impaired the determination to contend for victory. The situation of the *Lawrence* was most critical, the slaughter on board her being terrible, and yet no man read discouragement in his countenance. The survivors all unite in saying that he did not manifest even the anxiety he must have felt at the ominous appearance of things. The *Lawrence* was effectually a beaten ship an hour before she

struck; but Perry felt the vast importance of keeping the colors of the commanding vessel flying to the last moment; and the instant an opportunity presented itself to redeem the seemingly waning fortunes of the day, he seized it with promptitude, carrying off the victory not only in triumph, but apparently against all the accidents and chances which, for a time, menaced him with defeat.

Perry appears seriously to have satisfied himself that he captured a materially superior force in the battle of Lake Erie. If any reliance is to be placed on the published report of Capt. Barclay, this is certainly an error; and, we may add, that the better opinion of those naval men who have had proper opportunities for ascertaining the fact, is also against it. In the men of the two squadrons, there was probably no essential disparity; although there are reasons for thinking that the English a little outnumbered the Americans. Neither side had many above or under five hundred souls engaged in this action. But the sick lists of the Americans amounted to more than a hundred. As Capt. Barclay came out expressly to fight, expecting to meet his enemy the next day, and he had received aboard his vessels a strong party of troops, it is not probable he brought out any sick with him. It is in confirmation of this opinion, that, while the enemy dwell on their inferiority of force, and the other disadvantages under which they supposed themselves to labor, nothing is said of any sick. This fact would make a material difference as respects the men, even allowing the opposing parties to have been equal, numerically.

In vessels the Americans were to the English as nine are to six. This might have been a disadvantage, however, and in one sense it was, by distributing the force unequally at the commencement of the battle. Still, as the two largest American brigs were essentially heavier than the two heaviest British vessels, and the Ariel was a schooner of some size, this circumstance would have been more than balanced by their weight, could these three vessels have got into close action simultaneously, and soon ; or before the enemy had an opportunity to cripple one of them in detail.

The opinion of Perry, and, we may add, that of the country, concerning the superiority of the enemy in this battle, appear to have been founded principally on the circumstance that the English had the most guns. A mere numerical superiority in guns is altogether fallacious. A single long 32 pounder, for most of the purposes of nautical warfare, would be more efficient than thirty-two 1 pounders ; the sizes of the guns being quite as important as the number. There can be little question that a vessel, always supposing her to be of a size suitable to bear the metal, which carried twenty 32 pounders, would be fully a match for two similar ships that carried each twenty 12 pounders ; or, perhaps, for two that carried each twenty 18 pounders ; the guns being long or short alike. As the latter, however, was not the fact in the battle of Lake Erie, the Detroit carrying long guns, principally, while the two heaviest American brigs carried carronades, the comparative estimates of force become complicated in a way that does not altogether refer to weight of shot. The superiority of the long gun depends, first, on its

greater range, and the greater momentum of the shot, pound for pound; second, from the circumstance that the long ship-gun will almost always bear two, and sometimes three shot; whereas the carronade is in danger of dismounting itself by the recoil, if over-charged, and of so far lessening the momentum of its shot as to prevent them from penetrating a vessel's side;\* and, thirdly, because the long gun will sustain a protracted cannonade, while a short gun is seldom of much efficiency after an hour's service. There can be no question that the *Lawrence* and *Niagara* would have been an overmatch for the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*

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\* In this battle the *Detroit's* side was full of shot that did not penetrate. By some it was supposed that the American powder was bad; but, it is far more probable that the distance at which the *Lawrence* engaged at first, and over-shotting her carronades, were the true reasons the English escaped so well for the first hour or two. This fact is now asserted, on direct testimony. Mr. Dobbins, an officer of experience who served on the Lake, but who was not in this battle, having joined the squadron from distant service, a day or two after its occurrence, writes as follows:—  
“A day or two after the action I was on board the *Detroit*, and in company with Lieut. Rolette of the British service, and late of that ship, with whom I was well acquainted previous to the war, and shown by him the division he had charge of, and had from him an explanation and account of the action. There was one thing he remarked; which I have never seen mentioned in any account of that affair. He said that the ship (the *Detroit*) received more damage in her hull from the long guns, more particularly the long 32s of the gun-boats, than from all the rest put together; and that the carronades, particularly of the *Lawrence*, must have been much over-shotted, as the shot from them would frequently strike the side of the ship, and rebound into the water. In fact, I was told by some of those who were on board of her, (*Lawrence*), that they invariably put in, first, a round shot, and then a stand of both grape and canister, and sometimes a bag of langrage besides.’



in close action, and when we come to see the great disparity of the metal of the remaining vessels, it can leave no doubt that the Americans possessed the strongest force on this occasion, comparing the two squadrons in the aggregate. A very brief analysis will prove the justice of this position.

The American vessels, in the battle of Lake Erie, carried 54 guns, while the English had 63. This makes a numerical superiority of 9 guns, and on this vague fallacy the victory has been assumed to have been one of an inferior over a superior force. In the combat between the *Constellation* and *l'Insurgente*, the latter vessel mounted 40 guns, and the former only 38. There was also a difference of a hundred men, in favor of the French ship. But the *Constellation's* gun-deck metal was long 24s, while that of *l'Insurgente* was French 12s; leaving the former an essential superiority of force that no intelligent seaman has ever denied. In the action we are examining, the *Hunter* mounted 10 guns, and the *Caledonia* 3. Thus, numerically speaking, the former vessel was of more than treble the force of the latter. But a critical analysis of the metal, and of the armaments, will give a very different result. In the first place, the *Caledonia's* guns were on pivots, which gave her 3 guns in broadside, whereas the *Hunter* could fight but 5 at any one time, and under any circumstances. This fact alone reduces the numerical superiority of the British vessel from more than treble to less than double. Then comes the consideration of the metal. Agreeably to Capt. Barclay's return of the force of his vessels, which is appended to his official account of the battle, the regular broadside

metal of the Hunter was only 30 lbs., and this, too, distributed in shot, of which some were so small as 2, 4, and 6lbs. each; while the Caledonia threw 80lbs. of metal at a discharge, in 24 and 32lb. shot. On the other hand, however, the Hunter had quarters, or bulwarks, which make a protection against small missiles.

There is another circumstance to prove the fallacy of placing the superiority of force on a naked numerical superiority in guns. Including the pivot guns, and the regular armament of the British on the 10th September, they fought 34 guns at a time, or what may be termed in broadside; while the Americans, owing to their having more traversing pieces mounted, fought precisely the same number, though of much heavier metal. This fact at once reduces the apparent comparative force of the two squadrons in guns, or from that of 54 to 63, to a numerical equality; or, to that of 34 to 34.

But the fortunes of a battle are not to be estimated solely by the physical forces employed by the opposing parties. Circumstances constantly occur to neutralize these advantages, and to render the chances nearer equal. The assailant has frequently more to contend with than the assailed, and it is obvious that the force which cannot be used is, for the purposes of that particular occasion, as if it did not exist. While, therefore, there can be little doubt that the American squadron, in the battle on Lake Erie, was much superior to the British squadron as a whole, there were circumstances to aid the enemy which produced far more of a real than there was of an apparent equality. As respects Perry, himself, he certainly, in his own brig, contended against

a vastly superior force, owing to the dispersed state of his vessels, in part, though quite as much, probably, to the determination of the enemy to concentrate their fire on the American commanding vessel until they had destroyed her. The latter circumstance will account for many of the seeming anomalies of this day. Thus the Ariel and Scorpion, though engaged from the first, suffered comparatively but little; as did the Caledonia. All these vessels were under fire from an early period in the action, and it is in direct proof that a shot passed through the wails of both sides of the latter vessel, within a short time after the battle commenced.

The slaughter on board the Lawrence was terrible. Mr. Yarnall, her first lieutenant, testified before a Court of Inquiry, in 1815, that the Lawrence had on board of her "131 men and boys of every description, of which 103 were fit for duty." Of this number 22 were killed, and 63 were wounded. The loss of the Niagara, also, would have been deemed heavy but for this carnage on board the Lawrence. By the report of Perry, himself, she had 2 killed and 25 wounded. Her own surgeon, however, says that this report was inaccurate, the slightly wounded having been omitted. He also says that there were five men killed. The discrepancy is to be accounted for by the circumstances that after the action, the men were much scattered in the prizes, the Niagara furnishing most of their crews, and that her own medical officer had no agency in drawing up the report. Thus the number of the dangerously and severely wounded the latter states to have been accurately given, while those of the slain and slightly wounded were not. These are facts which it is diffi-

cult to authenticate, at this late day, though there are circumstances which go to render the accuracy of this correction of the official report probable, if not certain. In a squadron which now numbered fifteen sail, with broken crews, few officers to report, and some of those few wounded or ill, and with men dying of disease daily, mistakes of this nature might readily occur. The other vessels did not suffer heavily, and the British, as a whole, lost about as many men as the Americans.

While the nation was disposed to overlook every thing connected with this battle, in the result, Perry did not escape criticism for the manner in which he engaged the enemy. It was said that he ought to have waited until his line had become compact, and covered the approach of his two principal brigs, by the fire of the heavy long guns of the smaller vessels. This is probably still the opinion of many distinguished seamen.

It is certain that by placing the schooners of the American squadron in the advance, it would have been possible to open on the enemy with as many long guns as he possessed himself, and guns of much heavier metal; but grave questions of this nature are not to be so lightly determined, as this admission may seem to infer. There was the experience of the warfare on Lake Ontario to induce Perry to suppose that a similar policy might be resorted to on Lake Erie. The English sailed better in squadron than the Americans, on both lakes, and having the same object in view, the commander on Lake Erie had every reason to suppose that they would retire before him, as

soon as a general action became probable, and thus postpone, or altogether avoid the desired conflict for the command of those waters. The distances being so small, nothing was easier than to carry out this policy. Even allowing Perry to have sent his heavily armed schooners in advance, and to have approached himself under cover of their fire, there can scarcely be a doubt that Barclay would have wore round, and changed the order of formation, by bringing them, again, into the rear of the American line; an evolution that would have been easy of accomplishment, with his superiority of sailing.

Had the wind stood, or even had not the enemy hit upon the plan of directing most of their fire against the Lawrence, the victory of Lake Erie, now so complete in its results, would have had no drawbacks. But, with the high ends he kept in view, the importance of securing the command of the lake, and the moral certainty of success could he close with his enemy, Perry would scarcely have been justified in delaying the attack, on the plea that the lightness of the wind endangered any particular vessel of his command. Now that the battle is over, it is doubtless easy to perceive in what manner it might have been better fought, but this is a remark that will probably apply to all human actions.

His victory at once raised Perry from comparative obscurity to a high degree of renown before the nation. With the navy he had always stood well, but neither his rank nor his services had given him an opportunity of becoming known to the world. The important results that attended his success, the completeness of that suc-

cess, the number of vessels captured at the same time, and the novelty of a victory in squadron over the English, all contributed to shed more than an ordinary degree of renown on this event; and, by necessary connection, on the youthful conqueror of that day. His own great personal exertions, too, gave a romantic character to his success, and disposed the public mind to regard it with an unusual degree of interest. The government granted gold medals to Perry and his second in command, and the former was promoted to be a captain, his commission being dated on the 10th September, 1813.

His triumph on the water did not satisfy Perry. After co-operating with the army, by assisting in regaining possession of Detroit, and in transporting the troops, he joined the land forces, under General Harrison, in person, and was present at the Battle of the Moravian Towns. In all this service, he was as active as his peculiar situation would allow, and there can be little doubt that the presence of a gallant young sailor, flushed with victory and ever foremost on the march, was cheering to the army which then pressed on the rear of the enemy. After the surrender of the British troops, Perry issued, conjointly with Harrison, a proclamation to the people of the portion of Upper Canada that had fallen into the hands of the republic, pointing out the usual conditions for their government and submission. It is worthy of remark that this was the first instance in which any American naval officer was ever in a situation to perform a similar act.

Shortly after, the end of the season being at hand, Perry gave up his command. As he returned to the

older parts of the country, his journey was a species of triumph, in which warm, spontaneous feeling, however, rather than studied exhibition predominated.

Perry's victory did not prove altogether barren, in another sense, though his pecuniary benefits were certainly out of proportion small, as compared with the political benefits it conferred on the country. There was properly no broad pennant on Lake Erie, in either squadron, Com. Chauncey, in the one case, and Sir James Yeo, in the other, being the commander-in-chief. This circumstance deprived Perry of the usual share of prize money which legally fell to that rank, but Congress added the sum of \$5000 to that of \$7500 which belonged to him as commander of the *Lawrence*, making a total amount of \$12,500; a sum which, while it is insignificant when viewed as the gift of a nation, bestowed on a conqueror for such a service, was not altogether unimportant to the young housekeeper, whose family had now been increased in number to four by the birth of two children. It may be added, here, as a proof of the high estimation in which Perry's success has ever been held by the nation, that his most elaborate biographer states that something like forty counties, towns, villages, etc., have been named after him, in different parts of the Union.

Perry had returned to his command and his family at Newport, on quitting Lake Erie, but here it was not possible for him to remain long, in the height of an active war. In August, 1814, he was transferred to the *Java* 44, an entirely new ship, then fitting at Baltimore. This vessel, however, was unable to get out, in consequence of the force the enemy kept in the bay, below.

Her commander and crew were actively employed in the operations that were carried on to annoy the British vessels on their descent of the Potomac from Alexandria, and the defence of their own vessel was confided to them in the fruitless attempt on Baltimore.

About the close of the year, preparations were made for equipping two light squadrons, with a view to harass the trade of the enemy. One of the squadrons was now given to Perry, it being found that the *Java* could not get to sea. He immediately caused the keels of three brigs to be laid, intending to have two more constructed to complete the number. Peace, however, put an end to this enterprise.

In May, 1815, Perry was attached anew to the *Java*, and he remained in this ship, at different ports, until January, 1816, when he sailed from Newport for the Mediterranean. While lying at the port from which he now took his departure, an opportunity offered for this brave man, always active on emergencies of this sort, to rescue the crew of a wreck from drowning, during a gale in the cold weather of an American winter. The season was boisterous, and it is mentioned as an extraordinary fact that the *Java*, which sailed from Newport with strong north-west gales, passed the Western Islands, the eighth day out. On the fourteenth she was within a few hours' run of Cape St. Vincent.

On reaching the Mediterranean, the *Java* joined a squadron commanded by Com. Shaw, and was present before Algiers at a moment when very serious movements were contemplated against that regency. Peace, however, was preserved, and the ship continued to cruise in that beautiful sea, subsequently under the



command of Com. Chauncey, until January, 1817, when she was ordered home.

The termination of this cruise was made uncomfortable to Perry, by an exceedingly unpleasant misunderstanding with the commanding marine-officer of his own ship. Some disagreeable occurrences had already created a coolness between them, when Perry, in a personal interview, became so far irritated as to strike his subordinate in his own cabin. It may be some little extenuation of this act, that it is understood to have been committed after Perry had returned from a dinner party on shore. There is little to be said in justification of such a violation of propriety, beyond the usual plea that no one is always right. Perry appears to have been soon sensible that he had committed himself in a way to require concessions, and these he very handsomely offered to make. They were not accepted, and the affair subsequently led to recriminating charges and trials, by means of which both the offenders were sentenced to be privately reprimanded.

This transaction produced a deeper feeling, perhaps, than any other question of mere discipline that ever agitated the American marine. It was justly said that, in Perry's case, the punishment was altogether disproportioned to the offence, and that the persons and honor of the subordinates were placed at the mercy of the captains by the decision. There can be no sufficient reason for the commanding officer of a ship's using violence toward an inferior, as he has all legal means for compelling legal submission; and beyond this his power does not extend. Thus the punishment of the superior who thus transcends his just authority ought

even to exceed that which awaits the subordinate who rebels against it, since it is without a motive in itself, while passion may goad the other to an act of madness; and, of the two, it is ever more dangerous to discipline for the superior than for the inferior to err. In the one case, the crime is that of an individual; while in the other, it is authority itself which is in fault; and power can never offend without bringing discredit on its attributes.

As respects the conduct of Perry in this matter, it partakes equally of what we conceive to be the strong and the weak points of his character. Notwithstanding all that rigorous moralists may be disposed to say, the best excuse for the offence, perhaps, is the fact that he was a little off his guard by the exhilaration of the scene he is understood to have just left. The fault committed, apology was his true course, and this reflection induced him to offer. It was not accepted, and he saw before him the prospect of a trial. Then it was that he preferred the charges against the marine officer. Here he committed, by far, the gravest of his faults; and truth compels us to say it was a fault that he committed more than once in the course of his life, leaving, under the gravity of the cases, reason to infer that it was connected with some controlling trait of character. A commander has little discretion in the preferring of charges. If the party merit punishment, or if the act demand investigation, the public good is the object, in both cases alike. Under no circumstances can a commander, with propriety, compromise or vindicate justice, on grounds that are purely personal to himself. If the marine officer, in this case, merited punishment, the charges

should not have been delayed, but have been instituted independently of all questions between him and his commander; and did he not merit it, they should not have been preferred, even though Perry's commission were the price of his own error. There will be another occasion to advert to a similar confusion between right and wrong, in the official career of this distinguished officer, and in a case affecting himself.

On the other hand, Perry showed a deep sense of the error he had committed in connection with this affair, in his subsequent conduct. After his return home, a meeting took place between him and the marine officer, in which he received the shot of his opponent, declining to fire in return. Nothing could have been better than his conduct throughout the latter part of this affair. In a letter written to his friend Decatur, on this occasion, he uses the following generous and manly language—"I cannot return his fire, as the meeting, on my part, will be entirely an atonement for the violated rules of the service."

The affair with his marine officer was not quite disposed of, when a new difficulty arose to embitter the close of Perry's life. Like that of the marine officer, it has already attracted too much notice, and the indiscretions of ill-judging and partial vindicators have dragged into the question principles of far too much importance to the navy, and indeed to the nation at large, to allow of any biographer's passing it over in silence.

The battle of Lake Erie was attended by two circumstances that were likely to entail dissensions and discussions on the actors in that important event.

Though victory crowned the efforts of the Americans, the commanding vessel, the *Lawrence*, struck her flag to the enemy, while the *Niagara*, a vessel every way her equal in force, did not get her full share of the combat until near its close. Nothing is more certain than that both these peculiarities might have occurred without blame being properly attached to any one; but nothing was more natural than that such circumstances should lead to accusations, recriminations, and quarrels. Most of the officers were exceedingly young men, and, while some of the *Niagara* were indiscreet in accusing those who surrendered the *Lawrence* of having tarnished the lustre of the day, those of the *Lawrence* retorted by accusing the *Niagara* of not having properly supported them. When this business of recrimination commenced, or which party was the aggressor, it would now most probably be in vain to ask; but the result has been one of the most protracted and bitter controversies that has ever darkened the pages of the history of the American marine; and a controversy to which political malignancy has endeavored to add its sting. As full and elaborate discussions of this subject have appeared, or will appear in print, we intend to allude to it here no farther than it is inseparably connected with the acts and character of the subject of our memoir, and the vindication of our own opinions.

In his official account of the battle of Lake Erie, Perry commended the conduct of his second in command, Capt. Elliott, in terms of strong eulogium. But it would seem that the circumstances above mentioned gave rise to some early rumors to the prejudice of both parties; it being contended, on one side, that Capt. El-

liott did not do his duty in the engagement, and, on the other, that Capt. Perry came on board the Niagara dispirited, and ready to abandon the day. The country heard but little of this, though the report to the prejudice of Capt. Elliott was widely circulated in the region of the lakes, particularly among the troops of Gen. Harrison's army. In 1815, in consequence of a paragraph in an English newspaper, which accompanied the finding of the Court Martial that sat on Capt. Barclay, and which appears to have been mistaken even by Capt. Elliott, as well as by sundry writers of this country, for a part of the finding itself, Capt. Elliott asked for a Court of Inquiry into his conduct on the 10th Sept. The court sat; and the finding was an honorable acquittal. Here the matter rested for three years, or until after the return of Perry from the Mediterranean, when he received a letter from Capt. Elliott, who asked for explanations on the matter of certain certificates enclosed, which alleged that he, Capt. Perry, had spoken disrespectfully of his, Capt. Elliott's, conduct in the battle of Lake Erie. This letter produced a brief but envenomed correspondence, in which Perry avowed the imputations charged to him, and which terminated in a challenge from Capt. Elliott. This challenge Perry declined accepting, on the ground that he was about to prefer charges against his late subordinate. Here the matter terminated, in waiting for the future course of the government. It is known that these charges were shortly after sent, but no proceedings were ever ordered by the department.

In order to form a just estimate of Perry's conduct in this affair, and to discharge our own duties as im-

partial biographers, it will be necessary to analyze his charges, and to give him the benefit of his own explanations. Perry felt the awkwardness of his present position. In 1813, a few days after the battle, he had written a letter to the secretary, eulogizing the conduct of Capt. Elliott in unequivocal terms. This letter was written three days after the occurrence of the events, when all the circumstances were still quite recent, and yet when sufficient time had been given to become acquainted with any incidents which may have escaped his personal observation. He was now, five years later, bringing accusations which necessarily involved a contradiction of his eulogiums, and he felt the necessity of offering his reasons for this change of course and seemingly of opinion. This he did in a letter that was sent with his charges, and which was dated August 10th, 1818.

In his explanations, Perry took the ground that when he wrote the official letter of 1813, commending the conduct of Capt. Elliott, he was not fully apprised of all the facts of the case; but that he now possessed the evidence necessary to substantiate his charges. This was the only substantial excuse that could be offered, the profession of a reluctance to say any thing which might injure Capt. Elliott, which was also urged, hardly sufficing to explain away a eulogy. The truth, however, compels us to go further, and to add that Perry, in this instance, committed the same fault that he had just before fallen into in the case of the marine officer. He allowed considerations that were purely personal to himself, to control his official conduct. In his explanations, it is distinctly stated that he should

still have been willing to pass over the alleged delinquency of Capt. Elliott, had not the latter, by assailing his, Perry's, character, endeavored to repair his own. While he makes this admission, Perry also confesses that the facts upon which some of his present charges were founded had long been in his possession, thus weakening his best defence for the course he was now taking, or that of previous ignorance. If we add that Perry gave as an additional reason for praising Capt. Elliott in his official report of the battle, that he wished all under his orders to share in the glory of the day, the excuse is not tenable, as he omitted altogether to mention four of his commanders, and this, too, under circumstances that produced deep mortification to the gentlemen whose names were not given to the nation.

A dispassionate examination of this letter, at once exposes its fallacies. In the first place, it was not necessary to eulogize the conduct of Capt. Elliott to screen him from censure. The praise that Perry gave him, in 1813, is prominent, distinct, and much fuller than that which is bestowed on any other officer under his command. It is but justice to Perry to say, however, that admitting Capt. Elliott deserved equally well with others, his rank, and the peculiar circumstance that he alone was Perry's equal in this respect, might fairly entitle him to more notice than his inferiors; while it is due to Capt. Elliott to add that superiority of notice was by no means necessary if the object had been solely to protect from censure. There is a particularity in Perry's praise, however, that it is difficult to ascribe to any thing but an honest conviction that Elliott

merited it. That the reader may judge for himself, we give parts of the letter itself, in a note, putting the passages that apply especially to Capt. Elliott in italics.\*

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\* The following passages from Perry's official report, are those in which he speaks of the conduct of Capt. Elliott, and in which he speaks of the conduct of his officers generally. They are all given for the purposes of comparison.

“ *U. S. Schooner Ariel, Put-in-Bay, 13th Sept. 1813.*

“ SIR—In my last I informed you that we had captured the enemy's fleet on this lake. I have now the honor to give you the most important particulars of the action,” &c.

“ *At half-past two, the wind springing up, Capt. Elliott was enabled to bring his vessel, the Niagara, gallantly into close action; I immediately went on board of her, when he anticipated my wish, by volunteering to bring the schooners, which had been kept astern by the lightness of the wind, into close action.*”

“The Niagara being very little injured, I determined to pass through the enemy's line—bore up and passed ahead of their two ships and a brig, giving a raking fire to them with the starboard guns, and to a large schooner and sloop from the larboard side, at half pistol-shot distance. The smaller vessels at this time having got within grape and canister distance, *under the direction of Capt. Elliott, and keeping up a well-directed fire*, the two ships, a brig, and a schooner surrendered, a schooner and sloop making a vain attempt to escape.”

“Those officers and men under my observation evinced the greatest gallantry, and I have no doubt that all others conducted themselves as became American officers and seamen. Lieut. Yarnall, first of the Lawrence, though several times wounded, refused to quit the deck. Midshipman Forrest, (doing duty as lieutenant,) and sailing-master Taylor, were of great assistance to me. I have great pain in stating to you the death of Lieut. Brooks of the marines, and Mid. Lamb, both of the Lawrence; and Mid. John Clark, of the Scorpion—they were valuable officers. Mr. Hambleton, purser, two volunteered his services on deck, was



The next consideration is the circumstance that Perry forbore to prefer his charges, though some of the proofs had long been in his possession, until an issue had been made up between his own character and that of Capt. Elliott. This, then, is the instance similar to that which occurred in the affair of the marine officer. In both cases, the prosecutor is in possession of the facts; in both he delays to bring his charges while a controversy affecting himself is in suspense; and in both he actually brings them when he finds that his own conduct is to be brought in question. All this is proved by Perry's own showing, and there is little necessity of dilating on the merits of his course. It is unjustifiable, and the mitigation of its errors is only to be sought in the universal predominance of human

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severely wounded late in the action. Mid. Swartout and Claxton, of the Lawrence, were severely wounded. On board the Niagara, Lieuts. Smith and Edwards, and Mid. Webster (doing duty as sailing-master) behaved in a very handsome manner. Capt. Brevoort, of the army, who acted as a volunteer in the capacity of a marine officer on board that vessel, is an excellent and brave officer, and with his musketry did great execution. Lieut. Turner, commanding the Caledonia, brought that vessel into action in the most able manner, and is an officer that in all situations may be relied upon. The Ariel, Lieut. Packett, and Scorpion, Sailing-Master Champlin, were enabled to get early into the action, and were of great service. Capt. Elliott speaks in the highest terms of Mr. Magrath, purser, who had been despatched in a boat on service, previous to my getting on board the Niagara; and, being a seaman, since the action has rendered essential service in taking charge of one of the prizes. *Of Capt. Elliott, already so well known to the government, it would be almost superfluous to speak. In this action he evinced his characteristic bravery and judgment, and since the close of the action has given me the most able and essential assistance.*"

infirmity. It must be allowed, perhaps, that a large majority of mankind would have acted under similar influence, and have made the same mistake; but, at the same time, it is certain there are a few who would not. It follows, therefore, that the character of Perry, as respects the qualities connected with this affair, must be classed with those of the men who suffer personal feeling to control their public conduct, instead of with those of the men who, in their public acts, overlook self, and decide solely on the abstract principles of duty. This is said without adverting more particularly to the issue which it is alleged had been made up between Perry and Elliott, since nothing is plainer than the fact, that accusations against the former might easily have been disproved, if false, without necessarily dragging accusations against the latter into the inquiry. The result of all is to show, that while Perry possessed some of the qualities of true greatness, he wanted others, without which no man can claim to be placed near the summit of human morals.

It must also be conceded that Perry did not manifest the strong desire he supposes, to allow all to share in the honors of the day, since, as has just been stated, he omitted to mention the names of no less than four of the commanders of his gun-vessels; two of whom were superior in rank to others who were expressly named, and all of whom were as much entitled to be mentioned as the commanders of the other small vessels, under the usual considerations of naval etiquette. We come now to an examination of the charges themselves.

The charges brought by Capt. Perry against Capt. Elliott, in 1818, may be divided into two classes:

those which refer to the conduct of the latter on the 10th Sept., 1813, and those which refer to his conduct subsequently to that day. As the last have no connection with any historical event, they may be passed without comment, though it is no more than justice to Perry to say that some of these charges, with their specifications, are of a nature, if true, to require the punishment of the offender; while it is equally justice to Capt. Elliott to say that others, on their face, are frivolous, and, in their nature, not to be legally sustained. Of the latter class, is a specification which charges Capt. Elliott with having "declared, that the officers and men of the Lawrence were not entitled to prize-money on account of the vessels of the enemy captured on Lake Erie, but that the officers and crews of the other vessels of the American fleet were entitled to prize-money for the re-capture of the Lawrence." To deny an officer the right to make declarations of this nature, would be virtually to deny him the right of maintaining his private interests in the forms prescribed by law. This particular specification appears to have been conceived in a spirit that appeals to the national vanity, rather than to the national justice.\*

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\* In another specification, Perry charges Elliott with having said that the British vessels might, from the superior force of the Americans, have been taken in fifteen minutes, "although he, the said Capt. Elliott, well knew that the force of the enemy in that engagement was superior to that of the American fleet."

The writer cannot see on what principle of force the English, comparing fleet to fleet, were superior to the Americans. An experienced officer, who examined both squadrons, tells him that the Americans were decidedly superior. Officers who were in

The charges of ill conduct on the part of Capt. Elliott, in the battle of Lake Erie, are three in number. The first is conceived in the following words, viz.:—"That the said Capt. Elliott, on the 10th Sept., 1813, being then a master and commander in the navy of the United States, and commanding the U. S. brig Niagara, one of the American squadron on Lake Erie, did not use his utmost exertions to carry into execution the orders of his commanding officer to join in the battle of that day between the American and British fleets." There are two other charges, one accusing Capt. Elliott of not doing his utmost to destroy the vessel he had been particularly ordered to engage, and the other that he did not do his utmost to succor the Lawrence. All three of these charges substantially rest on the same specifications, there being but one elaborately prepared, which assumes to give an outline of the movements of the Niagara in the action.

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the engagement have given him the same account of the matter. His own calculations produce a similar result. Mr. Webster, before the Court of Inquiry, in 1815, says:—"In close action they were not superior to us, in my opinion; but from the *lightness of the wind*, the *situation of the fleets*, and the enemy's having long guns, I consider them superior."

Capt. Turner, in his affidavit, says that it was owing to the Niagara's being so far astern, or, to use his own words, "which circumstance, only, made the result of the battle for a short time doubtful." This is strong language to use *as against a superior force*.

Mr. Packett also says, substantially, the same thing. Now, neither of these brave men would be apt to think success against a superior *British force certain*.

The charge against Elliott is extraordinary in every point of view, since it is like compelling an officer to submit his opinions to those of other persons, in a matter affecting his views of force.

As the purpose of this article is merely to draw a sketch of Perry's acts and character, it is unnecessary to comment on these charges further than is required to effect that object. We deem it impossible for any impartial person to read these charges, and then to examine the evidence, without coming to the conclusion that the subject of this memoir lost sight of public duty in the pursuit of private resentment. He appears to have even overlooked the effect of his own orders in the desire to criminate, and it is certain that one of the specifications involves so great an ignorance of some of the plainest principles of nautical practice, as to raise a suspicion that the hand of some legal man has been employed to pervert that which depends so palpably on natural laws as to admit of no serious dispute. There is other evidence, we think, that Perry did not draw up these charges himself; a fact that may, in a measure, relieve him from the responsibility of having brought them in the precise forms in which they appear.

In the specification of charge fourth, we get the following statement, as coming from Perry himself, touching his own order of battle, viz.: "1st. An order directing in what manner the line of battle should be formed: the several vessels to keep within half a cable's length of each other, and *enjoining it upon the commanders to preserve their stations in the line*, and in all cases to keep as near to the commanding officer's vessel (the Lawrence) as possible. 2d. An order of attack: in which order the Lawrence was designated to attack the enemy's new ship, (afterward ascertained to be named the Detroit,) and the Niagara, commanded by the said Capt. Elliott, designated to attack the enemy's ship Queen

Charlotte," &c., &c. This, then, was the general order of battle, as respects the Niagara, with the addition that her station in the line was half a cable's length astern of the Caledonia. Perry also gave a repetition of Nelson's well known order—"That if his officers laid their vessels close alongside of their enemies, they could not be out of the way." Under these orders, not only Perry himself, in 1818, but several of his witnesses, appear to think it was the duty of a commander to close with the particular adversary he was ordered to engage, if in his power, without regard to any other consideration. This opinion is such an unmilitary construction of the orders, and might have led to consequences so injurious, as to be easily shown to be untenable.

If the construction of the orders just mentioned can be sustained, the line, the distance from each other at which the vessels were to form, and every other provision for the battle, the one alluded to excepted, became worse than useless. The true course would have been, with such an intention before a commander, to have directed the several officers to their respective antagonists, and left them to find their way alongside in the best manner they could. If such were intended to be the primary order, in the orders for battle, it should have been so worded as to let the subordinates understand it, and not fetter them with other orders, of which the execution must materially interfere with the execution of this particular mandate.

But it is impossible to understand the order of battle in this restricted sense; else would it reflect sorely on Perry's judgment as an officer, and do utter discredit to

his powers of explanation. The order of battle clearly meant—first, to prescribe a *line of battle*, in which each ship had her assigned station, with an additional direction, “*enjoining it on her to keep her station in the line;*” second, to point out at what vessel of the enemy each American should direct his efforts, *from that station in the line;* and, lastly, if circumstances deranged the original plan, to keep near the Lawrence, though you may place yourself alongside of your enemy as a last resort; *there* you cannot be much out of your way. Without this construction of them, the orders would be a contradictory mass of confusion.

Now it is in proof that the Niagara was in her station astern of the Caledonia, until Capt. Elliott, after waiting for orders to shift his berth in vain, did it on his own responsibility, breaking that line of battle which he was enjoined to keep, and from the responsibility of doing which it was certainly the peculiar duty of Perry to relieve him, either by a signal, or by an order sent by a boat, did it appear to him to be necessary. It is also in proof, that, when Capt. Elliott took on himself, in the immediate presence of his commander, without a signal, to break an order of battle he was enjoined to keep, he endeavored to close with the Lawrence, and that when the latter dropped, he passed ahead, and came abeam of the only heavy vessels the enemy possessed, engaging them within musket-shot. If these facts are not true, human testimony is worthless; for they are substantially shown even by the best of Capt. Perry's own witnesses. This confusion in the reading of the orders prevails among most of the witnesses, who evidently mistake the accessory for the principal.

Another of Perry's specifications accuses Capt. Elliott of keeping his brig "nearly a mile's distance from the Lawrence," &c., at the period of the engagement before he passed the Caledonia. It is beyond dispute that the Caledonia was close to the Niagara all this time, and, let the distance be what it might, it is not easy to find the principle which censures one commander, under these circumstances, and does not censure the other; unless the explanation is to be found in the admitted superiority of the Niagara over the Caledonia in sailing. This we believe to be the solution of Perry's impression on this particular point, as well as of those of the witnesses whose affidavits accompany his charges. In other words, they appear to have persuaded themselves that it was the duty of Capt. Elliott to have disregarded the line of battle, and the injunction to keep it, and to have broken it immediately, or as soon as the Lawrence drew ahead of the Caledonia. This is what is meant by their statement that the wind which carried the Lawrence ahead, would have done the same thing with the Niagara. No one can dispute the fact; but the question, who ought to take the responsibility of altering a line of battle before any material damage had been done on either side, he who issued the order originally, and who had the power to change his own arrangements, or he whose duty it was to obey, is a question which can admit of no dispute in the minds of the clear-thinking and impartial.

Having adverted to this particular specification, it is proper to add that all the witnesses of the Niagara, who speak to the point, differ from the charges as to this alleged distance of their vessel when astern; and even



the two lieutenants of the *Lawrence*, who were examined before the court of 1815, put it, the one at three quarters of a mile from *the enemy*, and the other at from half to three quarters of a mile; thus lessening the distance averred in the charges, by nearly, if not quite, one half.

In another specification Perry uses these words, viz. : "Instead of preventing which, or affording any assistance to said brig *Lawrence*, the said Capt. Elliott left that vessel, her officers and crew, (eighty-three of whom were killed or wounded,) a sacrifice to the enemy, although his, the said Capt. Elliott's, vessel remained perfectly uninjured, with not more than one or two of his men, (if any,) while Capt. Elliott continued on board of her, wounded.

Since the death of Perry, the clearest evidence has been produced to show that the *Niagara* had met with at least half of her whole loss before Perry reached her, and several witnesses have testified they do not think more than five or six of the casualties occurred while he was on board. Previously to his bringing the charges, however, the error of this allegation about the wounded, and that of the injuries to the vessel, had been publicly shown. Mr. Webster, the sailing-master of the *Niagara*, before the court of 1815, testified that he was hurt and carried below previously to Capt. Perry's coming on board; and, in reply to a question as to the injuries received by the *Niagara*, he answered as follows, viz. : "There were two men killed from my division *before I went below*, and several men wounded on board." This testimony forms part of the records of the department, though Perry may never have seen it. To

suppose him capable of bringing an allegation that only two men were *wounded* in the Niagara, when it was established that two had been *killed*, would be to attribute to him a subterfuge that could scarcely be palliated by the blindness of resentment. There is now no doubt, whatever, that the specification, so far as it relates to the hurt of the Niagara, rests solely on vague rumors, which, so far from strengthening the accusations against Capt. Elliott, have a direct tendency to weaken them, by proving the active feeling under which they have been brought. The specification, worthless as it would be if true, is unquestionably untrue.

There is another specification which it is impossible to suppose Perry deliberately offered, and not to imagine him totally blinded by resentment, since it involves a physical contradiction. This specification is in these words: "And was (meaning Capt. Elliott) when his said commanding officer went on board that vessel, (the Niagara,) keeping her on a course *by the wind*, which would in a few minutes have carried said vessel entirely out of action; to prevent which, and in order to bring said vessel into close action with the enemy, the said commanding officer was under the necessity of heaving-to, and immediately waring said vessel, and altering her course *at least eight points*."

The first objection to this charge is a feature of disingenuousness, that has greatly misled the public mind, on the subject of the situation the Niagara actually occupied when Capt. Perry reached her. It is unanswerably in proof that this brig was about as near to the enemy as the Lawrence ever got during the engagement, and though Perry certainly carried her much

nearer, the phrase he uses, in this charge, of "in order to bring the said vessel into close action," has a tendency to mislead. If the *Lawrence* was ever in close action, then was the *Niagara* in close action when Perry reached her; and it would have been fairer to have used some expression which would have left a clearer idea of the real facts of the case. But this is the least objection to the specification. A reference to Capt. Perry's own official report of the action will show that he himself admits, in that document, that *Capt. Elliott took the Niagara into close action.*

If Capt. Perry found the *Niagara* "on a course by the wind," he found her steering on a line parallel to that on which the enemy was sailing; and if it required "a few minutes" to carry her out of action, under such circumstances, it is a proof she was still coming up abreast of her antagonist; and to insinuate that that was an equivocal position, would be like insinuating the same of *Hull*, when he ran alongside of the *Guerriere*, or of *Lawrence* when he did the same to the *Shannon*, as each of these officers was steering on courses off the wind, which in a few minutes would have carried them ahead of their foes, and out of the action, had they not devised means to prevent it. To accuse a man of what might happen, while he is still doing what is right, is to bring a charge which falls of its own weight. It is an accusation which may be brought against the most virtuous while employed in the performance of any act of merit.

Feeble as is the imputation contained in the foregoing feature of this specification, that which follows is still more so, since it contradicts the possibilities. Pass-

ing over the singularity of a ship's first heaving-to, to prevent her running out of action, and of then "immediately waring," a conjunction of evolutions that is entirely novel to seamanship, we come to the charge that Capt. Perry was obliged to "ware" or alter his course "eight points," in order to cut the English line. The term "ware" is never used by a seaman unless he brings the wind from one quarter to the other. To "ware" is to come round *before* the wind; as to "tack" is to come round *against* the wind. With the wind at north, a ship on the larboard tack that was steering "a course by the wind" would head at least as high as east-north-east. Now keeping her off "eight points," would cause her to head south-south-east; a course which would not only still leave the wind on her larboard quarter, but which would want two full points of keeping dead away; the last being a step preliminary to waring, or coming up on the other tack. If Capt. Perry used the term "waring" inadvertently, and merely meant to say that he *kept away* eight points to cut the line, it follows that the Niagara must have been nearly abeam of the enemy when he took command of her, and proves that Capt. Elliott himself was fairly coming up alongside of his enemy. If, however, he is to be understood as saying literally that he did "ware," or bring the wind on his starboard quarter, as is most probably true, both because the fact is believed to be so, and because a seaman would not be apt to use the word "ware" without meaning the thing, it gives a death-blow to the only serious imputation connected with the charge, by showing that Capt. Elliott must have been bearing down on the enemy

when Capt. Perry reached the Niagara. The very minimum of waring would be to bring the wind one point on the quarter opposite to that on which it had been before the evolution was performed. Less than that would be keeping away. No seaman would think of using the term for a change less than this. Now, if Capt. Perry "wore," and altered his course only eight points, he must have had the wind one point abaft the beam when he commenced the evolution, and the charge that Capt. Elliott was hugging the wind cannot be true.

It is impossible to refute this reasoning, which depends on the simplest mathematical demonstration. The weakness of the specification is so apparent, indeed, as to give reason to distrust the agency of any seaman in its immediate production. There are some incidental facts that may possibly strengthen such a supposition. The answer of Perry to Capt. Elliott's last letter, is dated August 3d, 1818. In this answer, he says—"I have prepared the charges I am about to prefer against you; and, by the mail to-morrow, shall transmit them to the Secretary of the Navy," &c. The date of the charges actually sent to the department, however, is August 8th, or five days later, and, from the phraseology of the charges, as well as from that of the accompanying affidavits, it gives some reason to suppose that an outline of the facts had, in the interval, been laid before some member of the bar, who has himself supplied the phraseology, and with it, quite likely, most of the defective reasoning.

It is nevertheless impossible to read this page in the life of Perry without regret. The self-contradiction be-

tween the language of his official report and that of his charges is of a character that every right-thinking man must condemn, and when we take his own explanations of the discrepancy, and look into the charges themselves, we find little to persuade us that the last were brought under that high sense of the convictions of public duty, which alone could justify his course. We have no pleasure in laying this matter before the world, but the circulation which has lately been given to the subject, under *ex parte* views and mutilated testimony, imposes the obligation on a biographer to dwell longer on this theme than he might wish. There is ever a temptation in a democracy to flatter even the prejudices of the community; but he is, indeed, a short-sighted judge of human nature who fancies that the world will fail to punish those who have been the instruments of even its own delusions, and a miserable moralist who sees truth through the medium of popular clamor, at the expense equally of his reason and of the right.

The government never ordered any proceedings on the charges thus preferred by Perry against Capt. Elliott. It appears to have viewed them, as they must be viewed by all impartial men who examine the subject, as the result of personal resentment, confessedly offered to its consideration under the influence of personal interests; and as something very like the assumption of a right in a public servant to mould the history of the country to suit the passions or policy of the hour. Still, Perry remained a favorite, for his services were unequivocal, and there was a desire to overlook the capital mistake into which he had fallen. We have no evidence of his pressing the matter, and it

is fair to presume, from this circumstance, that the advice of cool-headed friends prevailed on him to acquiesce in the course taken by the functionaries at Washington.

It was March, 1819, before Perry was again called into service. He had caused a small residence to be constructed on a part of the property that had been in his family since the settlement of the country, and here he passed the autumn of the year of his controversies; certainly well clear of one of them, whatever may be the judgment of posterity concerning his course in the other. The following winter he purchased a house in Newport, and took possession of his new abode. Here he was found by letters from the department directing him to join the Secretary in New York. The result of the interview was his being ordered to the command of a force that was to be employed in protecting the trade with the countries near the equator, his functions being semi-diplomatic as well as nautical.

It was intended that Perry, who now in truth first became a commodore by orders, though the courtesy of the nation had bestowed on him the title ever since his success on Lake Erie, should hoist his broad pennant on board the *Constellation* 38; but that ship not being ready, he sailed from Annapolis in the *John Adams* 24, on the 7th June. He did not get to sea, however, until the 11th. Early in July the *John Adams* reached Barbadoes. After communicating with the shore, she proceeded on to the mouth of the Orinoco, where Perry shifted his pennant to the *Nonsuch* schooner, which vessel had sailed in his company, and sent the ship to Trinidad. He then began to ascend the river toward

Angostura, the capital of Venezuela; off which town the *Nonsuch* anchored on the evening of the 26th July.

The American party remained at Angostura until the 15th August; twenty days, at nearly the worst season of the year. The yellow fever prevailed, and Perry remarks in his journal, a few days after his arrival, that his crew was getting to be sickly, and that two Englishmen had already been buried from the house in which he resided. After transacting his business, it now became necessary to depart, and, on the day above mentioned, he took his leave of the authorities, and immediately got under way.

The situation of the *Nonsuch* was already critical, her commander, the late commodore, then Lieut. Claxton, the present Capt. Salter, who was a passenger, and Doctor Morgan, the surgeon, together with some fifteen or twenty of the crew, being already down with the fever. The whole service had been one of danger, though it was a danger that does not address itself to the imagination of men with the influence and brilliancy of that of war. The officers and crew of this vessel had entered the Orinoco, only thirty-four days after they sailed from Lynn Haven, and were probably as much exposed to the dreadful disease of the equator as men well could be. As yet, however, the deaths in the schooner had not been numerous, about one fourth of the ill only having died.

On the morning of the 17th, Perry entered his gig, and, as the *Nonsuch* continued to drop down with the current, he pulled ahead, amusing himself with a fowling-piece along the margin of the river. This may seem to have been running an unnecessary risk, but



the seeds of disease were doubtless already in his system. That evening, the vessel reached the mouth of the stream, but meeting with a fresh and foul wind, she was anchored on the bar. There was a good deal of sea in the course of the night, which was driven in before the breeze, and the schooner riding to the current, the spray washed over her quarter, from time to time, water descending into the cabin and wetting Perry in his sleep. When he awoke, which was quite early, he found himself in a cold chill. In about an hour the chill left him, and was succeeded by pains in the head and bones, a hot skin, and other symptoms of yellow fever. Perry was of a full habit of body, and to appearances as unpromising a subject for this disease as might be. He had foreseen the risk he ran, and had foretold his own fate in the event of being seized. Notwithstanding his appearance, it seems he would not bear the lancet, the loss of blood causing him to sink, and his attendants were compelled to relinquish a treatment that had been quite successful in most of the other cases. There were intervals of hope, however, his skin cooling, and his breathing becoming easier, but new accesses of the disorder as constantly succeeded to destroy their cheering influence.

From the first, Perry himself had but little expectation of recovery. His fortitude was not the less apparent, though he frequently betrayed the strength of the domestic ties which bound him to life. By the 23d of August, the *Nonsuch* had got within two leagues of her haven, being bound to Port Spain, in Trinidad, where his own ship, the *John Adams*, was waiting his return. Perry was now so far gone as to have attacks of the

hiccough, though his mind still remained calm and his deportment placid. He was lying on the floor of a trunk-cabin, in a small schooner, under a burning sun, and in light winds; a situation that scarcely admitted of even the transient comfort of cooling breezes and complete ventilation. At noon of this day he desired the surgeon to let him know if any fatal symptoms occurred, and shortly after he was actually seized with the vomiting which in this disorder is the unerring precursor of death. This was a sign he could understand as well as another, and he summoned to his side several of his senior officers, and made a verbal disposition of his property in favor of his wife. He appears to have waited to perform this act until quite assured that his fate was certain. This duty discharged, he asked to be left alone.

A boat from the John Adams now arrived, and there was a moment of reviving interest in the world as he inquired of her first lieutenant as to the situation of his ship and crew. He then had an interview with the gentleman whom he wished to draw his will, but his mind wandered, and about half-past three he breathed his last. As his death occurred on the 23d of August, 1819, he was just thirty-four years and two days old when he expired. When this event occurred, the Non-such was only a mile from the anchorage, and it would have been a great mitigation of such a blow, could the dying man have passed the last few hours of his existence in the comfortable and airy cabin of a larger vessel. The death of the commodore was first announced to the officers and crew of the John Adams by seeing the broad pennant, the symbol of authority, lowered from

the mast-head of the schooner. The body was interred with military honors in Trinidad, but, a few years later, it was transferred in a ship of war to Newport, where it now lies, in its native soil, and in the bosom of the community in which it first had an existence.

In person, Com. Perry was singularly favored, being, in early manhood, of an unusually agreeable and prepossessing appearance. The expression of his countenance was open, frank and cheerful, indicating more of the qualities of the heart, perhaps, than of the mind. His capacity was good, notwithstanding, if not brilliant or profound, and he had bestowed sufficient pains on himself to render his conversation and correspondence suited to the high rank and trust that were confided to him. He was warm-hearted, affectionate in disposition, gentle in his ordinary deportment, but quick in temper, and, as usually happens with men of vivid feelings, as apt to dislike as strongly as he was cordial in his attachments. He was inclined to a clannish feeling, as is apt to be the case with the members of small communities, and more or less of its effects are to be traced in several incidents of his life. 'Thus, in the controversy' that occurred between himself and Capt. Elliott, of the nine witnesses who take a view of the latter officer's conduct similar to his own, six were gentlemen who followed him from Rhode Island,\* and belonged to

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\* Of the other three, two were the lieutenants of the Lawrence, and had their feelings enlisted in the fate of that brig, while the ninth was an officer who not only had just before quarreled with Capt. Elliott, but who, by his own showing, believed that the omission of his own name in the despatches was owing to Capt. Elliott's interference. No better proof of the nature of the feeling that prevailed need be given than the fact, that the surgeon's mate

his own gallant little state. He was fond of surrounding himself with friends from his native place, and ever retired to it when not on service afloat. Perry was probably the only officer of his rank who never served an hour, unattached to a vessel in any state but his own. Whether this were accidental, or the result of choice, we cannot say; but it is in singular conformity with his predilections, which go far toward explaining some of the more painful passages of his life.

In stature, Commodore Perry was slightly above the middle height.\* His frame was compact, muscular, and well formed, and his activity in due proportion. His voice was peculiarly clear and agreeable, and, aided

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of the Lawrence, one of Perry's immediate followers, testifies himself that he questioned the wounded of the Niagara, within thirty-six hours of the battle, in order to ascertain how many were hurt while Capt. Elliott was on board of her, and how many after Perry took command!

\* The writer admits that many of the minor details of this sketch are obtained from the work of Capt. Mackenzie. But here his indebtedness ceases. He writes and thinks for himself in all that is distinctive in the history or character of Perry. In nothing does he agree less with Capt. Mackenzie, than in the opinion of the latter concerning Perry's stature. "The person of Perry," says that gentleman, "was of the *loftiest stature*, and most graceful mould" —p. 242, vol. 2d, Mack. Life of Perry. If Capt. Mackenzie viewed the whole of his subject through the same exaggerated medium, as he certainly has viewed the person of Perry, it is not surprising that others should differ from him in opinion. The writer has stood side by side with Perry, often, and feels certain he was himself taller than Perry. His own stature was then rather under five feet ten. A gentleman who knew Perry well, assures the writer that he measured him once, for a wager, and that his height was as near as might be to five feet eight. The "*loftiest stature*" would infer, at the very least, six feet, and this Perry certainly was not by several inches.

by its power, he was a brilliant deck-officer. His reputation as a seaman, also, was good, while his steadiness in emergencies was often proved.

By his marriage with Miss Mason, who still lives his widow, Perry left four children; three sons and a daughter. The government made a larger provision than usual for their education and support, though it could scarcely be deemed adequate to its object, or to the claims of the deceased husband and father. Of the sons, the eldest was educated a physician; the second is now a lieutenant in the navy; the third has devoted himself to the profession of arms, as a student at West Point. The daughter is married to a clergyman of the name of Vinton. Perry appears to have been happy in his domestic relations, having been an attached husband and a careful father, though he did not permit the ties of the fireside to interfere with the discharge of his public duties, the severest of all trials perhaps on a man of an affectionate disposition and domestic habits.

In reviewing the life of Com. Perry, one cannot but regret that the ill-directed zeal of mistaken friends has not left his memory peacefully to repose on the laurels he obtained in battle. Advancing under the cover of political vituperation, they have endeavored to sustain a vindictive controversy, by exaggerated pictures of the character of his victory, and by *ex parte* representations of testimony. It is a misfortune that men who have not been capable of appreciating how much more powerful truth really is than even the illusions of national vanity, have had too much to do with what has been termed the vindication of his character, and have thus dragged before the world evidence to prove that Perry

was far from being superior to human failings. His professional career was short, and, though it was distinguished by a victory that led to important results, and which was attended by great success, it was not the victory of unrivaled skill and unsurpassed merit that ill-judged commentators have so strenuously asserted. Compared with the battle of Plattsburgh Bay, as a nautical achievement, the victory of Lake Erie must always rank second in the eyes of American seamen, and, in the eyes of statesmen, as filling the same place in importance. A mere *ad captandum* enumeration of guns can never mislead the intelligent and experienced, and these, when acquainted with the facts, will see that the action of the 10th September was one in which defeat would have been disgrace. Still it was a glorious victory, and gallantly achieved. Circumstances were adverse, and the disadvantages were nobly met by Perry. His greatest merit on this day was in his personal exertions, and the indomitable resolution he manifested not to be conquered. The manner in which he changed his vessel, taken in connection with the motive, *stands almost alone in the annals of naval exploits*, and evinces a professional *game* that of itself would confer lustre on a sea-captain. His recent and severe illness, too, adds to the merit of his conduct, for it is seldom that the mind is enabled to look down the infirmities of the body. But the personal intrepidity of Perry, always of a high order, as was often manifested, was not the principal feature of this act, though it led him from the deck of one ship, already a slaughter-house, that was dropping out of the battle, to the deck of another then in the heat of the combat; but it was that lofty determination to re-

deem his previous losses, and still to wrest victory from the grasp of his enemy, that truly ennobles the deed, and, *so far as he himself was personally concerned, throws the mere calculations of force into the shade.*

The death of Perry, too, has a claim on the public gratitude, that is quite equal to what would have been so readily conceded had he fallen in battle. In his case the fatal danger was not even concealed; for he went into the Orinoco, as he went into the fight, conscious of the presence of an enemy, and with unerring warnings of his own fate should he happen to come within the reach of his ruthless arm. To our minds, Perry calmly dying on the cabin-floor of the little Nonsuch, surrounded by mourning friends, beneath a burning sky, and without even a breath of the scirocco-like atmosphere to fan his cheek, is a spectacle as sublime as if he lay weltering in his gore on the quarter-deck of the Pennsylvania, with the shouts of victory still ringing in his ears.

The name of Perry will ever remain associated with American naval annals. His victory was the first obtained, in squadron, by the regular and permanent marine of the country, and its reputation precedes all others in the order of time. The peculiar character of his personal exertions associated him more closely with his success, too, than is usual even for a commanding officer, securing to his renown a perpetuity of lustre that no one can envy who justly views his exertions. All attempts to rob Perry of a commander's credit for the battle of Lake Erie must fail; for to this he is fairly entitled, and this the good sense and natural justice of men must award him; but too much is exacted when

his admirers ask the world to disregard the known laws that regulate physical force ; to forget the points of the compass ; to overlook testimony, when it is direct, unimpeached, and the best a case will admit of, in favor of rumors that can be traced to no responsible source ; to believe all that even Perry says to-day, and to forget all that he said yesterday ; in short, to place judgment, knowledge, evidence, the truth, and even the laws of nature, at the mercy of imbittered disputants, who have fancied that the ephemeral influence of political clamor is to outlast the eternal principles of right, and even to supplant the mandates of God



## RICHARD DALE.

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AMONG the many brave men who early contributed to render the navy of the republic popular and respectable, the gallant seaman whose name is placed at the head of this article is entitled to a conspicuous place; equally on account of his services, his professional skill, and his personal merit. Although his connection with the marine, created under the constitution of 1789, was of short continuance, it left a durable impression on the service; and, if we look back to the dark period of the Revolution, we find him contending in some of the fiercest combats of the period, always with heroism, and not unfrequently with success. Circumstances, too, have connected his renown with one of the most remarkable naval battles on record; a distinction of itself which fully entitles him to a high place among those who have fought and bled for the independence of their country, in stations of subordinate authority.

Richard Dale was born in the colony of Virginia, on the 6th November, 1756. His birth-place was in the county of Norfolk, and not distant from the well known port of the same name. His parents were native Americans, of respectable standing, though of rather reduced circumstances. His father, dying early, left

a widow with five children, of whom the subject of this memoir was the eldest. Some time after the death of his father, his mother contracted a second marriage with a gentleman of the name of Cooper, among the issue of which were two well known ship-masters of Philadelphia.

Young Dale manifested an inclination for the sea at a very early period of life. The distrust of a parental control that has no foundation in nature, and which is apt to be regarded with jealousy, stimulated if it did not quicken this desire, and we find him at the tender age of twelve, or in 1768, making a voyage between Norfolk and Liverpool, in a vessel commanded by one of his own uncles. On his return home, he appears to have passed nearly a twelvemonth on shore; but his desire to become a sailor still continuing, in the spring of 1770 he was regularly apprenticed to a respectable merchant and ship-owner, of the borough of Norfolk, named Newton. From this moment his fortune in life was cast, and he continued devotedly employed in the profession, until his enterprise, prudence and gallantry enabled him finally to retire with credit, and unblemished name, and a competency.

During his apprenticeship, Dale appears to have been, most of the time, employed in the West India trade. Every sailor has his chances and hair-breadth escapes, and our young mariner met with two, at that period of his life, which may be thought worthy of notice. On one occasion he fell from the spars stowed on the belfry into the vessel's hold, hitting the keelson, a distance of near twenty feet; escaping, however, without material injury. A much greater risk was

incurred on another. While the vessel to which he belonged was running off the wind, with a stiff breeze, Dale was accidentally knocked overboard by the jib sheets, and was not picked up without great difficulty. He was an hour in the water, sustaining himself by swimming, and he ever spoke of the incident as one of more peril than any other in a very perilous career.

When nineteen, or in 1775, Dale had risen to the station of chief mate on board a large brig belonging to his owner. In this situation he appears to have remained, industriously engaged during the few first months of the struggle for independence; the active warfare not having yet extended itself as far south as his part of the country. Early in 1776, however, the aspect of things began to change, and it is probable that the interruption to commerce rendered him the master of his own movements.

Virginia, in common with most of the larger and more maritime colonies, had a sort of marine of its own; more especially anterior to the Declaration of Independence. It consisted principally of bay craft, and was employed in the extensive estuaries and rivers of that commonwealth. On board of one of these light cruisers Dale was entered as a lieutenant, in the early part of the memorable year 1776. While in this service, he was sent a short distance for some guns, in a river craft; but falling in with a tender of the Liverpool frigate, which ship was then cruising on the Cape Henry station, he was captured and carried into Norfolk. These tenders were usually smart little cruisers, another, belonging to the same frigate, having been taken shortly before, by the U. S. brig Lexington, after

a sharp and bloody conflict. Resistance in the case of Dale was consequently out of the question, his capture having been altogether a matter of course.

On reaching Norfolk, our young officer was thrown on board a prison-ship. Here he found himself in the midst of those whom it was the fashion to call "loyal subjects." Many of them were his old school-mates and friends. Among the latter was a young man of the name of Bridges Gutteridge, a sailor like himself, and one who possessed his entire confidence. Mr. Gutteridge, who it is believed subsequently took part with his countrymen himself, was then employed by the British, in the waters of the Chesapeake, actually commanding a tender in their service. The quarrel was still recent; and honorable, as well as honest men, under the opinions which prevailed in that day, might well be divided as to its merits. Mr. Gutteridge had persuaded himself he was pursuing the proper course. Entertaining such opinions, he earnestly set about the attempt of making a convert of his captured friend. The usual arguments, touching the sacred rights of the king—himself merely a legalized usurper, by the way, if any validity is to be given to the claims of hereditary right to the crown—and the desperate nature of the "rebel cause," were freely and strenuously used, until Dale began to waver in his faith. In the end, he yielded and consented to accompany his friend in a cruise against the vessels of the state. This occurred in the month of May, and, hostilities beginning now to be active, the tender soon fell in with a party of Americans, in some pilot boats, that were employed in the Rappahannock. A warm engagement ensued, in

which the tender was compelled to run, after meeting with a heavy loss. It was a rude initiation into the mysteries of war, the fighting being of a desperate, and almost of a personal character. This was one of those combats that often occurred about this period, and in those waters, most of them being close and sanguinary.

In this affair, Dale received a severe wound, having been hit in the head by a musket ball; with this wound he was confined several weeks at Norfolk, during which time he had abundance of leisure to reflect on the false step into which he had been persuaded, and to form certain healthful resolutions for the future. To use his own words, in speaking of this error of his early life, he determined "never again to put himself in the way of the bullets of his own country." This resolution, however, it was necessary to conceal, if he would escape the horrors of a prison-ship, and he "bided his time," fully determined to take service again under the American flag, at the first fitting opportunity.

In the peculiar state of the two countries at the time, and with the doubtful and contested morality of the misunderstanding, there was nothing extraordinary in this incident. Similar circumstances occurred to many men, who, with the best intentions and purest motives, saw, or fancied they saw, reasons for changing sides in what, in their eyes, was strictly a family quarrel. In the case of Dale, however, the feature most worthy of comment was the singleness of mind and simple integrity with which he used to confess his own error, together with the manner in which he finally became a convert to the true political faith. No narrative of the life of this respectable seaman would be complete, with-

out including this temporary wavering of purpose ; nor would any delineation of his character be just, that did not point out the candor and sincerity with which, in after life, he admitted his fault.

Dale was only in his twentieth year when he received this instructive lesson from the "bullets of his countrymen." From that time, he took good care not to place himself again in their way, going, in June or July, to Bermuda, on a more peaceable expedition, in company with William Gutteridge, a relative of his beguiling friend. On the return passage, the vessel was captured by the *Lexington*, the brig just mentioned, then a successful cruiser, under the orders of Capt. John Barry ; an officer who subsequently died at the head of the service. This occurred just after the Declaration of Independence, and Dale immediately offered himself as a volunteer under the national flag. He was received and rated as a midshipman within a few hours of his capture. This was the commencement of Dale's service in the regular navy of his native country. It was also the commencement of his acquaintance with the distinguished commander of the *Lexington*, whose friendship and respect he enjoyed down to the day of the latter's death. While the brig was out, our midshipman had another narrow escape from death, having, together with several others, been struck senseless by lightning during a severe thunder storm.

Barry made the capture just mentioned near the end of his cruise, and he soon after went into Philadelphia, which place Dale now saw for the first time. Here Barry left the *Lexington* to take command of the *Ef-*

fingham 28, a ship that never got to sea, leaving our new midshipman in the brig. Capt. Hallock was Barry's successor, and he soon rated Dale, by this time an active and skilful seaman, a master's mate. Early in the autumn, the Lexington sailed for Cape François, on special duty. On her return, in the month of December, she fell in with the Pearl frigate,\* and was captured without resistance, carrying an armament of only a few fours.

As it was blowing very fresh at the moment this capture was made, the Pearl took out of the prize four or five officers, threw a small crew on board, and directed the brig to follow her. By some accounts Dale was left in the Lexington, while by others he was not. A succinct history of the events of his life, written by a connection under his own eye, and which is now before us, gives the latter version of the affair, and is probably the true one. At all events, the remaining officers and crew of the Lexington rose upon the captors in the course of the night, retook the brig, and carried her into Baltimore.†

The English landed several of their prisoners on Cape Henlopen, in January, 1777, under some arrangement that cannot now be explained, though probably it was connected with an exchange for the men taken and carried away in the prize. Among these was Dale,

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\* This ship has been differently stated to have been the Liverpool and the Pearl. We follow what we think the best authorities.

† The prize-officer of the Lexington was a young American, of a highly respectable family, then an acting lieutenant in the English navy. His prisoners seized an occasion to rise, at a moment when he had gone below for an instant, in consequence of which he was dismissed the service; living the remainder of his life, and dying, in his native country.

who made the best of his way to Philadelphia, when he received orders to proceed to Baltimore; which he obeyed, and rejoined his brig, the command of which had now been transferred to Capt. Henry Johnston.

The next service on which the *Lexington* was employed was in the European seas. In March, she sailed from Baltimore for Bourdeaux, with despatches. On her arrival, this brig was attached to a small squadron under the orders of Capt. Lambert Wickes, who was in the *Reprisal 16*, having under his command also the *Dolphin 10*, Capt. Samuel Nicholson. This force of little vessels accomplished a bold and destructive cruise, making the entire circuit of Ireland, though it was eventually chased into a French port by a line-of-battle ship. Its object was the interception of certain linen-ships, which it missed; its success, however, in the main, was such as to excite great alarm among the English merchants, and to produce warm remonstrances to France, from their government.

At this time France was not at war with England, although she secretly favored and aided the cause of the revolted colonies. The appearance of American cruisers in the narrow seas, however, gave rise to so many complaints, as to induce the French government, in preference to pushing matters to extremities, temporarily to sequester the vessels. The *Lexington* was included in this measure, having been detained in port more than two months, or until security was given that she would quit the European seas. This was done, and the brig got to sea again on the 18th September, 1777.\*

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\* It is a curious feature of the times, that, the French ordering the Americans to quit their ports with their prizes, the latter were taken out a short distance to sea and sold, Frenchmen becoming the purchasers, and finding means to secure the property.



It is probable that the recent difficulties had some effect on the amount of the military stores on board all three of the American vessels. At all events, it is certain that the Lexington sailed with a short supply of both powder and shot, particularly of the latter. The very next day she made an English cutter lying-to, which was approached with a confidence that could only have proceeded from a mistake as to her character. This cutter proved to be a man-of-war, called the Alert, commanded by Lieutenant, afterward Admiral Bazely, having a strong crew on board, and an armament of ten sixes.

In the action that ensued, and which was particularly well fought on the part of the enemy, the Americans were, in a measure, taken by surprise. So little were the latter prepared for the conflict, that not a match was ready when the engagement commenced, and several broadsides were fired by discharging muskets at the vents of the guns. The firing killed the wind, and there being considerable sea on, the engagement became very protracted, during which the Lexington expended most of her ammunition.

After a cannonading of two hours, believing his antagonist to be too much crippled to follow, and aware of his own inability to continue the action much longer, Capt. Johnson made sail, and left the cutter, under favor of a breeze that just then sprung up. The Lexington left the Alert rapidly at first, but the latter having bent new sails, and being the faster vessel, in the course of three or four hours succeeded in getting alongside again, and of renewing the engagement. This second struggle lasted an hour, the fighting being principally

on one side. After the Lexington had thrown her last shot, had broken up and used all the iron that could be made available as substitutes, and had three of her officers and several of her men slain, besides many wounded, Capt. Johnston struck his colors. The first lieutenant, marine officer, and master of the Lexington were among the slain.

By this accident Dale became a prisoner for the third time. This occurred when he wanted just fifty days of being twenty-one years old. On this occasion, however, he escaped unhurt, though the combat had been both fierce and sanguinary. The prize was taken into Plymouth, and her officers, after undergoing a severe examination, in order to ascertain their birthplaces, were all thrown into Mill Prison, on a charge of high treason. Here they found the common men; the whole being doomed to a rigorous and painful confinement.

Either from policy or cupidity, the treatment received by the Americans, in this particular prison, was of a cruel and oppressive character. There is no apology for excessive rigor, or, indeed, for any constraint beyond that which is necessary to security, toward an uncondemned man. Viewed as mere prisoners of war, the Americans might claim the usual indulgence; viewed as subjects still to be tried, they were rightfully included in that healthful maxim of the law, which assumes that all are innocent until they are proved to be guilty. So severe were the privations of the Americans on this occasion, however, that, in pure hunger, they caught a stray dog one day, skinned, cooked and ate him, to satisfy their cravings for food. Their situation at length attracted the attention of the liberal;

statements of their wants were laid before the public ; and an appeal was made to the humanity of the English nation. This is always an efficient mode of obtaining assistance, and the large sum of sixteen thousand pounds was soon raised ; thereby relieving the wants of the sufferers, and effectually effacing the stain from the national escutcheon, by demonstrating that the sufferers found a generous sympathy in the breasts of the public. But man requires more than food and warmth. Although suffering no longer from actual want and brutal maltreatment, Dale and his companions pined for liberty—to be once more fighting the battles of their country. Seeing no hopes of an exchange, a large party of the prisoners determined to make an attempt at escape. A suitable place was selected, and a hole under a wall was commenced. The work required secrecy and time. The earth was removed, little by little, in the pockets of the captives, care being had to conceal the place, until a hole of sufficient size was made to permit the body of a man to pass through. It was a tedious process, for the only opportunity which occurred to empty their pockets, was while the Americans were exercising on the walls of their prison, for a short period of each day. By patience and perseverance, they accomplished their purpose, however, every hour dreading exposure and defeat.

When all was ready, Capt. Johnston, most of his officers, and several of his crew, or as many as were in the secret, passed through the hole, and escaped. This was in February, 1778. The party wandered about the country in company, and by night, for more than a week, suffering all sorts of privations, until it was

resolved to take the wiser course of separating. Dale, accompanied by one other, found his way to London, hotly pursued. At one time the two lay concealed under some straw in an out-house, while the premises were searched by those who were in quest of them. On reaching London, Dale and his companion immediately got on board a vessel about to sail for Dunkirk. A pressgang unluckily took this craft in its rounds, and suspecting the true objects of the fugitives, they were arrested, and, their characters being ascertained, they were sent back to Mill Prison in disgrace.

This was the commencement of a captivity far more tedious than the former. In the first place, they were condemned to forty days' confinement in the black hole, as the punishment for the late escape; and, released from this durance, they were deprived of many of their former indulgences. Dale himself took his revenge in singing "rebel songs," and paid a second visit to the black hole, as the penalty. This state of things, with alternations of favor and punishment, continued quite a year, when Dale, singly, succeeded in again effecting his great object of getting free.

The mode in which this second escape was made is known, but the manner by which he procured the means he refused to his dying day to disclose. At all events, he obtained a full suit of British uniform, attired in which, and seizing a favorable moment, he boldly walked past all the sentinels, and got off. That some one was connected with his escape who might suffer by his revelations is almost certain; and it is a trait in his character, worthy of notice, that he kept this secret, with scrupulous fidelity, for forty-seven years. It is

not known that he ever divulged it even to any individual of his own family.

Rendered wary by experience, Dale now proceeded with great address and caution. He probably had money as well as clothes. At all events, he went to London, found means to procure a passport, and left the country for France, unsuspected and undetected. On reaching a friendly soil, he hastened to l'Orient, and joined the force then equipping under Paul Jones, in his old rank of a master's mate. Here he was actively employed for some months, affording the commodore an opportunity to ascertain his true merits, when they met with something like their just reward. As Dale was now near twenty-three, and an accomplished seaman, Jones, after trying several less competent persons, procured a commission for him, from the commissioners, and made him the first lieutenant of his own ship, the justly celebrated *Bon Homme Richard*.

It is not our intention, in this article, to enter any farther into the incidents of this well known cruise, than is necessary to complete the present subject. Dale does not appear in any prominent situation, though always discharging the duties of his responsible station with skill and credit, until the squadron appeared off Leith, with the intention of seizing that town—the port of Edinburgh—and of laying it under contribution. On this occasion, our lieutenant was selected to command the boats that were to land, a high compliment to so young a man, as coming from one of the character of Paul Jones. Every thing was ready, Dale had received his final orders, and was in the very act of proceeding to the ship's side to enter his boat, when a heavy squall

struck the vessels, and induced an order for the men to come on deck, and assist in shortening sail. The vessels were compelled to bear up before it, to save their spars; this carried them out of the frith; and, a gale succeeding, the enterprise was necessarily abandoned. This gale proved so heavy, that one of the prizes actually foundered.

This attempt of Jones', while it is admitted to have greatly alarmed the coast, has often been pronounced rash and inconsiderate. Such was not the opinion of Dale. A man of singular moderation in his modes of thinking, and totally without bravado, it was his conviction that the effort would have been crowned with success. He assured the writer, years after the occurrence, that he was about to embark in the expedition with feelings of high confidence, and that he believed nothing but the inopportune intervention of the squall stood between Jones and a triumphant *coup de main*.

A few days later, Jones made a secret proposal to his officers, which some affirm was to burn the shipping at North Shields, but which the commanders of two of his vessels strenuously opposed, in consequence of which the project was abandoned. The commodore himself, in speaking of the manner in which this and other similar propositions were received by his subordinates, extolled the ardor invariably manifested by the young men, among whom Dale was one of the foremost. Had it rested with them, the attempts at least would all have been made.

On the 19th September occurred the celebrated battle between the *Serapis* and the *Bon Homme Richard*. As the proper place to enter fully into the details of

that murderous combat will be in the biography of Jones, we shall confine ourselves at present to incidents with which the subject of this memoir was more immediately connected.

The Bon Homme Richard had finally sailed on this cruise with only two proper sea-lieutenants on board her. There was a third officer of the name of Lunt, who has been indifferently called a lieutenant and the sailing-master, but who properly filled the latter station. This gentleman had separated from the ship in a fog, on the coast of Ireland, while in the pursuit of some deserters, and never rejoined the squadron. Another person of the same name, and a distant relative of the master, was the second lieutenant. He was sent in a pilot-boat, accompanied by a midshipman and several men, to capture a vessel in sight, before Jones made the Baltic fleet coming round Flamborough Head. This party was not able to return to the Bon Homme Richard, until after the battle had terminated. In consequence of these two circumstances, each so novel in itself, the American frigate fought this bloody and arduous combat with only one officer on board her, of the rank of a sea-lieutenant, who was Dale. This is the reason why the latter is so often mentioned as *the* lieutenant of the Bon Homme Richard, during that memorable fight. The fact rendered his duties more arduous and diversified, and entitles him to the greater credit for their proper performance. Both the Lunts, however, appear to have been seamen of merit, and subsequently did good service. They were natives of New England.

Dale was stationed on the gun-deck, where of course he commanded in chief, though it appears that his pro-

per personal division was the forward guns. Until the ships got foul of each other, this brought him particularly into the hottest of the work ; the *Serapis* keeping much on the bows, or ahead of the *Bon Homme Richard*. It is known that Jones was much pleased with his department, which, in truth, was every way worthy of his own. When the alarm was given that the ship was sinking, Dale went below himself to ascertain the real state of the water, and his confident and fearless report cheered the men to renewed exertions. Shortly after, the supply of powder was stopped, when our lieutenant again quitted his quarters to inquire into the cause. On reaching the magazine passage he was told by the sentinels that they had closed the ingress, on account of a great number of strange and foreign faces that they saw around them. On further inquiry, Dale discovered that the master at arms, of his own head, had let loose all the prisoners—more than a hundred in number—under the belief that the ship was sinking. Dale soon saw the danger which might ensue, but finding the English much alarmed at the supposed condition of the ship, he succeeded in mustering them, and setting them at work at the pumps, where, by their exertions, they probably prevented the apprehended calamity. For some time, at the close of the action, all his guns being rendered useless, Dale was employed principally in this important service. There is no question that without some such succor, the *Richard* would have gone down much earlier than she did. It is a singular feature of this everyway extraordinary battle, that here were Englishmen, zealously employed in aiding the efforts of their



enemies, under the cool control of a collected and observant officer.

At length the cheerful intelligence was received that the enemy had struck. Dale went on deck, and immediately demanded Jones' permission to take possession of the prize. It was granted, and had he never manifested any other act of personal intrepidity, his promptitude on this occasion, and the manner in which he went to work, to attain his purpose, would have shown him to be a man above personal considerations, when duty or honor pointed out his course. The main-yard of the *Serapis* was hanging a-cock-bill, over the side of the American ship. The brace was shot away, and the pendant hung within reach. Seizing the latter, Dale literally swung himself off, and alighted alone on the quarter-deck of the *Serapis*. Here he found no one but the brave Pierson, who had struck his own flag; but the men below were still ignorant of the act. We may form an opinion of the risk that the young man ran, in thus boarding his enemy at night, and in the confusion of such a combat, for the English were still firing below, by the fact that Mr. Mayrant, a young man of South Carolina, and a midshipman of the *Bon Homme Richard*, who led a party after the lieutenant, was actually run through the thigh by a boarding pike, and by the hands of a man in the waist below.

The first act of Dale, on getting on the quarter-deck of the *Serapis*, was to direct her captain to go on board the American ship. While thus employed, the English first lieutenant came up from below, and finding that the Americans had ceased their fire, he demanded

if they had struck. "No, sir," answered Dale, "it is this ship that has struck, and you are my prisoner." An appeal to Capt. Pierson confirming this, the English lieutenant offered to go below and silence the remaining guns of the *Serapis*. To this Dale objected, and had both the officers passed on board the *Bon Homme Richard*. In a short time, the English below were sent from their guns, and full possession was obtained of the prize.

As more men were soon sent from the *Bon Homme Richard*, the two ships were now separated, the *Richard* making sail, and Jones ordering Dale to follow with the prize. A sense of fatigue had come over the latter, in consequence of the reaction of so much excitement and so great exertions, and he took a seat on the binnacle. Here he issued an order to brace the head yards aback, and to put the helm down. Wondering that the ship did not pay off, he directed that the wheelropes should be examined. It was reported that they were not injured, and that the helm was hard down. Astonished to find the ship immovable under such circumstances, there being a light breeze, Dale sprang upon his feet, and then discovered, for the first time, that he had been severely wounded, by a splinter, in the foot and ankle. The hurt, now that he was no longer sustained by the excitement of battle, deprived him of the use of his leg, and he fell. Just at this moment, Mr. Lunt, the officer who had been absent in the pilot-boat, reached the *Richard*, and Dale was forced to give up to him the command of the prize. The cause of the *Serapis*' not minding her helm was the fact that Capt. Pierson had dropped an anchor under

foot when the two ships got foul; a circumstance of which the Americans were ignorant until this moment.

Dale was some time laid up with his wound, but he remained with Jones in his old station of first lieutenant, accompanying that officer, in the *Alliance*, from the Texel to l'Orient. In the controversy which ensued between the commodore and Landais, our lieutenant took sides warmly with the first, and even offered to head a party to recover the *Alliance*, by force. This measure not being resorted to, he remained with Jones, and finally sailed with him for America, as his first lieutenant, in the *Ariel 20*, a ship lent to the Americans, by the King of France.

The *Ariel* quitted port in October, 1780, but encountered a tremendous gale of wind off the Penmarks. Losing her masts, she was compelled to return to refit. On this occasion Dale, in his responsible situation of first lieutenant, showed all the coolness of his character, and the resources of a thorough seaman. The tempest was almost a hurricane, and of extraordinary violence. The *Ariel* sailed a second time about the commencement of the year 1781, and reached Philadelphia on the 18th February. During the passage home, she had a short action, in the night, with a heavy British letter-of-marque, that gave her name as the *Triumph*; and which ship is said to have struck, but to have made her escape by treachery. Jones, who was greedy of glory, even fancied that his enemy was a vessel of war, and that he had captured a cruiser of at least equal force. This was not Dale's impression. He spoke of the affair to the writer of this article, as one of no great moment, even questioning whether their

antagonist struck at all ; giving it as his belief she was a quick-working and fast-sailing letter-of-marque. He distinctly stated that she got off by out-manœuvring the *Ariel*, which vessel was badly manned, and had an exceedingly mixed and disaffected crew. It is worthy of remark, that, while two articles, enumerating the services of Dale, have been written by gentlemen connected with himself, and possessing his confidence, neither mentions this affair ; a proof, in itself, that Dale considered it one of little moment.

The account which Dale always gave of the meeting between the *Ariel* and *Triumph*—admitting such to have been the name of the English ship—so different from that which has found its way into various publications, on the representation of other actors in that affair, is illustrative of the character of the man. Simple of mind, totally without exaggeration, and a lover, as well as a practicer, of severe truth, he was one whose representations might be fully relied on. Even in his account of the extraordinary combat between the *Richard* and *Serapis*, he stripped the affair of all its romance, and of every thing that was wonderful ; rendering the whole clear, simple and intelligible as his own thoughts. The only narratives of that battle, worthy of a seaman, have been written rigidly after his explanations, which leave it a bloody and murderous fight, but one wholly without the marvelous.

On his arrival at Philadelphia, after an absence of four years, more than one of which had been spent in prison, Dale was just twenty-four years and two months old. He was now regularly put on the list of lieutenants, by the marine committee of Congress ; his

former authority proceeding from the agents of the government in Europe. It is owing to this circumstance that the register of government places him so low as a lieutenant. Dale now parted from Paul Jones, with whom he had served near two years; and that, too, in some of the most trying scenes of the latter's life. The commodore was anxious to take his favorite lieutenant with him to the *America* 74; but the latter declined the service, under the impression it would be a long time before the ship got to sea. He judged right, the *America* being transferred to the French in the end, and Jones himself never again sailing under the American flag.

The name of Dale will be inseparably connected with the battle of the *Richard* and *Serapis*. His prominent position and excellent conduct entitle him to this mark of distinction, and it says much for the superior, when it confers fame to have been "Paul Jones' first lieutenant." We smile, however, at the legends of the day, when we recall the account of the "Lieutenants Grubb" and other heroes of romance, who have been made to figure in the histories of that renowned combat, and place them in contrast with the truth-loving, sincere, moral and respectable subject of this memoir. The sword which Louis XVI. bestowed on Jones, for this victory, passed into the hands of Dale, and is now the property of a gallant son, a fitting mark of the service of the father, on the glorious occasion it commemorates.\*

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\* This sword has, quite recently, become the subject of public discussion, and of some private feeling, under circumstances not wholly without interest to the navy and the country. At page 63, vol. 2, of Mackenzie's *Life of Paul Jones*, is the following note, viz :

Dale was employed on board a schooner that was manned from the Ariel, after reaching Philadelphia, and sent down the Delaware to convoy certain public stores. The following June, he joined the Trumbull

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“This sword was sent by Jones’ heirs to his valued friend, Robert Morris, to whose favor he had owed his opportunities of distinguishing himself. Mr. Morris gave the sword to the navy of the United States. It was to be retained and worn by the senior officer, and transmitted at his death, to his successor. After passing through the hands of Commodore Barry, *and one or two other senior officers*, it came into possession of Commodore Dale, and now remains in his family, through some mistake in the nature of the bequest, which seems to require that it should either be restored to the navy in the person of its senior officer, or else revert to the heirs of Mr. Robert Morris, from one of whom the writer has received this information.”

That Captain Mackenzie has been correctly informed as to a portion of the foregoing statement, is as probable as it is certain he has been misled as to the remainder. It would have been more discreet, however, in a writer to have heard both sides, previously to laying such a statement before the world. A very little inquiry might have satisfied him that Commodore Dale could not have held any thing as the senior officer of the navy, since he never occupied that station. We believe the following will be found to be accurate.

Of the manner in which Commodore Barry became possessed of this sword we know nothing beyond report, and the statement of Captain Mackenzie. We understand that a female member of the Morris family gives a version of the affair like that published in the note we have quoted, but the accuracy of her recollections can hardly be put in opposition to the *acts* of such men as Barry and Dale.

The sword never passed through the hands “*of one or two other senior officers*,” as stated by Captain Mackenzie, at all. It was bequeathed by Commodore Barry to Commodore Dale, in his will, and in the following words, viz.

“Item, I give and bequeath to my good friend Captain Richard Dale, *my* gold-hilted sword, as a token of my esteem for him.”

28, Capt. Nicholson, as her first lieutenant. The Trumbull left the capes of the Delaware, on the 8th August, 1781, being chased off the land by three of the enemy's cruisers. The weather was squally, and

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We have carefully examined the will, inventory, &c., of Commodore Barry. The first is dated February 27, 1803; the will is proved and the inventory filed in the following September, in which month Commodore Barry died. Now Commodore Dale was not in the navy at all, when this sword was bequeathed to him, nor when he received it. Dale resigned in the autumn of 1802; and he never rose nearer to the head of the list of captains, than to be the third in rank; Barry, himself, and Samuel Nicholson, being his seniors, when he resigned.

The inventory of Commodore Barry's personal property is very minute, containing articles of a value as low as one dollar. It mentions *two* swords, both of which are specifically bequeathed—viz.: “*my gold-hilted,*” and “*my silver-hilted sword.*” No allusion is made in the will to any trust. Only these two swords were found among the assets, and each was delivered agreeably to the bequest. The gold-hilted sword was known in the family, as the “Paul Jones sword,” and there is not the smallest doubt Commodore Barry intended to bequeath this particular sword, in full property, to Commodore Dale.

Let us next look to the probabilities of the case. The heirs of Paul Jones, who left no issue, gave the sword to Robert Morris, says Capt. Mackenzie, as a mark of gratitude. This may very well be true. But Mr. Morris “gave the sword to the navy of the United States,” to be retained and worn by its senior officer. It would have been a more usual course to have lodged the sword in the Navy Department, had such been the intention. That Commodore Barry did not view *his* possession of the sword in this light, is clear enough by his will. He gave it, *without* restraint of any sort, to a friend who was not in the navy at all, and who never had been its senior officer. This he did, in full possession of his mind and powers, six months before he died, and under circumstances to render any misconception highly improbable. It may be added, that Miss Jeannette Taylor, Paul Jones' niece, in a written communication to the writer, affirms that information was

night set in dark. In endeavoring to avoid her pursuers, the Trumbull found herself alongside of the largest, a frigate of thirty-two guns, and an action was fought under the most unfavorable circumstances. The Trumbull's fore-topmast was hanging over, or rather through her fore-castle, her crew was disorganized, and the vessel herself in a state of no preparation for a conflict with an equal force; much less with that actually opposed to her. The officers made great exertions, and maintained an action of more than an hour, when the colors of the American ship were struck to the Iris 32, and Monk 18. The former of these vessels had been the American frigate Hancock, and the latter was subsequently captured in the Delaware, by Barney, in the Hyder Ally.

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given her brother, which went to satisfy him that Robert Morris, in his pecuniary difficulties, *sold* the sword to Barry. Of the fact, the writer professes to know no more than is here stated.

Can we find any motive for the bequest of Commodore Barry? It was not personal to himself, as the sword went out of his own family. The *other sword* he gave to a brother-in-law. "Paul Jones' sword" was bequeathed to a distinguished professional friend—to one who, of all others, next to Jones himself, had the best professional right to wear it—to "Paul Jones' first lieutenant." Commodore Dale did leave sons, and some in the navy; and the country will believe that the one who now owns the sword has as good a moral right to wear it, as the remote collaterals of Jones, and a much better right than the senior officer of the navy, on proof as vague as that offered. His *legal* right to the sword seems to be beyond dispute.

In the inventory of Commodore Barry's personals, this sword is thus mentioned, viz.:—"a very elegant gold-hilted sword—\$300." The other sword is thus mentioned, viz.:—"a handsome silver-hilted do., \$100." It is worthy of remark, that Miss Taylor says the sword cost 500 louis d'or. The \$300 may have been the sum Barry paid for it.



This was the fourth serious affair in which Dale had been engaged that war, and the fourth time he had been captured. As he was hurt also in this battle, it made the third of his wounds. His confinement, however, was short, and the treatment not a subject of complaint. He was taken into New York, paroled on Long Island, and exchanged in November.

No new service offering in a marine which, by this time, had lost most of its ships, Dale obtained a furlough, and joined a large letter-of-marque, called the Queen of France, that carried twelve guns, as her first officer. Soon after he was appointed to the command of the same vessel. In the spring of 1782, this ship, in company with several other letters-of-marque, sailed for France, making many captures by the way. The ship of Dale, however, parted from the fleet, and falling in with an English privateer of fourteen guns, a severe engagement followed, in which both parties were much cut up; they parted by mutual consent. Dale did not get back to Philadelphia until February of the succeeding year, or until about the time that peace was made.

In common with most of the officers of the navy, Lieutenant Dale was disbanded, as soon as the war ceased. He was now in the twenty-seventh year of his age, with a perfect knowledge of his profession, in which he had passed more than half his life, a high reputation for his rank, a courage that had often been tried, a body well scarred, a character beyond reproach, and not altogether without "money in his purse." Under the circumstances, he naturally determined to follow up his fortunes in the line in which he had commenced his career. He became part owner of a large

ship, and sailed in her for London, December, 1783, in the station of master. After this, he embarked successfully in the East India trade, in the same character, commanding several of the finest ships out of the country. In this manner he accumulated a respectable fortune, and began to take his place among the worthies of the land in a new character.

In September, 1791, Mr. Dale was married to Dorothy Crathorne, the daughter of another respectable ship-master of Philadelphia, and then a ward of Barry's. With this lady he passed the remainder of his days, she surviving him as his widow, and dying some years later than himself. No change in his pursuits occurred until 1794, when the new government commenced the organization of another marine, which has resulted in that which the country now possesses.

Dale was one of the six captains appointed under the law of 1794, that directed the construction of as many frigates, with a view to resist the aggressions of Algiers. Each of the new captains was ordered to superintend the construction of one of the frigates, and Dale, who was fifth in rank, was directed to assume the superintendence of the one laid down at Norfolk, virtually the place of his nativity. This ship was intended to be a frigate of the first class, but, by some mistake in her moulds, she proved in the end to be the smallest of the six vessels then built. It was the unfortunate Chesapeake, a vessel that never was in a situation to reflect much credit on the service. Her construction, however, was deferred, in consequence of an arrangement with Algiers, and her captain was put on furlough.

Dale now returned to the China trade, in which he

continued until the spring of 1798. The last vessel he commanded was called the *Ganges*. She was a fine, fast ship, and the state of our relations with France requiring a hurried armament, the government bought this vessel, in common with several others, put an armament of suitable guns in her, with a full crew, gave her to Dale, and ordered her on the coast as a regular cruiser.

In consequence of this arrangement, Capt. Dale was the first officer who ever got to sea under the pennant of the present navy. He sailed in May, 1798, and was followed by the *Constellation* and *Delaware* in a few days. The service of Dale in his new capacity was short, however, in consequence of some questions relating to rank. The captains appointed in 1794 claimed their old places, and, it being uncertain what might be the final decision of the government, as there were many aspirants, Dale declined serving until the matter was determined. In May, 1799, he sailed for Canton again, in command of a strong letter-of-marque, under a furlough. On his return from this voyage, he found his place on the list settled according to his own views of justice and honor, and reported himself for service. Nothing offered, however, until the difficulties with France were arranged; but, in May, 1801, he was ordered to take command of a squadron of observation about to be sent to the Mediterranean.

Dale now hoisted his broad pennant, for the first and only time, and assumed the title by which he was known for the rest of his days. He was in the prime of life, being in his forty-fifth year, of an active, manly frame, and had every prospect before him of a long and honorable service. The ships put under his orders were the

President 44, Capt. James Barron; Philadelphia 38, Capt. S. Barron; Essex 32, Capt. William Bainbridge; and Enterprise 12, Lieut. Com. Sterrett. A better appointed, or a better commanded force, probably never sailed from America. But there was little to do, under the timid policy and defective laws of the day. War was not supposed to exist, although hostilities did; and cruisers were sent into foreign seas with crews shipped for a period that would scarcely allow of a vessel's being got into proper order.

The squadron sailed June 1st, 1801, and reached Gibraltar July 1st. The Philadelphia blockaded the Tripolitan admiral, with two cruisers, in Gibraltar, while the other vessels went aloft. A sharp action occurred between the Enterprise and a Tripolitan of equal force, in which the latter was compelled to submit, but was allowed to go into her own port again, for want of legal authority to detain her. Dale appeared off Tripoli, endeavored to negotiate about an exchange of prisoners, and did blockade the port; but his orders fettered him in a way to prevent any serious enterprises. In a word, no circumstances occurred to allow the commodore to show his true character, except as it was manifested in his humanity, prudence and dignity. As a superior, he obtained the profound respect of all under his orders, and to this day his name is mentioned with regard by those who then served under him. It is thought that this squadron did much toward establishing the high discipline of the marine. In one instance only had Dale an opportunity of manifesting his high personal and professional qualities. The President struck a rock, in quitting Port Mahon, and for some

hours she was thought to be in imminent danger of foundering. Dale assumed the command, and one of his lieutenants, himself subsequently a flag officer of rare seamanship and merit, has often recounted to the writer his admiration of the commodore's coolness, judgment, and nerve, on so trying an occasion. The ship was carried to Toulon, blowing a gale, and, on examination, it was found that she was only saved from destruction by the skilful manner in which the wood ends had been secured.

The vigilance of Dale was so great, however, and his dispositions so skilful, that the Tripolitans made no captures while he commanded in those seas. In March, 1802, he sailed for home, under his orders, reaching Hampton Roads in April, after a cruise of about ten months. The succeeding autumn, Com. Dale received an order to hold himself in readiness to resume the command from which he had just returned. Ever ready to serve his country, when it could be done with honor, he would cheerfully have made his preparations accordingly, but, by the order itself, he ascertained that he was to be sent out without a captain in his own ship. This, agreeably to the notions he entertained, was a descent in the scale of rank, and he declined serving on such terms. There being no alternative between obedience and resignation, he chose the latter, and quitted the navy. At this time, he was the third captain on the list, and it is no more than justice to say, that he stood second to no other in the public estimation.

Dale never went to sea again. Enjoying an ample fortune, and possessing the esteem of all who knew him, he commanded the respect of those with whom he

differed in opinion touching the question which drove him from the navy. With the latter he never quarreled, for, at the proper period, he gave to it his two eldest sons. To the last he retained his interest in its success, and his care of mariners, in general, extended far beyond the interests of this life.

Many years previously to his death, Com. Dale entered into full communion with the Protestant Episcopal church, of which he proved a consistent and pious member. Under the newly awakened feelings which induced this step, he was the originator of a Mariner's Church, in Philadelphia, attending it in person, every Sunday afternoon, for a long succession of years. He was as free with his purse, too, as with his time; and his charities, though properly concealed, were believed to be large and discriminating. With some it may be deemed a matter of moment, with all it should be a proof of the estimation in which Dale was held by certainly a very respectable part of his fellow citizens, that he was named to be the first president of the Washington Benevolent Society; an association that soon degenerated to serve the ends of party politics, whatever may have been the design that influenced the few with which it originated.

The evening of the life of Dale was singularly peaceful and happy. It was as calm as its morning had been tempestuous. It is true he had to weep for the loss of his first-born son, a noble youth, who died of wounds received in the action between his old ship, the *President*, and a British squadron; but he had given the young man to his country, and knew how to bear up under the privation. He died, himself, in the seventieth

year of his age, in his dwelling at Philadelphia, February 26, 1826; departing in peace with God and man, as he fondly trusted himself, and as those who survive have every reason to hope.

By his marriage with Miss Crathorne, Com. Dale had several children, five of whom lived to become men and women, viz. : three sons and two daughters. Of the former, Richard, the eldest, fell at an early age, a midshipman on board the *President*. John Montgomery, the second, is now a commander in the navy, having served with Warrington, in the last English war. This gentleman is married to a lady of the well known family of Willing. Edward Crathorne, the youngest son, is a merchant of Philadelphia. He is married, and has children. The eldest daughter, Sarah, married T. M'Kean Pettit, Esq., a judge of the District Court, in Philadelphia, and is dead, leaving issue. Elizabeth, the youngest, is the wife of Com. George Campbell Read, of the navy, and has no issue.

In considering the character of Dale, we are struck with its simple modesty and frank sincerity, quite as much as with its more brilliant qualities. His courage and constancy were of the highest order, rendering him always equal to the most critical duties, and never wearying in their performance. Such a man is perfectly free from all exaggeration. As he was not afraid to act when his cooler judgment approved, he had no distrusts to overcome ere he could forbear, as prudence dictated. Jones found him a man ready and willing to second all his boldest and most hazardous attempts, so long as reason showed the probabilities of success; but the deed done, none more thoroughly stripped it of

all false coloring, or viewed it in a truer light, than he who had risked his life in aiding to achieve it.

The person of Dale was in harmony with his moral qualities. It was manly, seaman-like, and of singularly respectable bearing. Simplicity, good faith, truth and courage were imprinted on his countenance, which all who were thrown into his company soon discovered was no more than the mirror of his mind. The navy has had more brilliant intellects, officers of profounder mental attainments, and of higher natural gifts, but it has had few leaders of cooler judgment, sounder discretion, more inflexible justice, or indomitable resolution. He was of a nature, an experience, and a professional skill to command respect and to inspire confidence, tributes that were cheerfully paid by all who served under his orders. The writer of this article has had extensive opportunities of hearing character discussed among the sea-officers of his country; few escape criticism of some sort or other, for their professional acts, and fewer still, as men; yet he cannot recall a single instance in which he has ever heard a whisper of complaint against the public or private career of Richard Dale. This total exemption from the usual fortunes of the race, may in part be owing to the shortness of the latter's service in the present marine, and to the limited acquaintance of his contemporaries; but it is difficult to believe that it is not chiefly to be ascribed to the thoroughly seaman-like character of the officer, and to the perfect truth and sterling probity of the man.







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