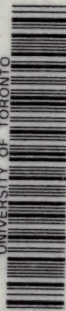
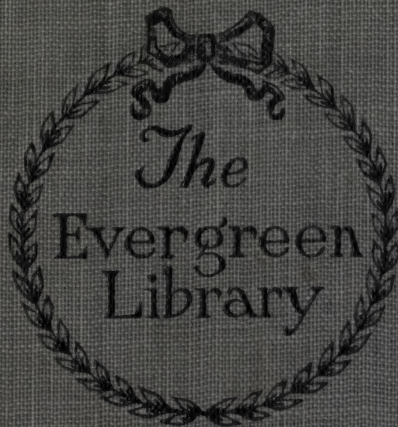


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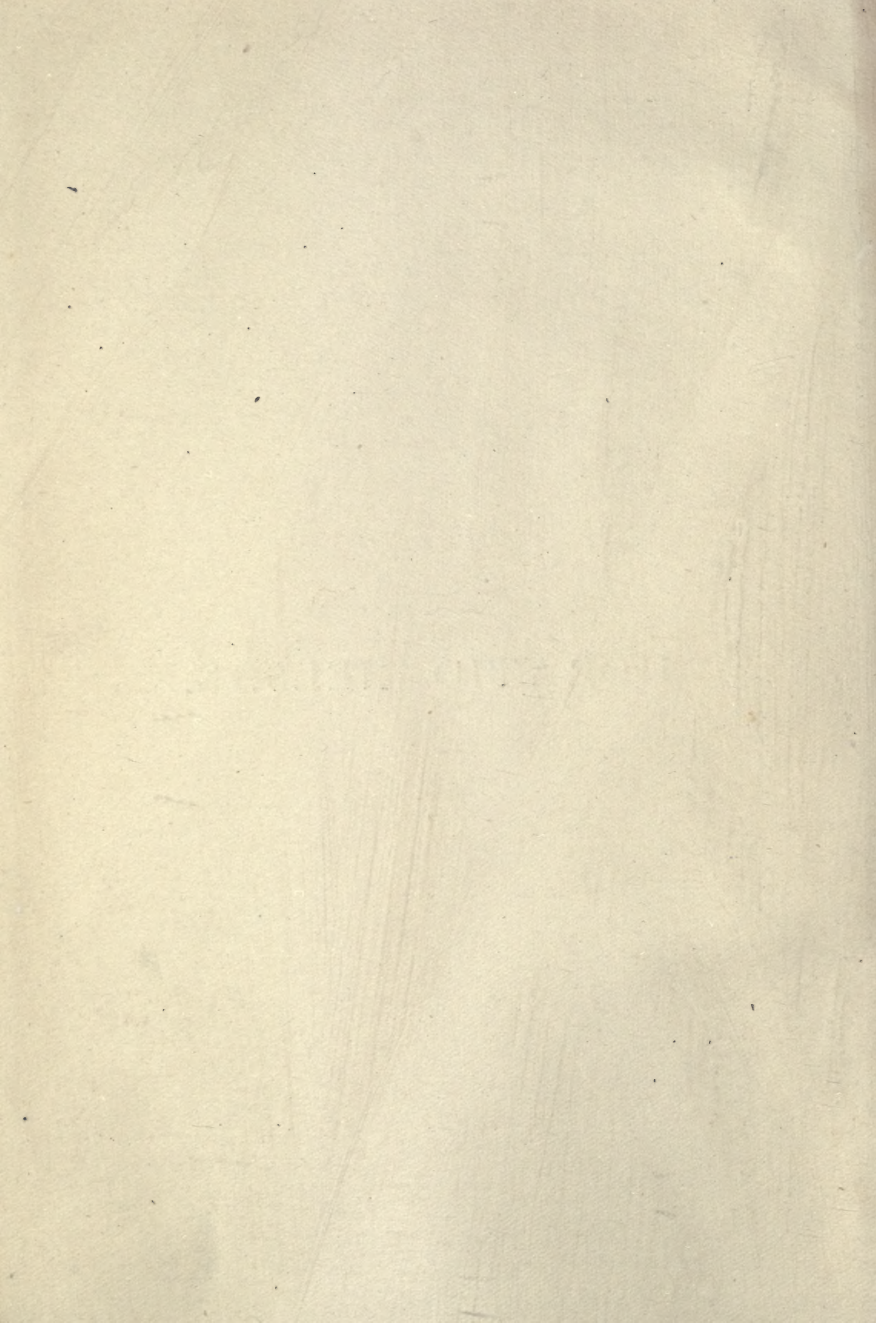


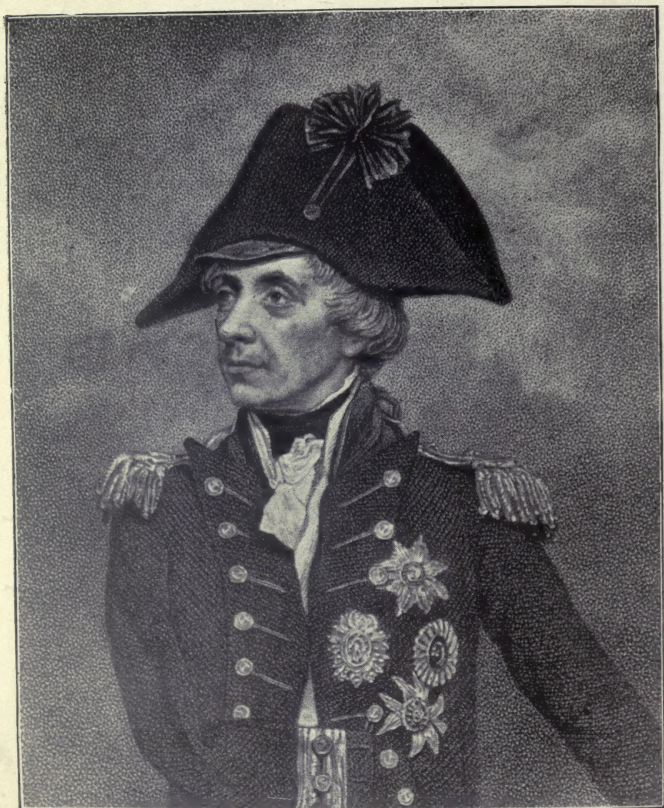
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HORATIO NELSON.





LORD NELSON.

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HORATIO NELSON:

England's Sailor Hero.

BY

RICHARD H. HOLME

(MARDALE),

AUTHOR OF "THROUGH STORM AND STRESS,"

"RUPERT CALDERFORD," ETC.

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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PREFACE.

WE celebrate, this year of grace nineteen hundred and five,¹ the centenary of the sailor-hero who wrung from the navies of the world the command of the seas, making the country he loved so dearly, mistress of the waters. It was this vast achievement which rendered the Peninsular War possible; it was the victories of Wellington in Spain which broke the power of Napoleon; it was the destruction of that military genius at Waterloo which terminated military despotism, and enabled Europe to enter upon the prosperity it enjoys to-day.

The ultimate effect of an action apprizes its real value, and, viewed in this light, Nelson's battles, culminating in the glorious victory at Trafalgar, must be regarded as the most important conquests won in modern times; for, through them, war was replaced by peace, chaos by order, and through the ensuing peace

¹ October 21st.

Britain became the mighty and pre-eminent nation she is to-day.

It is impossible to ascribe too much glory to the wonderful sea-king whose victories laid the foundation of our present political and commercial supremacy. The whole English-speaking race rises to-day to do him honour; every true Briton doffs his cap this centenary year in honour of the hero of the seas, who, despite almost insurmountable obstacles, effected his mission gloriously—spending his noble patriotism for the country he loved so much, and giving its sons for all ages that inspiring motto which none can ever read or listen to unmoved—“England expects that every man will do his duty.”

May 1905.

CONTENTS.



PART I.

PREVIOUS TO THE BATTLE OFF CAPE ST. VINCENT.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
EARLY LIFE - - - - -	I

CHAPTER II.

BASTIA AND CALVI - - - - -	16
----------------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

THE MEDITERRANEAN - - - - -	38
-----------------------------	----

PART II.

THE BATTLE OFF CAPE ST. VINCENT.

CHAPTER I.

THE BATTLE - - - - -	56
----------------------	----

CHAPTER II.

CADIZ AND TENERIFFE - - - - -	86
-------------------------------	----

CONTENTS.

PART III.

THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
ABOUKIR - - - - -	112

CHAPTER II.

THE WANT OF FRIGATES - - - -	145
------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER III.

THE TWO SICILIES - - - - -	154
----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER IV.

THE BLOT UPON THE ESCUTCHEON - - -	171
------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER V.

THE LAST OF THE FRENCH FLEET, AND RETURN HOME - - - - -	183
--	-----

PART IV.

COPENHAGEN.

CHAPTER I.

COPENHAGEN - - - - -	192
----------------------	-----

CHAPTER II.

AFTER THE BATTLE. IN THE BALTIC - -	237
-------------------------------------	-----

CONTENTS. ix

CHAPTER III.

	PAGE
AFTER THE BATTLE. AT HOME - - -	246

CHAPTER IV.

MERTON - - - - -	255
------------------	-----

CHAPTER V.

GLIMPSES OF HIS HOME LIFE AT MERTON - -	259
---	-----

PART V.

TRAFALGAR.

CHAPTER I.

LED INTO WAR AGAIN . . . - -	265
------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER II.

LONG, WEARY WATCH . . . - -	271
-----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER III.

THE SEARCH - - - - -	289
----------------------	-----

CHAPTER IV.

CUTHBERT COLLINGWOOD - - - - -	302
--------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER V.

DEPARTURE FROM ENGLAND AND ARRIVAL OFF CADIZ - - - - -	309
---	-----

CHAPTER VI.

INCIDENTS PRIOR TO THE BATTLE - - -	331
-------------------------------------	-----

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER VII.

	PAGE
THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR: LOG-BOOK OF H.M.S.	
"EURYALUS" - - - - -	342

CHAPTER VIII.

CONTINUATION OF THE LOG OF THE "EURYALUS."	
THE "VICTORY" BREAKS THE LINE . . .	373

CHAPTER IX.

THE "ANCHORING" QUESTION - - - - -	404
NOTE - - - - -	411

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
*LORD NELSON - - - - -	<i>Frontispiece</i>
NELSON'S BIRTHPLACE - - - - -	2
BURNHAM THORPE CHURCH - - - - -	5
NELSON'S FLAGSHIPS - - - - -	14
*LORD NELSON - - - - -	42
PLANS OF THE BATTLE OF ST. VINCENT -	62, 64, 66
NELSON BOARDING THE "SAN JOSEF" -	70
THE VANQUISHED SPANIARD AT ST. VINCENT -	73
NELSON WOUNDED AT TENERIFFE - - -	102
*LADY HAMILTON - - - - -	107
NELSON'S CHASE OF THE FRENCH FLEET -	122
NELSON WOUNDED AT THE BATTLE OF THE NILE -	134
LORD NELSON AS AN ADMIRAL - - - - -	143
LORD NELSON - - - - -	148
LADY HAMILTON IN EARLY LIFE - - - - -	156
NELSON'S RECEPTION AT NAPLES - - - - -	162
GIFT OF A COFFIN TO LORD NELSON - - -	175
FRIGATE "SUCCESS" - - - - -	186
PLAN OF BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN - - - -	217

	PAGE
COPENHAGEN - - - - -	219
NELSON AT COPENHAGEN - - - - -	221
NELSON'S BLIND EYE - - - - -	227
NELSON'S HOUSE AT MERTON - - - - -	256
LORD NELSON - - - - -	269
NELSON AND WELLINGTON - - - - -	311
NELSON AT PORTSMOUTH, BEFORE TRAFALGAR - - - - -	319
WITNESSING NELSON'S WILL - - - - -	339
PUNISHMENT ON BOARD SHIP - - - - -	343
PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR - - - - -	353
NELSON PROCEEDING TO THE QUARTER-DECK - - - - -	355
NELSON'S LAST LETTER TO LADY HAMILTON - - - - -	359
NELSON'S SIGNAL - - - - -	360
NELSON'S FLAG SIGNAL - - - - -	365
BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR - - - - -	369, 375
NELSON WOUNDED AT TRAFALGAR - - - - -	384
DEATH OF NELSON'S ASSAILANT - - - - -	387
THE COCKPIT WHERE LORD NELSON DIED - - - - -	389
NELSON IN THE COCKPIT OF THE "VICTORY" - - - - -	393

* These two portraits of Nelson and the one of Lady Hamilton are by the Court-painter, Johann Heinrich Schmidt, who was in his time a celebrity. Nelson was in Dresden in 1801, probably with Lady Hamilton, and the frontispiece portrait is dated that year. Their present owner bought the three portraits from the grandson of the artist, and believes them to be unknown and hitherto unpublished. They were in the possession of the previous owner's family for over a century.

HORATIO NELSON.

PART I.

PREVIOUS TO THE BATTLE OFF CAPE ST. VINCENT.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE.

IT has from earliest times been deemed proper to love and admire the brave; but when, in addition to the most reckless bravery, there is added a nobility of character and a passionate love of country such as characterised our Nelson, a panegyric, even, is justified—nay, more, deserved. This, therefore, is our justification in the present year when the centenary of his greatest victory is celebrated, and his glorious death is mourned, for putting into simple language a record of the life and actions of Britain's greatest sea son.

To protect our island home from invasion,

armed fleets are requisite; but be those fleets not manned by dauntless-hearted tars, and their



NELSON'S BIRTHPLACE.

direction entrusted to fearless and enlightened captains, their existence is of no effect. As it

is the genius of the man who plans the battle which alone leads on to victory, should our present naval supremacy be assailed by the united navies of the Continent, as was the case a hundred years ago to-day, it will be woe to us if a second Nelson does not arise to save us from destruction.

A hundred years ago we stood alone, with the navies of the nations close-arrayed to annihilate us, to crush us for good and all; but it was Nelson's genius which proved our saviour, and it was he who laid the foundation for that prosperity which we now enjoy. Is it not therefore fitting, as we commemorate the crowning act of his glorious life and mourn his untimely death, that we should look back upon his life and record again and yet again the noble deeds he wrought? For that crowning victory "in Trafalgar's Bay" it was that rendered Waterloo a possibility, and initiated that succession of events which culminated in the fall of despotism and freed the world for a whole century.

Just a hundred years ago the united navies of Europe were leagued against us, and Horatio Nelson, with shattering strokes, broke up that alliance, swept away or captured the hostile armaments, and held our flag aloft to wave above the vessels of this land of liberty. As

the Horatius of old dealt his fierce strokes upon the champions as they successively attacked him, so did our Horatio, by his successive victories, annihilate those fleets, overwhelming their last and greatest combination near Trafalgar, making *our* bridge secure until to-day. The first Horatius lived to enjoy the honours showered upon him for his noble deeds; the second one, Horatio, was stricken down even as the victory was won, and a nation's tears were all the guerdon *our* fathers could pour out for him.

Nelson's history is woven into the story of two others, and in thinking of that trio—those three little men, for each was small of stature—I think also of the mysterious ways in which divine Providence shapes the ways of men—

“Shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will.”

Little did the world reckon when, in the year 1769, two boys were born, one in the village of Ajaccio, in Corsica, an island in the blue Mediterranean, and one in Mirion Street, Dublin, that these were eventually to hold the destinies of the world in their hands; that one was to become the scourge of Europe, and the other was to meet and overthrow him and make free the Continent. Little, too, did those who

saw a weakly, almost sickly, youngster rambling about the lanes of Norfolk, or playing in the parsonage grounds at Burnham Thorpe, a lad of eleven years of age (he was born on the



BURNHAM THORPE CHURCH.

29th September 1758), imagine they were looking at one who was predestined to be the mighty naval hero who by his genius would make possible the meeting of the two in after

years. Yet so it was. That little boy was Horatio Nelson, son of Edmond and Catherine Nelson, and great-grandson (through his mother) of the sister of the famous Sir Robert Walpole.

Two years before — in 1767 — Horatio's mother had died, and he and six brothers and sisters were a heavy charge upon the income of the clergyman their father. Perhaps, indeed, it was that burden of his brothers' and sisters' keep that weighed heavily upon the parents when the new baby appeared, for it was with the hope that his godfather, the first Lord Walpole, might be induced in after years to favour him with his protection and influence, that he received his name Horatio; and, as it turned out, the influence of his godfather did come to his assistance on several occasions in his earlier manhood. His uncle (on his mother's side), Maurice Suckling, was captain of H.M.S. *Raisnable* when Horatio was twelve years old, and all the lad's thoughts were turned, as are lads' thoughts even to-day, to the delights and wonders of a seaman's life. He and his brothers had long talks about their future life, and a sea vocation was Horatio's, despite the fact that he was small and weakly, and to all appearance utterly unfitted for the

hardships on board ship. One day he persuaded his elder brother to write to his father, who was staying at Bath for a course of medicinal treatment, and his father approached his brother-in-law upon the subject. The hearty sea captain, as he pictured in his memory his delicate little nephew, laughed at the idea; but the nephew, with that dogged determination which distinguished him through life, persisted, and finally Captain Suckling gave permission to send Horatio to him for a year's trial, saying that a year would either cure him of his fancy or kill him off for good and all. Though delicate-looking and small, there was that within the lad which marked out the hero, for he possessed not only a sharpness of action, a plucky determination, but, also, he was almost devoid of fear.

Southey has preserved an anecdote of Nelson in his life of that hero which, though often told, is well worth repeating :

“When a mere child he strayed a-bird-nesting from his grandmother's house, in company with a cowboy. The dinner hour elapsed; he was absent, and could not be found, and the alarm of the family became very great, for they apprehended that he might have been carried off by gipsies. At length, after search had been made for him in various direc-

tions, he was discovered alone, sitting composedly by the side of a brook, which he could not get over.

“‘I wonder, child,’ said the old lady, ‘that hunger and fear did not drive you home.’”

“‘Fear, grandmother,’ replied the future hero, ‘I never saw fear. What is it?’”

Let me add another story to exemplify one more quality of the lad—his intense sense of honour:

“Once, after the winter holidays, when he and his brother William had set off on horseback to return to school, they came back because there had been a fall of snow, and William, who did not much like the journey, said it was too deep for them to venture on.

“‘If that be the case,’ said the father, ‘you certainly shall not go; but make another attempt, and I will leave it to your honour. If the road is dangerous, you may return; but remember, boys, I leave it to your honour.’”

“The snow was deep enough to have afforded them a reasonable excuse, but Horatio was not to be prevailed upon to turn back.

“‘We must go on,’ said he; ‘remember, brother, it was left to our honour.’”

Finding Horatio determined to go to sea, his father saw him on to the coach for Chatham, and said good-bye, and the youngster began that life which became so famous in the annals of

English naval history. He began miserably; for when he left the coach at the stopping-place he failed to find any one who could direct him to find the *Raisnable*, and wandered about, wet and miserable, a forlorn little fellow; so forlorn, indeed, that a passing officer looked at him, looked again, and stopped and interrogated him as to who he was and why he was so sad. Horatio told him his name, and also that he was going to join his uncle's ship, the *Raisnable*, but no one could tell him where she was.

This officer was a friend of Captain Suckling, so he took charge of the little fellow, had him home and gave him a good dinner, and afterwards put him into a foy-boat, directing the man where to take him.

Horatio's troubles did not end here. When he had scrambled on board, no one knew anything about his coming; by some oversight his uncle had forgotten to mention to the officer in charge that a new "young gentleman" was expected, and that he was a relation of his own. There is always plenty of work on board a warship in harbour, and the people passed and re-passed, taking no notice of the youngster, except, perhaps, to tell him to get out of the way; so he stood on deck in the falling

sleety showers all that evening, *all that night*, and into the next day, cold, hungry, neglected, miserable, but keeping his heart up. Next day one of the ship's officers, passing the boy, wondered who he could be, spoke to him, and taking pity upon him, got him below to the midshipmen's den, and ordered some food to be given him. For this Horatio was intensely grateful.

Thus it was that Nelson in 1770 first trod the deck of one of his Majesty's ships of war, and became an item on board the *Raisnable*, beginning the life of a sailor for good or ill. When his uncle arrived on board, he was made more comfortable, but shortly afterwards orders came to pay the vessel off, and Suckling was in difficulties what to do with the lad. At that time there was a merchant vessel loading for the West Indies, and as one of the petty officers of the *Raisnable* was among the ship's officers, Captain Suckling suggested to Horatio that loafing about port would do him little good, but that a voyage in a trader might teach him his duties. The boy fell in with his uncle's views, and was entered upon the books for the voyage there and back.

The hardships the lad endured during that voyage proved almost too much for him, and he began to find a sea life was not the enjoy-

able one he had pictured. Over and above this, he found, in conversation with the late petty officer of the *Raisnable*, that, bad as life was on board a trader, it was ten times worse on board a man-of-war, and it was all he could do to stick to his resolution and not go home when he returned to the Medway.

Meanwhile Captain Suckling had been transferred to the *Triumph*, a seventy-four gun sail of the line, but with no prospect of being sent on active service. Determined, however, to do all he could to teach his nephew his duties, the uncle put him into the pilot service. Here he learned the art of pilotage, a knowledge which stood him in good stead in many a fray later on. He was taught the duties of guiding vessels up and down the river Thames from the Nore to the Tower, and being apt, soon became proficient, and young as he was, was spoken of as a reliable Thames pilot.

The *Triumph* being still laid up in the Medway, and two of his Majesty's bombs—or, as we would say to-day, gunboats—being ordered to proceed on a voyage of discovery into the Arctic Circle, Horatio asked to go with them. His uncle obtained permission, and he set sail for the frozen North. One incident which occurred while in the Arctic regions tells

of the lad's pluck and absolute fearlessness, and it may be told here. Horatio and another lad slipped off one foggy day on a voyage of discovery on their own account, and their absence being discovered, a search party was about to be despatched when the fog lifted, and the lads were seen some distance off attacking a huge bear. Alarmed for their safety, signals were made for their instant return, and Horatio's comrade obeyed. Nelson, whose gun was useless, the pan being empty, refused to obey orders.

"Only let me get a blow at the devil with the butt-end of my musket, and we will have him," he said. A gap in the ice intervening alone saved the lives of the lads, as the bear could not get at them. Seeing their position, the captain ordered a gun to be fired, the roar of which startled Bruin and he made off, and Horatio had to return to his vessel to stand a reprimand from his captain.

In reply to the question why he had not instantly returned, the young hero replied respectfully, though agitated:

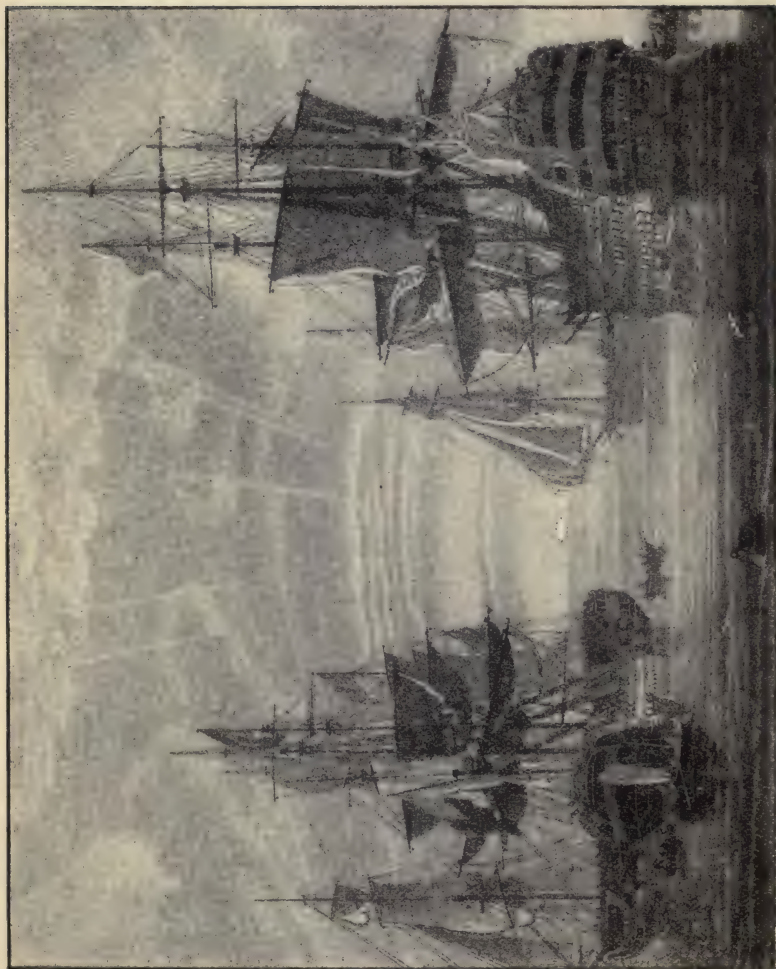
"Sir, I wished to kill the bear, that I might carry the skin to my father."

After an arduous time in the Arctic regions, the vessels returned home and were paid off.

Captain Suckling now arranged for Horatio to be rated upon the books of the *Seahorse*, Captain Farmer. In her he voyaged to the East Indies, during which voyage he developed such good seamanlike qualities that he was marked for promotion, young as he was. While on this station Horatio contracted fever, and had to be sent home in the *Dolphin*, to find on his arrival that his uncle had been promoted to Comptroller of the Navy. Captain Suckling's influence got his nephew appointed acting-lieutenant of the *Worcester*, a sixty-four gun frigate; and on 8th April 1777, young Nelson passed for lieutenant most honourably.

A pleasing incident occurred at that examination. The president happened to be Captain Suckling himself, and he said not a word about the candidate being his nephew until, having passed creditably, he introduced Horatio to his examiners, to their great astonishment, telling them at the same time he wanted the youngster to receive no favours, but to prove his mettle unbefriended, as he knew he would do.

From the *Lowestoft*, to which Horatio was appointed second-lieutenant, he was, after a voyage to the West Indies, transferred to the *Bristol*, and became here first-lieutenant, being appointed commander of the *Badger* brig.



NELSON'S FLAGSHIPS.

While in command of her he prevented what might have proved a calamity by his fearlessness. The *Glasgow*, twenty guns, lying alongside the *Badger* in Montego Bay, Jamaica, took fire. The latter's crew rushed to the boats, but Nelson ordered them back, and, until they had thrown all gunpowder overboard and pointed all their guns upwards, so as to do no injury, he would not allow one of them to enter the boats. This action saved many lives, as the explosion might have set fire to other vessels, and the bombardment by the twenty cannon must assuredly have killed many.

Shortly after taking command of the *Badger*, Nelson was made post-captain of the *Hinchinbrook*, of twenty-eight guns. This was on 11th June 1779, he being then short of three months of attaining twenty-one. Truly a young post-captain!

Up till now Nelson had to thank the influence of his uncle and his other friends, including his godfather, for his rapid rise in his adopted profession; but being post-captain, all the benefits of the service were open to him, and merit could do more for him than the voice of friends; his skill as a sailor was acknowledged, and loud were the praises heard on his behalf. Let us see.

CHAPTER II.

BASTIA AND CALVI.

AFTER being appointed to the *Janus*, of forty-four guns, Nelson was seized with dysentery and brought home. He was so emaciated that for a while his life was despaired of, but a few months at Bath restored him, and he was able to apply for another appointment. He received that of the *Albemarle*, of twenty-eight guns, and after a voyage to Copenhagen—a useful experience for him, as he discovered later on—he was sent to the American station.

At Boston he had a narrow squeak, for four French sail of the line and a frigate gave chase, and they would have utterly destroyed Nelson but that his knowledge of pilotage stood him in good stead: he made his way among the shoals and intricately worked his vessel through them, throwing off the big ships but still followed by the frigate. Directly he was free, outside, he hove to and prepared to give battle, but this so frightened the pursuing commander that he up helm and got off as quickly as possible, to

Nelson's great disgust, for, despite the odds, he wished to try conclusions with him.

It is noteworthy that the very year in which Nelson won his captaincy, Napoleon entered into the Brienne School for military training, preliminary to becoming a gentleman cadet in the Military School at Paris, and began the career which had to end at Waterloo. It is also remarkable that in that self-same school was a young man named Sydney Smith—a man destined before many years to face Napoleon at Acre and mete out to him his first great punishment, and to hurl his forces backward into the desert through which centuries before Moses led the children of Israel.

To understand the true bearing of the events of Nelson's life, a correct idea of his character and disposition is necessary. Rapid in judgment, he never reasoned in the ordinarily accepted understanding of the word; he saw something to be done, and instantly he did it, or attempted to do it. The intervening difficulties never deterred him, never appealed to him. Sanguine, full of hope, totally devoid of fear, ardent in spirit, hasty in feelings, petulant at times, imbued with an extraordinary degree of honourable feeling and intense patriotism; keenly susceptible to the

charms of the ladies, he fell a ready victim to their attractions; vain of his person, and yet more vain of the honours that he won, a vanity which accounted partly for his death at Trafalgar—all these qualifications must be borne in mind before his ways, his modes, his feelings can be rightly understood.

It was in Quebec, while commanding the *Albemarle*, that, just previous to his sailing, Captain Davison—a friend who was much older—met the little post-captain one evening hurrying not to, but from his vessel. Asking him the reason for coming ashore at that time of night, he was told by Nelson that he was so smitten with love for his hostess that he could not leave Quebec without laying his hand and heart at her feet, and imploring her to marry him. Well knowing how disastrous such an imprudent marriage would be for his friend, Davison put his arm through his, and affecting to argue with him, gradually led him back to his galley, and never ceased talking till he had seen him safely off, well knowing that, once on board of his ship, he would forget his charmer in his round of duties. Such proved to be the case, and Nelson said later on to Davison how grateful he was to him for interfering, and how thankful to him he was for his kindness.

This was the first of four love episodes in Nelson's career. Two of them ended prematurely, one in marriage; but the last was the real attachment of his life, and was fatal to his domestic peace.

A good picture of the man at that time is drawn by the Duke of Sussex (Prince William Henry). “He appears,” says the Duke, “a mere boy of a captain, dressed in full lace uniform, an old-fashioned waistcoat with long flaps, lank, unpowdered hair tied in a hessian knot of great length. Altogether so remarkable a figure that I had never seen anything like it before, nor could I imagine who he was nor what he came for. But his address and conversation were irresistibly pleasing, and when he spoke on professional subjects it was with an enthusiasm that showed he was no common being.”

That charm of manner it was which won the love of every one brought into connection with him, and which made him a god among the seamen. He always had a kind word for every one—a charming, helpful word for the meanest on board his vessel; he was as one of them, and so beloved was he that when the *Albemarle* was paid off at the end of that voyage, every man volunteered for service under him as soon as he received a new command.

All through his life this ardent affection existed between commander and crew, and when his complement had to be made up, there was no necessity to use a press-gang. It was the other way about, and sorrowful indeed were many when they found they could not get rated on the books of any vessel that Nelson commanded. Thus Nelson's crews were always composed of picked men—men of lion-heart, who would shed the last drop of blood in their veins in his service.

Scarce had Nelson arrived in England when he again fell in love, this time with a much more suitable lady—the daughter of a clergyman; and once more he was dissuaded from throwing away his chances in his naval career, and again, as quickly as he fell in love, he forgot all about it, filled with enthusiasm for his chosen life. He was appointed to the *Boreas*, twenty-eight guns, and while in command of her, events transpired which nearly ended in his throwing up the service, leaving the land of Britain and becoming a resident in France, a disaster to England that might have proved irreparable. This is how it came about. He was ordered to the West Indies, and found he was senior captain of the station, and that great responsibilities devolved upon him. At that

particular period the navigation laws were in full force, and these laws enacted that all trade with our Colonies should be confined to English ships, no foreigners being permitted to compete. The Americans, who had lately become an independent nation under the title of the United States, possessed ships which were registered as English, and, with them, they filched the trade of the West Indies from these legitimate traders. They were abetted by the planters, who, under a system of bribery, connived at the deception. When overhauled, the exhibition of their ship's papers and the declaration of the captain that the ship was British-built was deemed sufficient to save confiscation of cargo, and, thus protected, the trading proved lucrative both to the Americans and the planters. These subterfuges did not satisfy Nelson. He was too honourable to allow a fraud to shield the vessels and deprive his countrymen of their legitimate trade. The United States were, he said, a foreign nation, and vessels, owners, and citizens of those States were foreigners, no matter what their papers showed. He appealed first to the civil administration to put a stop to these illegal practices; but they, being in the pay of the wealthy planters, categorically refused to re-

cognise his arguments. Next he went to the admiral commanding the station, only to have the same rebuff. The admiral knew there was a technical infringement of the laws, and advised Nelson to wink at it, as any action would bring about trouble with the planters, although finally he gave a reluctant consent to Nelson taking the matter in hand on his own account.

Nelson boldly seized four well-known American ships, and forced their captains to admit that they were American and owned by Americans, while the flag they sailed under was not theirs by right. This was sufficient—he laid an embargo upon all four. This brave defence of the law annoyed the planters: they saw their unholy profits lost, and the heavy drawbacks which they received as their share at connivance, disappear. They brought pressure to bear upon the civil authorities, and trumped up a vile case-at-law against Nelson, affirming that the vessels were really English, but that the statements of the captains had been *wrung from them by force*, and at the peril of *being shot if they refused to state they were Americans*. Damages were laid at £40,000, and process entered against Nelson. Nelson wrote home and made the full truth known to

the authorities, and appealed to the admiral for support. This latter appeal was in vain, and the spectacle was presented of Nelson having to remain on board for eight weeks to avoid arrest, which meant, in the then heated state of feeling on the island, being incarcerated or perhaps murdered (so vengeful were the planters at their tricks being exposed), while, outside the bay, the admiral's ships lay without making any effort to support the authority of the senior captain; in fact, the admiral advised Nelson to drop the matter. Upon the station were the brothers Collingwood, in the *Mediator* and *Rattler*. They stood bravely by Nelson, and this began the friendship of Nelson and Collingwood.

During eight weeks the trial proceeded, and the verdict was that the seizure was lawful. Nelson was the initiator of the action, was the man who carried it out, who fought the legal action and vindicated the law; the admiral gave no assistance whatever. Yet when the vital importance of what Nelson had done broke upon the authorities at home, and a letter of approbation and thanks was sent to the station, it was the admiral, and the admiral only, that was personally congratulated and thanked for "his" ardent efforts to enforce the

law; while Nelson, the sole mover in the matter, was never once mentioned, despite the fact that it was Nelson's own personal report which informed them of the facts! This official ingratitude struck home to the generous and sensitive heart of the young captain, and galled him excessively.

During his investigations in the above matter, Nelson made another and still more important discovery. He unearthed the fact that the Colonial authorities were robbing the home Government of millions of money every year, and this also he brought home to the Government and had, eventually, remedied; but instead of a word of thanks for his insistent efforts at reform, he was practically disgraced, as though he had interfered in matters which did not concern him. When, weak and ill, almost dying, he had to return home, with malicious spitefulness he was ordered to place his vessel at an extreme station near the Nore, and act as a receiving slop-ship. The authorities guilty of this act knew that the commander was an invalid, almost in a consumption, and just returned from the tropics; yet for four months they kept him exposed to the raw wintry winds of the North Sea at the risk of his life, for in their eyes he had been too clever and must be

snubbed. This added insult, after such services, almost broke the heart of Nelson. He never quitted his vessel during the long period she had to remain there, and he determined that as soon as he was paid off he would relinquish the service of so ungrateful a Government and never more seek employment under them. These are the words he wrote to the senior officer commanding the *Medway* when he told him of his settled determination: "It will release me for ever from an ungrateful service, for it is my firm and unalterable determination never again to set my foot upon a King's ship. Immediately after my arrival in town I shall wait upon the First Lord of the Admiralty and resign my commission."

While on the West Indian station Nelson's heart had been captivated for the third time, and, unluckily for him, he married the lady. She was a beautiful young widow of a certain Dr. Nisbet, and had a son some three years old at the time. Had there been a second Davison to interfere it would have been well for Nelson, and have saved him from many a heart-pang in the future.

The marriage took place at St. Christopher, Nevis (the date was 11th March 1787, and

Prince William Henry, being on the station, gave away the bride), and Nelson brought his wife to his father's home on landing on English shores, and presented her to the old gentleman, who received her affectionately. Scarcely, however, had the couple, along with Josiah the stepson, settled down at Burnham Thorpe, when a writ was served upon Nelson for £20,000. The planters had regained their ascendancy as soon as he was quit of the station, and had induced the four captains to re-open the cases of the seizure of their vessels, and begin a new action against Nelson for half the original amount.

Nelson was no diplomatist—he was emphatically a man of action, and, without attempting to reason the matter out, he came to the conclusion that this was an insult from the Government, added to that meted out to him on his return, and, feeling it was “the last straw,” he instantly decided not only not to pay a penny, but to leave the ungrateful country at once and seek refuge across the Channel in France. “This affront I did not deserve,” he said. “I’ll be trifled with no longer. I will write immediately to the Treasury, and if Government will not support me I will leave the country.” His boxes were packed ready for the receipt of the

Government's reply, and had that been unfavourable, a few days would have found Captain and Mrs. Nelson on the shores of France, and there would have been no Trafalgar for England.

Mr. Pitt's reply was, not to trouble himself about the matter. The Government would see no harm came to him, and he could rely upon the case being dropped.

Thus reassured, Nelson remained in England, leading a quiet country life, neglected by the Admiralty until the year 1793, when war was but a question of months, and every captain being required for the fleet, he was grudgingly appointed to the *Agamemnon*, of sixty-four guns. He sailed for the Mediterranean under Lord Hood, to assist the southern towns of France in their struggle against the tyranny of Paris, then in the hands of the red-Republicans.

It is remarkable that while Nelson was preparing to desert his country there was trouble in Corsica, and Napoleon was making a similar move. A fierce struggle was proceeding in Corsica between the man Bonaparte and his rival Paoli, and it ended in the discomfiture of Napoleon, who threw himself into the arms of France, a country he cordially detested; and

thus when Nelson sailed to support Toulon and Marseilles against Paris, Napoleon landed in France and was appointed a cannoneer to serve against those cities, and when Lord Hood's fleet entered Toulon, Napoleon Bonaparte was assisting the siege of that fortress city. The two men did not meet, for Nelson had been detached a few days previously to bear despatches to Sir William Hamilton, our Ambassador at Naples, to the Sicilian Court. There he saw for the first time the beautiful Lady Emma Hamilton, destined to play so large a part in his future life.

From Naples, Nelson proceeded to Tunis on a mission to induce the Bey to renounce his alliance with France, now at war with England, and on his way thither he fell in with five French ships—three 44-gun frigates, a corvette, and a brig. Despite that the *Agamemnon* was one of the worst vessels in the English navy, that her crew had been reduced, by drafts, to 345 men all told, in place of 500, and that the opposing fleet could face him with 168 guns to his 64 (nearly three to one), Nelson prepared to give battle.

The *Agamemnon* was cleared for action, the crew beat to quarters, and Nelson attacked the nearest, which was the largest vessel. For

three hours, and under the greatest disadvantages, he fought her, and, having beaten her, was about to take possession when a shift of wind enabled her to escape. The *Agamemnon* was so crippled in her gear and sails she was unable to pursue and complete the capture. The remaining ships now rapidly drew near, and Nelson asked his officers if it would be possible to fight them in his present condition. Their reply was a decided "no," but the spirit of the captain was manifest in his next words :

"Veer the ship and lay her head to the west; let some of the best men be employed at the rigging, and the carpenter getting spars and capstan bars to prevent our wounded spars from coming down, and get the wine up for the people, with some bread, for it may be half-an-hour before we are again in action."

Thus, calmly and without fuss, he put the ship once more into fighting trim and awaited the oncoming vessels. Luck was, however, on Nelson's side, for though he would have engaged all four, they discreetly withdrew to assist their crippled comrade, and left the battered *Agamemnon* severely alone.

From Tunis Nelson sailed in command of a small squadron to assist the Corsicans, who,

under the chief, Paoli, mentioned before, were making desperate efforts for freedom from the Republic of Paris, and a word or two is necessary here to make clear and explain the situation.

For thirty years the inhabitants of the island of Corsica had been striving for liberty. They had long suffered under the yoke of Genoa, but had won freedom from that power, only to learn that their island had been actually sold to France without consulting them, and that they were now annexed to that kingdom. When the monarchy was overthrown and "liberty, equality, and fraternity" preached by the revolutionists, the Corsicans considered they were a free state, and rose against the French garrisons of the late king. The Republicans granted them freedom on paper, making the island a department, but instead of leaving them alone they threw in their garrisons and took possession of the seaports.

Paoli and his supporters resented this change of government equally as much as the previous one, and turned against the Republicans.

To assist Paoli, Admiral Hood had arranged to attack St. Fiorenza in Corsica by sea and land simultaneously, but while still making preparations, Nelson arrived off that port and

proceeded to harry the garrison. With one hundred and twenty men he landed in the vicinity of their one mill and the warehouses where were stored their flour and provisions. So quick was his action and so secret that, though one thousand men were almost within call, he succeeded not only in burning the mill but securing the flour and provisions, which he destroyed; re-embarking his force just as the one thousand men arrived to defend the place.

This and similar misfortunes inflicted upon the garrison compelled them to evacuate their positions and retire to Bastia, a second seaport of Corsica, and Nelson followed, at the command of Lord Hood, on January 7th, 1794.

From Nelson's despatches and letters one gathers that he chafed at the delay in sending men to assist him to reduce this place, and he was insistent for a force of even five hundred to enable him to take action.

Hood took command at St. Fiorenza, and along with him Sir Gilbert Elliot as representative of the British Government, together with some thousand odd soldiers, and it was part of these Nelson wanted.

Bastia was a walled town of ten thousand inhabitants, defended by batteries on flank and

rear, while the principal defences were on the sea frontage. These batteries Nelson engaged for two hours, on February 23rd, with the *Agamemnon* and two frigates, and at the same time the British columns from St. Fiorenza appeared on the heights beyond, but their commander deeming his force insufficient to carry the place, they withdrew, to the great disgust of Nelson, who wrote: "What the general could have seen to make a retreat necessary I cannot comprehend. A thousand men could certainly take Bastia. With five hundred and *Agamemnon* I would attempt it. My seamen are now what British seamen ought to be, almost invincible. They really mind shot no more than peas."

Deprived of the assistance of the army, Hood and Nelson consulted, and concluded that nothing could be done save enforce a strict blockade by the *Agamemnon* and six frigates. The condition of Nelson's vessel at that time was deplorable. He wrote to Hood, saying: "We are really without firing, wine, beef, pork, flour, and almost without water; not a rope, canvas, twine, or nail in the ship. The ship is so light she cannot hold her side to the wind. . . . Yet if your lordship wishes me to remain off Bastia I can, by going to Porto Ferrajo,

get water and stores, and twenty-four hours at Leghorn will give us provisions, and our refitting, which will take some time, can be put off a little. My wish is to be present at the attack on Bastia."

On the 18th March, Hood and Nelson again consulted the army leaders, and again were told that the capture was an impossibility, even though, as was well known, the strict blockade had reduced the garrison and inhabitants to famine rations. They therefore made arrangements to capture it themselves with 1,183 soldiers, marines, and artillerymen, and 250 sailors, while the five regiments remained inactive at St. Fiorenza. On the 19th May, Bastia capitulated, and 4000 men laid down their arms to Hood, and to Nelson, and Nelson primarily, must the victory be accorded. Yet, strange to say, in Hood's despatches home he is merely alluded to, never commended. "Captain Nelson, of his Majesty's ship *Agamemnon*, who had the command and direction of the seamen in landing guns, mortars, and stores," is all the reference; while of Captain Hunt, whose part was a very insignificant one, Lord Hood says: "Captain Hunt, who commanded at the batteries, has an equal claim to my gratitude."

This was what Nelson wrote regarding this despatch:—

“ Lord Hood and myself were never better friends, *nor, although his letter does,* did he wish to put me where I never was—in the rear. Captain Hunt, who lost his ship, he wanted to push forward for another [one]—a young man who was never on a battery or ever rendered any service during the siege, and if any person ever said he did, then I submit to the character of a story-teller. . . . The whole operations of the siege were carried on through Lord Hood’s letters to me. *I* was the mover of it—*I* was the cause of its success. Sir Gilbert Elliot will be my evidence, if any is required. I am not a little vexed, but shall not quarrel.

“ My poor services will not be noticed. I have no interest; but, however services may be received, it is not right in an officer to slacken his zeal for his country.

“ My heart is full. When I think of the treatment I have received; every man who had any considerable share in the reduction has got some place or other—I, only I, am without reward. Nothing but my anxious endeavour to serve my country makes me bear up against it; but I sometimes am ready to give all up.

“ It is very true that I have ever served faithfully, and ever has it been my fate to be neglected, but that shall not make me inattentive to my duty. I have pride in doing my duty well, and a self-approbation, which if it is not so lucrative, yet, perhaps, affords more pleasing sensations.”

After the fall of Bastia, Hood and Nelson proceeded to Calvi, and the *Agamemnon* was sent to Bastia to bring away the troops required for the land investment.

Calvi lies on a promontory on the west side of an open gulf, of about three miles wide and two miles deep, on the north-west coast of Corsica, and is surrounded on the land side by walls and on the sea front by batteries. On the west is Cape Revellata and on the east Point Espano. The troops being landed, the siege began. In addition to the ordinary defences, there was, at a distance of about two hundred yards from the town, a series of earthworks across the neck of the land. These earthworks Nelson determined to capture, and on the 3rd July his sailors dragged up thirteen long guns and a number of mortars and howitzers, and placed them in position, Nelson and Captain Hallowell taking alternate days at the working of the guns.

It was while actively employed in one of the batteries—one of six guns, of which five had been disabled—and on the 12th of July at daylight, that a shot from the town batteries ricocheted and missed Nelson's head by a "hair's-breadth," yet drove up such quantities of sand into his face that he was thrown down

and incapacitated. When taken on board of the *Agamemnon*, it was found that his right eye was seriously injured, though he made light of the accident, and returned to his labours at the fort within four-and-twenty hours. As the result of the injury Nelson lost the sight of that eye, though externally it did not look as if it were blinded. Calvi fell, and Lord Hood made special mention of Nelson's services this time, going so far even as to send home his diary of the siege; but the home authorities persisted in their refusal to recognise his services, not even alluding to him in the despatches to the Admiral. He was far too brilliant an officer to suit the mediocrities in command.

Need we wonder that after such treatment Nelson wrote almost despairingly, if such a hero *could* despair:—

“One hundred and ten days I have been actively engaged, at sea and on shore, against the enemy; three actions against ships, two against Bastia in my ship, four boat actions, and two villages taken and twelve sail of vessels burnt. I do not know that any one has done more. I have had the comfort to be always applauded by my commander-in-chief, but never to be rewarded, and, what is more mortifying, for services in which I have been wounded

others have been praised, who at the same time were actually in bed, far from the scene of action. They have not done me justice. But never mind, *I'll have a 'Gazette' of my own.*"

And he had !!

CHAPTER III.

THE MEDITERRANEAN.

CORSICA being annexed by England and a constitution granted, the French made great efforts to re-conquer the island, in furtherance of which they fitted out a fleet at Toulon, consisting of seventeen line-of-battle ships and five smaller vessels. This fleet set sail on 8th March 1795, but on the 24th February a British fleet of thirteen sail of the line, together with a Neapolitan vessel of seventy-four guns, were at Leghorn to deal with it. On the 9th March the opposing fleets sighted one another, and kept in touch all through the 10th and 11th, but baffling winds prevented any action being taken by either side. On the 12th the *Agamemnon*, along with five British vessels and the Neapolitan one, were considerably in advance of the main portion of the fleet, their hulls just rising out of the water to eastward, while the French fleet had the wind, and bore down towards the detached vessels, but,

strange to say, made no use of this great advantage, and remained inactive until the evening, when a fresh breeze from the west arose and both fleets made a southerly course. Next morning was squally, with a strong south-westerly wind, and Admiral Hotham, who commanded the English fleet, made signals for a general chase, giving each captain freedom of action. The *Agamemnon* was well in advance, and Nelson did all he could to get at the enemy, never heeding the enormous disadvantage of numbers. At eight o'clock in the morning the *Ça Ira*, the third from the rear of the French line of vessels, collided with the vessel in front of her, and her fore and main topmasts went overboard on her port or larboard side (the left), impeding her progress, and Nelson marked her for his own. The *Ça Ira* was an eighty-gun ship, twice the size of the *Agamemnon*.

Nelson put the *Agamemnon* about so as to pass the *Ça Ira* and get behind her; then he tacked again, and with every sail set began to overhaul her, while a frigate, the *Inconstant*, made for her crippled side and opened fire upon her, but was beaten off quickly.

The *Ça Ira* had six heavy stern guns, and with these she began to hurl shot into the bows

of the *Agamemnon*. "So true did they fire," said Nelson, "that not a shot missed some part of the ship, and latterly the masts were struck by every shot, which obliged me to open out our fire a few minutes sooner than I intended, for it was my intention to have touched his stern before a shot was fired." A hundred yards separated the vessels, and the *Agamemnon* was put about so as to deliver a broadside from the larboard guns, then brought into the line of chase again to make more headway, to be put about later to deliver a starboard broadside. Over and over again this manœuvre was effected, damaging the *Ça Ira*, killing many of the crew, and at the same time preventing any attempt at getting the hampering wreckage away. The *Agamemnon* was entirely unsupported by any English ship, while the *Ça Ira* had another vessel towing her, and therefore capable at any moment of joining in the fray, and the other French vessels were rapidly bearing up to annihilate the *Agamemnon*.

By the help of the frigate, the *Ça Ira* tacked, and the *Agamemnon* did the same, and broadside to broadside the battle continued. Fortunately most of the *Ça Ira's* guns were laid too high, as though to cripple the English vessel's masts and sails, and only seven men

wounded was the surgeon's list at the close of the affair.

Seeing that if the other vessels could not beat up before the French squadron bore down upon them, the *Agamemnon* would assuredly be destroyed, Admiral Hotham hung out signals for Nelson to return, and this time Nelson did obey orders, but he had accomplished one part of his plans—so disabled one of the French vessels that the others must stay by her till next day, when a general action might result in the capture of them all. Before he left, however, Nelson had the pleasure of pouring a broadside, at pistol-shot range, into the *Sans-culotte* (afterwards re-named *L'Orient*, and destroyed at Aboukir), and then he made sail for the fleet, having done all the damage he could, and leaving the vessels with over one hundred of their crews *hors de combat*, no attempt being made to chase him.

March 14th opened with a westerly wind, and the French fleet had the advantage of position—the *Ça Ira*, in tow of *Le Censeur* (seventy-four), about a mile and a half to leeward, the English fleet three and a half miles still farther leeward. At 5.30 a smart breeze from the north-west enabled the English fleet to head for the *Ça Ira* and *Le Censeur*, which



LORD NELSON.

From an oil-painting by Johann Heinrich Schmidt of Dresden, dated 1808. Now published for the first time. By permission of Herr Fritz Arndt-Oberwartha.

vessels the *Captain* and the *Bedford* were ordered to attack, while the rest made a course to get between them and the main French fleet. The *Captain* and the *Bedford* were so battered that they had to retire crippled, and made their way to the rear.

The *Illustrious* and *Courageux* were the first in the English line, followed by the *Princess Royal* and *Agamemnon*, while the *Britannia* followed. The rest were too far away to be of any service.

The French admiral committed an error of judgment. As he had the wind, he could have easily rounded the *Ça Ira* and broke the English line, but he kept too far to the westward, and on getting into touch bore to the west, practically deserting two valuable vessels and leaving them to their fate.

Only the *Illustrious* and the *Courageux* were lucky enough to get into grips with the French fleet, and had to sustain the fire of the various vessels as they passed, losing main and mizzen masts and having many casualties.

Meanwhile the *Agamemnon* and the *Princess Royal* were fiercely engaged with the huge *Ça Ira* and *Le Censeur*, and at five minutes past ten both the French vessels struck, the *Ça Ira* being entirely dismasted and *Le*

Censeur minus her mainmast. So after all Nelson had the pleasure of capturing his mighty opponent of the previous day and adding another laurel to his record.

Nelson suggested to the admiral that it would be a first-rate plan to leave the crippled and captured vessels together and pursue the French with the rest of the fleet, but whether he was right or wrong no one can say now. The admiral would not hear of the chase, and advised Nelson "to be contented." Corsica was saved from attack, but the greater part of the French fleet escaped to do the English harm another day.

From July to December 1795, Nelson had charge of the Bay of Genoa with a miserably weak squadron utterly inadequate for any useful purposes, and, unsupported by Admiral Hotham, he was unable to prevent the French designs upon Italy and their fortifying the Riviera. Hampered in every way, he could only sail here and there and pretend to be in force while he was not.

To add to Nelson's chagrin the Government at home, while in one of those intermittent fits of neglect of the Navy and starving the Service, often occurring to our Governments, refused reinforcements, and although Lord Hood went

home and placed the real state of the case before the Admiralty, it would not send another ship. To this miserable cheeseparing the later troubles can easily be traced, for had Nelson been supported by an adequate number of vessels (half-a-dozen first-rates would have done), or even aided by active support from the admiral on the station, the disastrous conquest of Italy would never have taken place, and millions upon millions of money would have been saved to the English nation, instead of having to be poured out to make good in the future the neglect of the past. Thus the ignominious sight was witnessed of a French fleet of twenty sail of the line freely moving about the coast of Italy landing troops here and there and convoying stores, while a battered fleet of about sixteen small vessels, part English, part Neapolitan, had to lie helpless, for not a single vessel could be promised to replace a lost one in case of defeat. Not only was the fleet neglected by the Admiralty, but Nelson himself was scurvily treated by the Government; for when he wrote home saying all his ship's furniture had been lost in the Corsican campaign owing to its use on shore, and pointing out that he had been advanced to the position of a Colonel of Marines—a post equivalent to that of Brigadier-General

—and some small additional allowance ought to be made to him to enable him to meet the extra expenses thrust upon him, he received the curt answer that “No pay had ever been issued under the direction of the War Office to officers of the navy serving with the army ashore.”

We next hear of Nelson in an indecisive action off Genoa, and then we learn the state of his command, for he writes: “The poor *Agamemnon* is as nearly worn out as her captain, and soon both will have to be laid up for repairs.”

These years of neglect of Nelson were those when Wellington was—an unknown man—struggling at his vocation of soldier in India, and preparing for that career on land as was later on his famous compeer on the sea; and they were the years also when the third of the trio—Napoleon—was making his name famous as a leader of the Republican troops, laying the foundation for that seizure of power which made him dictator to Europe. Each of these three, in different grooves of action, were working steadily forward to the time when upon them would rest the future of Europe and the peace of the world. Without Nelson's great victory at Trafalgar Wellington could never

have confounded Napoleon at Waterloo; Trafalgar was the prelude to the final overthrow of the "man of destiny."

Finally, the *Agamemnon* was laid up for repairs, so beaten by the stress of storm and battle that its old hulk had to be *held together by cables* slung round it to prevent its becoming a total wreck. When as fit to go to sea as such an old hulk could be made, Nelson sailed for Corsica to meet for the first time in his life the new admiral of the Mediterranean Fleet, Sir John Jervis, and the life that made him famous may be said to have begun, for he came face to face with one who had watched his career, and was prepared to recognise his genius as a sailor and as a commander of men.

It was upon the 19th of January 1796 that Nelson sailed into St. Fiorenza and landed. The interview took place, and his reception by his new commander-in-chief was most flattering, for whatever the other admirals might think of Nelson Sir John gauged his capabilities, and knew he was one who could be relied on to uphold the honour of England in the strife of battle. The reception was unction to the soul of Nelson. Sir John offered Nelson his choice of two ships, and told him, at the time, the rank of commodore would shortly be conferred upon

him. He also asked him if he would support him by remaining in the Mediterranean for a while longer, as he needed his services there. "You must have a larger ship," said Sir John, "for we cannot spare you either as captain or admiral."

How sweet such words must have been to Nelson's ears! How his sensitive soul must have rejoiced that one at least appreciated his services, although the Government had ignored them! Need we wonder that his heart went out to Sir John, and that he felt that nothing he could ask would be too much for him to agree to instantly?

At Sir John's request, Nelson went northwards to survey the coast and try to discover the whereabouts of the French fleet, and its strength. At Toulon he made out there were thirteen ships of the line and five frigates, and the bustle in the harbour indicated that some important movement was on foot. For two months a game of hide-and-seek went on; nothing decisive could be effected, and all the while the victorious Republican army was steadily under Napoleon making good their hold upon Italy.

On April 8th, in Genoa, Nelson's broad pennant as commodore was saluted, and Cap-

tain Nelson was now Commodore Nelson. One by one the ports of Italy fell into Napoleon's hands, and, soon, there was scarcely one where fresh meat and vegetables could be secured for the fleet. On the 25th of September Sir John was ordered to abandon Corsica and leave the Mediterranean.

Meanwhile, Nelson had transferred his pennant from the *Agamemnon* to the *Captain*, seventy-four guns. This was on the 11th June 1796, immediately after Nelson had cut out (under the French batteries) the vessels conveying Napoleon's siege train, as well as their guarding gunboats. Up to the last, Nelson had been captain as well as commodore on the *Agamemnon*, but from now he had a captain under him. The officers and most of the crew of the *Agamemnon* were transferred to the *Captain*, and Nelson's first command passes out of history save to say she was present at the siege of Copenhagen and also at Trafalgar. In 1809 she was totally lost in the River Plate, having run ashore and settled upon one of her own anchors. There were still a few of the original crew on board her when she met her fate.

When Nelson heard the orders read out for the evacuation of the Mediterranean he was

aghast, as up to the last he had had hopes that more vessels would be sent to strengthen the navy there, rather than abandon the station. Very few more ships would enable him to checkmate movements which he was sure were about to take place, and which it was of vital importance to prevent or render futile.

Not only to Nelson did the action of the British Government savour of little short of madness, but to the Italians, the French, and Spaniards, now leagued together against England, it indicated that the home Government had lost its head. To relinquish the Islands of Corsica, over the capture of which so much blood and treasure had been squandered, the Island of Elba and that of Caprea, also the desertion of all who had remained faithful to her, indeed savoured, in their opinions, of stark, staring madness!

The rejoicing of the enemies of England was excessive. Such pusillanimity, after all her boastings, proved, to them, that at last she recognised she was only a second-rate power, and one scarcely worth reckoning with!

To Nelson was entrusted the evacuation of Corsica and the removal of stores, and it was as gall to him, who had won for England that dependence, to have to superintend its deser-

tion, and surrender to any one who liked to take possession without firing a single shot.

“Do his Majesty’s Ministers know their own minds?” wrote Nelson. “They at home do not know what the fleet is capable of performing—anything and everything. Much as I shall rejoice to see England, I lament our present orders in sackcloth and ashes; so dishonourable to the dignity of England, whose fleets are equal to meet the world in arms; and of all the fleets I ever saw I never beheld one in point of officers and men equal to Sir John Jervis’s, who is a commander able to lead them to glory.”

Sir John Jervis determined that, despite his orders to the contrary, he would retain Elba as a base in the Mediterranean, and accordingly instructed Nelson to use the port of Ferrajo in that island, where he might land the stores, refugees, and military forces.

On the 14th October Nelson arrived at Bastia, and found that under the influence of Napoleon the inhabitants had declared decidedly in favour of the French Revolutionary party. Indeed, so actively were the Corsicans become partisans of the French that, when Nelson expressed a wish to go overland from Bastia to St. Fiorenza, where Sir John Jervis

was with his fleet, he was told his life would not be safe, although there was but a short distance to travel.

On the 18th of October a large number of armed French were landed at Cape Corso, and from there a threatening order was received by the Municipality of Bastia to the effect that not one British man nor one piece of British property must be surrendered at their peril.

Nelson had three ships close to the Mole Head. The English force (save a guard at the Viceroy's house) was in the citadel, outside which Corsican soldiers, equal in numbers, were placed to prevent their egress, while other guards controlled the town. Nelson sent Captain Sutton, of the *Egmont*, on shore with a peremptory message to the effect that if the goods and stores were not given up, and every man, woman, or child who desired to take refuge in his ships permitted to do so, he would open fire instantly upon the place and blow it out of existence.

Captain Sutton delivered his message and stood, watch in hand, stating that if in five minutes he had no reply from the Municipality he would return to Commodore Nelson, who would open fire upon the town. Long before the five minutes were expired every guard had bolted,

and a message was delivered that "all goods and stores would be given up." The Viceroy was taken on board, and the removal of the goods of British inhabitants, together with the military stores, commenced. "The firm tone held by Commodore Nelson," wrote Sir John to the Admiralty, "soon reduced those gentlemen to order and quiet submission to the embarkation."

On the 20th October, at sunset, £200,000 worth of military stores, provisions, and other goods had been saved. At midnight the troops left the citadel and embarked at the Mole Head. At six o'clock in the morning Nelson and the General entered the barge, every one else being safely on board ship, and were pulled out to the blockading squadron, taking with them two field-pieces, retained to the last in case of attack, for the French had occupied the citadel five hours before. To add to the difficulties of the situation, the Spanish fleet, consisting of twenty sail of the line, had already arrived, and were actually within sixty miles of the port; but the wind favoured the British, and before many hours were over, Elba was reached. Sir John Jervis and Nelson waited, in the neighbourhood of Corsica, the arrival of Admiral Man, who had sailed with seven ships of the line to rein-

force them, during which time the Spanish fleet was often seen, but it never dared to strike. As Admiral Man did not arrive, and November 2nd was reached, further delay became dangerous, as provisions were giving out, and the fleet sailed to Gibraltar, arriving on the first of December.

Commodore Nelson transferred his pennant to the *Minerve*, and with a frigate, the *Blanche*, returned to the Mediterranean to remove the naval and other stores from Porto Ferrajo to Gibraltar, imperative orders having arrived to evacuate, even, Elba at once.

He sailed on 14th December, and on the 19th fell in with two Spanish frigates, which he attacked. The larger one, the *La Sabina*, he captured at one o'clock in the morning, but scarcely had he transferred her captain, Don Jacobo Stuart, to the *Minerve*, when another Spanish frigate came up to assist, and Nelson had to drop *La Sabina* and begin a fight with the new-comer. This second battle began at about four o'clock, and lasted an hour, when the Don had had enough and sheered off. Meanwhile the *Blanche* had captured the second frigate; but equally bad luck was hers, for two line-of-battle ships, hearing the sound of guns, put out from harbour and bore down upon her

and the *Minerve*. Nothing remained now but for both the vessels to show a good pair of heels, and despite the fact that the *Minerve* had all her masts injured, both vessels managed to escape. *La Sabina* was re-captured with the prize crew on board.

On arriving at Elba Nelson learned that General de Burg had received no official orders to quit Elba, and though he placed the position of affairs clearly before him, that general refused to allow the soldiers to embark. Nelson told him his orders were imperative, and he had no other course left but to take away all naval stores, leaving the army there until such times as it was *officially* commanded to remove itself.

PART II.

THE BATTLE OFF CAPE ST. VINCENT.

CHAPTER I.

THE BATTLE.

THE reasons for surrendering the command of the Mediterranean must be sought for far deeper than those ascribed to the Government by Nelson or the foreign Powers.

For four years the war had lasted, and England had been drained of money to subsidise European governments to combat France, under the idea that Hanover, being a dependency of the British Crown, England was a Continental nation; £200,000,000 had gone in this way. Not only had this enormous sum been wasted, but the commerce of England had gone back steadily year by year.

When Nelson had removed the naval stores from Elba, he sailed under French colours on a voyage of discovery to find the enemy's fleet.

St. Fiorenza was deserted; Toulon was empty of ships; no trace of a navy was discernible at Barcelona; not even in Carthagená could he discover a Spanish fleet, so he pushed on for Gibraltar and anchored on 9th February.

Here he learned the first news—viz., that the Spanish fleet had just passed the Rock, bound westward; and here, too, he was fortunate to effect from the Spaniards before Gibraltar an exchange of prisoners, whereby the two lieutenants and the seamen who had been put into the *La Sabina* as prize crew, re-joined the *Minerve*.

Excited beyond measure, and fearing he would be too late to assist in what he was certain would be a great battle, Nelson made all sail in the wake of the Spanish fleet, while in his wake followed two Spanish men-of-war and a frigate, endeavouring to overhaul him and capture the *Minerve*.

Speedily the first line-of-battle ship gained upon the *Minerve*, and Nelson prepared to give battle.

“Before the Dons get hold of that bit of bunting, Drinkwater,” he said to the Colonel of Marines, “I will have a struggle with them, and sooner than give up the frigate I’ll run her ashore.”

At that moment a cry was raised "Man overboard," and a boat was lowered, and Lieutenant Hardy—one of those recovered from the *Sabine*—with a boat's crew, put off to rescue the man. This they were unable to effect, as he had sunk, and they tried to return to their ship. The *Minerve* was making good way at the time, the boat could not get up to her, and the leading Spaniard—twice the power of the *Minerve*—was almost within gunshot.

"By God!" exclaimed Nelson, "I'll not lose Hardy. Back the mizzen topsail."

The way of the frigate was checked, and Hardy and his crew scrambled on board.

Strange to say, the sudden backing of the *Minerve* disconcerted the Spaniard. Nelson was evidently going to await his oncoming and open fire! He immediately put his vessel aback, lying to, to await the arrival of his slower consort, and thus the daring deed of Nelson effected what the speed of his vessel could not manage: it enabled him to get such a start as rendered the chase ineffective.

Directly night fell the *Minerve's* course was changed to south, to throw off the chase if possible, and suddenly Nelson found himself almost in the midst of a fleet which he instantly knew was not Sir John Jervis's. Luckily a

haze partly hid him from observation, and he was able to sheer clear without attracting attention, yet still appear as though he were one of the attached vessels.

During the night this fleet altered its course to make towards Cadiz, and the *Minerve* followed suit, but edged steadily westwardly, so as gradually to escape from the Spaniards. On the 12th February she sighted the fleet under Sir John Jervis, and Nelson made his report of having been actually among the whole Spanish fleet then making for the Atlantic. At six o'clock that evening Nelson hoisted his pennant on board the *Captain*, seventy-four guns, Captain R. W. Miller.

The force under Sir John Jervis was two ships of one hundred guns, two of ninety-eight, two of ninety, eight of seventy-four, one of sixty-four, making a total of fifteen sail of the line, while four frigates, a sloop, and a cutter brought up the total to twenty-one.

Against this armament, the Spanish admiral, Don Joseph de Cordova, had had twenty-seven of the line and twelve frigates when he sailed from Carthagená (for the purpose of raising the blockade at Brest, and, together with the French fleet, make for the Channel and "turn the tables on those English"), but had detached

the frigates, so that his fleet consisted entirely of large vessels—one of one hundred and thirty-six guns, six of one hundred and twelve, two of eighty-four, and eighteen of seventy-four guns; in all, twenty-seven ships with 2,308 guns.

All told, the English fleet of fifteen ships and four frigates had 1,280 guns—tremendous odds in favour of the Spaniards.

The fleet of Sir John was in two columns, kept compactly together in order to move in whatever direction the approach of the enemy required the order of attack, and in this arrangement the ships lay during the night of the 13th February.

Scarce had day broken on St. Valentine's Day when the look-out man reported to the Admiral, who was anxiously walking the deck in eagerness to have the first reports of the enemy:

“Spanish fleet in sight, Sir John.”

“Very well, sir,” replied Sir John.

“There are eighteen sail of the line, Sir John.”

“Very well, sir.”

“There are twenty sail of the line, Sir John.”

“Very well, sir.”

"There are twenty-five sail of the line, Sir John."

"Very well, sir."

"There are twenty-seven sail of the line, Sir John—nearly double our own."

"Enough, sir; no more of that, sir. The die is cast. If there were fifty sail of the line, I would go through them."

"That's right, Sir John," cried Hallowell, his worthy flag-captain; "that's right, and a d——d good licking we shall give them."

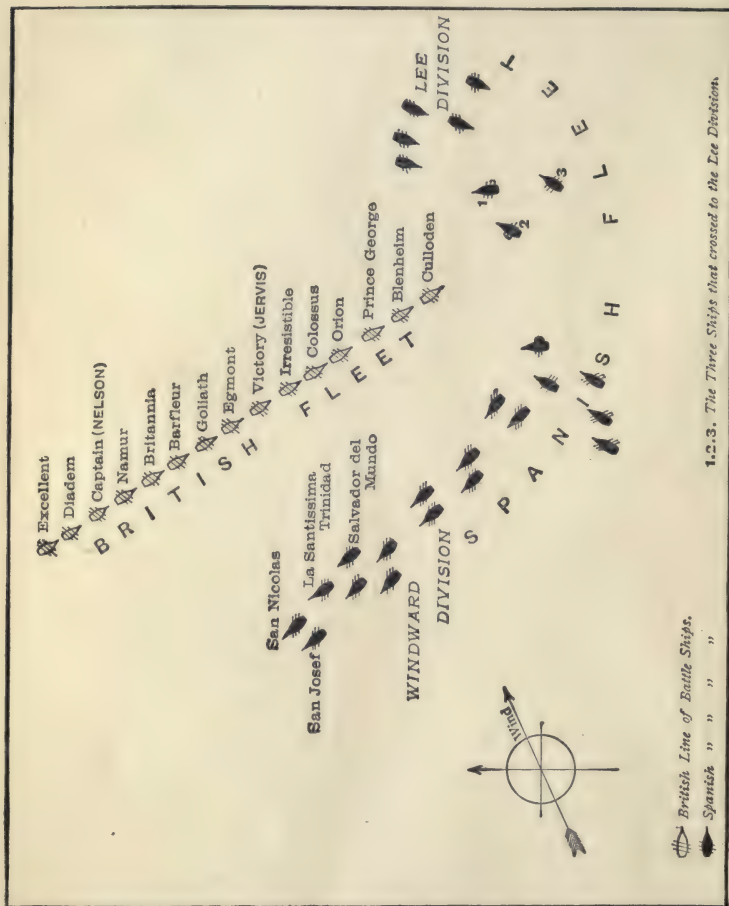
Such were the men, such the spirit by which the British Empire was saved in those heroic days.¹

The wind was west by south, bringing up the Spanish fleet in straggling order, practically divided into two parts. One, being in advance, and consequently most to leeward, consisted of six ships, and six or eight miles separated them from the main body, which was crowded together and in very bad order for action.

The English fleet was heading southward at right angles to the Spanish, approaching from the westward.

Sir John's plan was to pierce the fleet in the opening between its two divisions, destroy the smaller section, as he would hold the weather

¹ Tucker's *Life of St. Vincent*.



PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF ST. VINCENT.

gauge of it, then, when through to the south, tack round and fall upon the main body,

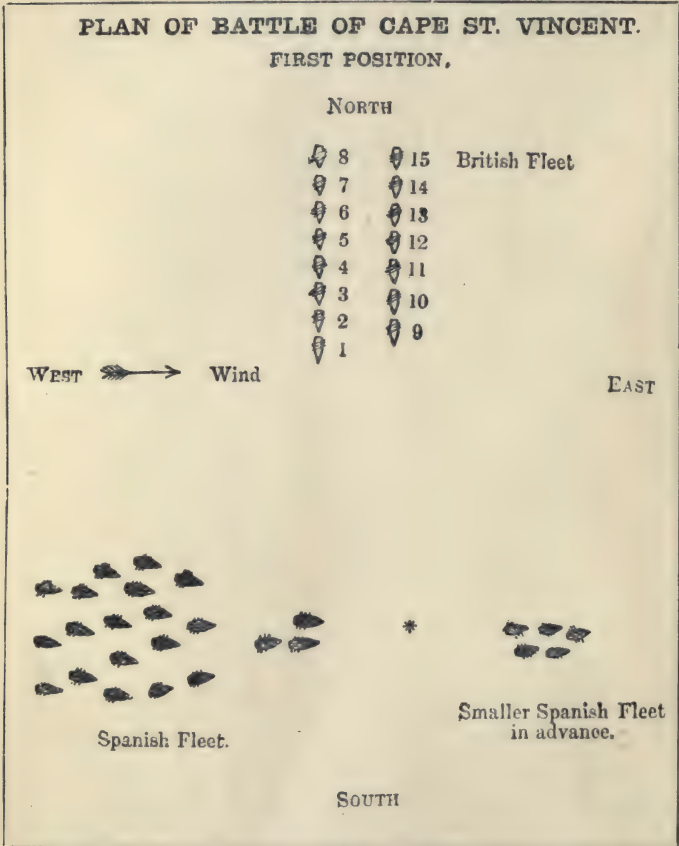
carrying the wind with him. Accordingly he signalled for single line, the leeward ships tacking and falling in alternately into a line with the windward column. At the same time he despatched the first six vessels to make for the opening and cut off that division of six before they could beat back to the main body.

The thirteenth vessel of the single column was the *Captain*, with Nelson on board; the *Culloden*, Captain Troubridge (Nelson's tried friend), headed it. After the *Captain* came the *Diadem* of sixty-four guns, while the *Excellent*, Captain Collingwood, brought up the rear. Immediately in front of Nelson was the *Barfleur*, carrying the flag of the junior admiral, and consequently governing the ships following her.

Anticipating this movement of Sir John's, the Spanish Admiral hastened to re-unite his fleet, but in this he was unsuccessful, for although three of his vessels managed to cross the head of the British column, increasing the leeward group to nine, before the leading ships of Sir John's fleet reached them, the British vessels, bringing both port and starboard batteries into play, stopped further effort in this direction.

One after the other, the leading ships of the

English line pierced that of the Spanish, delivering broadside after broadside, right and



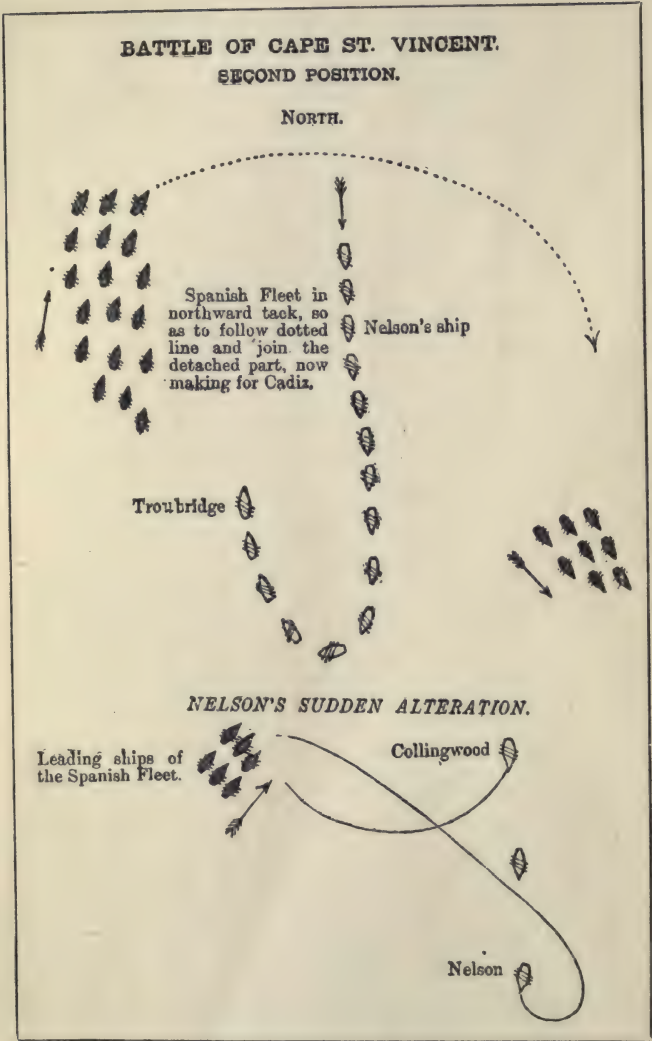
left, as they passed, and for an hour pounded at them. Then, when free, Sir John signalled to

WONDERFUL MOVE AT ST. VINCENT. 65

tack in single column and repeat the manœuvre with the main body.

At once Troubridge put the *Culloden* port about, and followed by the *Blenheim*, *Prince George*, *Orion*, and *Irresistible*, engaged the weather portion of Don Joseph's fleet, while those vessels appointed to attend to the smaller portion so battered them that they were driven off in confusion, and prevented taking part in the general engagement.

Don Joseph altered his tactics, and changed the course of his vessels to the northward, bearing apparently away from the English fleet, but in reality doubling upon them, and, by rounding their rear, rejoining his other vessels, and at the same time encircling great part of his enemies. This movement would have proved fatal to Sir John's plans, but, recognising its deadly intent, Commodore Nelson, without a moment's hesitation, put his ship about, ignoring the orders of his commander to tack in line, and doubled back. Under all press of sail he made for the foremost and therefore most leeward of the Spanish line, passing between the *Diadem* and *Excellent* in doing so, and thus there was the spectacle of a single vessel boldly attacking an entire fleet, rushing apparently to certain destruction. Nelson's plan was to



arrest the Spanish movement, and holding on to the leading vessels, give his own chief time to alter his plans and reorganise the attack.

Had this brilliant action of Nelson failed, it meant ruin and disgrace, for it was in direct antagonism to order, and was practically throwing his ship away; but Nelson knew no word "failure" in his vocabulary, heeded nothing when once he saw the proper course to be taken, and in a few minutes he was in the midst of the largest vessels and pounding away for dear life. Around him were the *Santisima Trinidad*, one hundred and thirty-six guns; *San Josef*, one hundred and twelve; *Salvador del Mundo*, one hundred and twelve; *San Nicolas*, eighty; *San Isidro* and another, each of seventy-four; while as rapidly as possible other huge three-deckers were pressing in to take part in the fight against the one English ship of seventy-four guns.

Sir John, watching the progress of the battle, perceived instantly the value of Nelson's movement, and signalled a revision of tactics; but before such signal had been made Troubridge had headed the *Culloden* to support the *Captain*, and for an hour these two fought the giants of the Spanish fleet single-handed, until the *Blenheim* came up, and, interposing her bulk, gave

them a few minutes' respite, on one side at all events, during which she poured broadside after broadside into the now shivering vessels. Up, too, came the brave Collingwood in his *Excellent*, and he joined joyfully in the fight, tackling the *Salvador del Mundo* and *San Isidro* most masterfully until the latter struck. Leaving her to be taken by the next in turn, he pressed on to where his friend was struggling desperately.

The position was now: the *Captain* surrounded by three first-raters, the *San Nicolas*, and a seventy-four—five in all, and pounding away for all she was worth at the whole of them; the *Blenheim* ahead, equally busy; while the poor *Culloden*, riddled and crippled, had fallen astern. Then Collingwood ranged up, hauled up his mainsail just astern, passing the *San Nicolas*, emptying his starboard batteries into her as he passed, and hung on to the *Santisima Trinidad*. The *San Nicolas* luffed up against the *San Josef*, and they became locked together. Then Nelson, knowing that his ship was practically a wreck, and incapable of more service—she had lost her fore-topmast and every sail, shroud, rope, or line, while even her wheel was shot away—boldly fastened her to the *San*

Nicolas to keep her afloat, and cried for "BOARDERS!"

The first man to answer that call was Commander Berry, who, leaping into the mizzen-chains, was on board almost instantly, while a crowd of hurraing heroes rushed after him. Even Captain Miller was striving to be amongst them, but Nelson laid his hand upon his arm and said, "No! not here." Then as he looked he recognised Nelson's great move. A soldier of the 69th had stove in the upper quarter gallery window, and a way was open to have two boardings simultaneously and capture the vessel either by one or the other. In sprang the soldier, Nelson followed, the rest as quickly as they could struggle through, all as eager to get inside as schoolboys are to get out of school, and they found themselves in the main cabin; but before they could fight through it, the doors were shut and locked, while the Spaniards fired through them. A moment or two sufficed to beat down the impediment of the doors, and with a rush the invaders were upon the officers, bearing them down as the wind blows down a field of wheat. A short cut-and-thrust fight followed at sword's length, sometimes not at that even, and the victorious Englishmen swept on and gained the



NELSON BOARDING THE "SAN JOSEF."

From a painting by George Jones, R.A.

deck. Berry had won the poop-deck in the meantime, and with anticipations of the result was hauling down the Spanish flag preliminary to hoisting the English. Clearing the after-deck, Nelson pressed onward to the fore-decks when the Spanish officers, seeing resistance was hopeless, tendered their swords, and the *San Nicolas* was in the hands of the English. The men were driven below and guards stationed at the hatches in the usual way, Captain Miller being instructed to send more men to secure and man the prize; and then Nelson prepared to board the vessel locked to her, the *San Josef*. "Board her!" he cried again; "Westminster Abbey, or glorious victory!" and into her main chains he clambered, and he and his brave men were quickly aboard. Even as he was clambering up, a captain of the *San Josef* leaning over the after-quarter shouted out that they surrendered, so the capture of this second ship was made extremely easy for them. Nelson asked him if his word was final. He answered "Yes," and presented his sword in token of surrender, informing him at the same time that the admiral himself was unable to hand him his as he was dying below of his wounds. Nelson accordingly ordered all officers to come forward and surrender, and—

“There on the quarter-deck of an enemy’s first-rater he received the swords of the officers, giving them as they were delivered, one by one, to William Fearney, one of his old *Agamemnon’s*, who with the utmost coolness put them under his arm.

“One of his sailors came up, and with an Englishman’s feeling took him by the hand, saying, he might not soon have another place to do it in, and he was heartily glad to see him there.”¹

Up to this moment the *San Nicolas* was still firing upon the *Prince George*, the crew being ignorant of the capture of their vessel, and they were astonished when they were stopped by the officers and the truth told them.

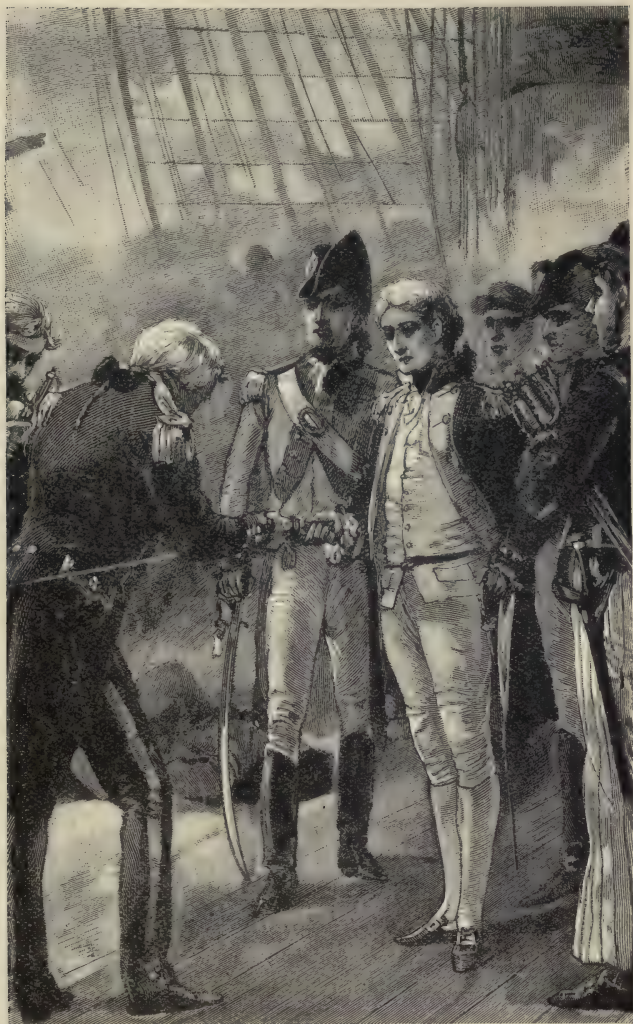
Captain Sir Gilbert Elliot, of the *Lively*, said of this affair:—

“Nothing in the world was ever more noble than the transaction of the *Captain* from beginning to end, and the glorious group of your ship and of her two prizes, fast in your grip, was never surpassed, and I daresay never will.”

Nelson wrote:—

“I pretend not to say that their ships might not have fell had I not boarded them, but truly it is far from impossible but they might have forged into the Spanish fleet as the other two did.”

¹ Southey.



THE VANQUISHED SPANIARD AT ST. VINCENT.

Captain Mahan says in his *Life of Nelson*:—

“He was there; he could do nothing else; he saw with his rapid glance that he might do this, *and he did it*. And after all it was a big thing this boarding a first-rate ship over the decks of another hostile ship, not inaptly characterised in the fleet as ‘Nelson’s patent bridge.’ We must mark, too, or we shall miss significant indications of character, that the same qualities which led him to the quarter-deck of the *San Josef* had led him but an hour before from the rear of the fleet to the van to save the fight—the same quickness to see opportunity, the same promptness to seize it, the same audacity to control it. The brilliant crowning of the day may be but an ornament, but it sits well and fitly upon the knightly deed that rolled back the tide of battle in the hour of need.”

In this deadly combat the loss on board the *Captain* was twenty-four killed and fifty-six wounded, being one-fourth of the loss of the entire English fleet. A remarkable fact was the small loss, when the strenuous nature of the combat is considered. The *Captain* lay in the water almost a wreck, held up by the vessel her gallant commodore had captured, yet but twenty-four men had been killed and fifty-six wounded, after a hail of missiles poured in by hundreds of cannon into her. Pluck and daring dash and fierceness of attack overawed her opponents, unnerved them, accentuating the fact that ships

alone are useless unless brave men man them, and gallant and fearless captains lead them to victory. With any other crew than the *Captain* had, or any other leader than a fearless Englishman, she was a doomed and conquered vessel; yet at the end of this great battle she had as trophies two prizes, each three times her size and fighting power.

While Nelson was thus winning his way, other vessels, one by one, had been throwing themselves into the fray. Amid the roaring and the smoke of battle Collingwood, directly he saw his friend Nelson safe, left the *San Josef* and began to fight the terrible four-decker *Santisima Trinidad*, heedless of its size and might, and with the assistance of the *Orion*, Captain de Saumarez (a native of Jersey and a famous fighter), so battered her that she struck to the latter. In the terrible press of fighting Captain Saumarez had not time to board, but signalled to the next ship following to take possession. Unfortunately, in the smoke, and perhaps owing to her tremendous proportions, the captain did not see the Union Jack lying¹

¹ When in those days a vessel *struck*, the commander laid his own flag over the taffrail, and laid the flag of the victor over it in token of surrender; he *could not* run the victor's flag *up*, as this could only be done by the boarding party, or after the vessel had been taken possession of.

above the white flag of Spain and allowed her to drift by, thus this gigantic ship was permitted to slip so far away that her captain took heart of grace, drew her apart, and was able to get her back among the sullen, beaten crowd of Spanish vessels at the end of the battle, and was towed into Cadiz. Sir John Jarvis, after exchanging broadsides with the *Principe de Asturias*, came to grips with the *Salvador del Mundo*, which he captured with the assistance of the *Barfleur*, and then passed on to add his shots to those being poured into the *Santisima Trinidad*.

Brave Collingwood tells his own tale. To his wife he wrote:—

“EXCELLENT,” OFF LAGOS,

Feb. 17, 1797.

MY DEAREST SARAH,—I am sure you will be glad to hear from me after such a day as we have had on the 14th (Valentine's Day). It was indeed a glorious one, and it seldom falls to the lot of any man to share in such a triumph. . . . On the night of the 13th, the weather being fine, but thick and hazy, we heard their signal guns, and soon after daylight we saw them very much scattered, while we were a compact little body. We flew to them as a hawk to his prey, passed through them in the disordered state they were, separated them into two distinct parts, and then tacked upon their largest division. The

Culloden and *Captain* (Commodore Nelson's ship) were the first that brought them to close action. I, by chance, became the admiral's leader (for the circumstances were such as would admit of no regular order), and had the good fortune to get very early into action. The first ship we engaged was the *San Salvador del Mundo* of one hundred and twelve guns, a first-rate; we were not farther from her than the length of our garden. Her colours soon came down, and her fire ceased. I hailed and asked if they surrendered, and when, by signs made by a man who stood by the colours, I understood that they had, I left her to be taken possession of by somebody behind, and made sail for the next, but was very much surprised, on looking back, to find her colours up again and her battle re-commenced. We very soon came up with the next, the *San Isidro* (seventy-four), so close alongside that a man might jump from one ship to the other. Our fire carried all before it, and in ten minutes she hauled down her colours; but I had been deceived once, and obliged this fellow to hoist English colours before I left him, and made a signal for somebody behind to board him, when the admiral ordered the *Lively* frigate to take charge of him. Then, making all sail, passing between our line and the enemy, we came up with the *San Nicolas*, of eighty guns, which happened at the time to be abreast of the *San Josef* of one hundred and twelve guns. We did not touch sides, but you could not put a bodkin between us, so that our shot passed through both ships, and in attempting to extricate themselves they got on board each other.

My good friend the commodore had been long engaged with these ships, and I came happily to his relief, for he was dreadfully mauled. Having engaged them until their fire ceased on me, though their colours were not down, I went on to the *Santisima Inviada*, the Spanish Admiral Cordova's ship of one hundred and thirty-two guns and four complete decks, such a ship as I never saw before. By this time our masts, sails, and rigging were so much shot that we could not get so near her as I would have been, but near enough to receive much injury from her, both in my men and ship. We were engaged an hour with this ship, and trimmed her well; she was a complete wreck. Several others of our ships came up and engaged her at the same time; but evening approaching, and the fresh Spaniards coming down upon us, the admiral made the signal to withdraw, carrying off the four ships that had surrendered to our fleet.

The ships longest and most engaged were the *Culloden*, Captain Troubridge; *Captain*, Commodore Nelson; *Blenheim*, Captain Frederick; and *Prince George*, Rear-Admiral W. Parker and Captain Irwin. I had eleven men killed and many wounded; everybody did well. I am persuaded there will be no complaints of this little fleet; and when the disparity of force is considered, the taking of two first-rates, with two flag officers, is a new thing. I have got a Spanish double-headed shot, fired from the *Santisima Trinidad*, which I intend as a present to your father, to put among his curiosities; it weighs 50 lbs. These are no jokes when they fly about one's

head. God bless you, my dearest love; may you ever be happy.

Of Nelson's receiving the swords on board the *San Josef* he wrote:—

“The commodore, on the quarter-deck of a Spanish first-rate, the *San Josef*, received the swords of the officers of the two ships, while one of the sailors bundled them up with as much composure as he would have made a faggot, though twenty-two sail of their line were still within gunshot.”

Of his own capture he wrote:—

“The Spaniards always carry their patron saint to sea with them, and I have given St. Isidro a berth in my cabin: it was the least I could do for him after he had consigned his charge to me. It is a good picture, as you will see when he goes to Morpeth.”

Nelson wrote to Collingwood a letter of thanks for his gallant support:—

“IRRESISTIBLE,”

Feb. 15, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,—“A friend in need is a friend indeed” was never more truly verified than by your most noble and gallant conduct yesterday in sparing the *Captain* from further loss, and I beg, both as a public officer and a friend, you will accept my most sincere thanks. I have not failed, by letter to the admiral, to represent the admirable services of the *Excellent*.

Collingwood answered that letter, and the reply is noteworthy for the following words:—

“The highest rewards are due to you and *Culloden*. You formed the plan of attack; we were only accessories to the Don’s ruin.”

At four o’clock in the afternoon, Sir John Jervis signalled “Bring to,” but it was not until five that the action was quite over. A strong line of ships was ranged before the prizes in expectation of a second battle, for when the day closed in, the Spaniards still outnumbered the English. The fight was, however, out of them, they dared not renew the battle; in fact, when a vote was taken, only two captains were for a renewal, the rest unanimous for a retreat into Cadiz harbour. So they withdrew, leaving the *San Isidro*, seventy-four guns; the *San Josef*, one hundred and twelve guns; the *San Nicolas*, eighty-four guns; and the *Salvator del Mundo*, one hundred and twelve guns, as prizes in the possession of the victors.

The *Captain* being almost a wreck, Nelson transferred his pennant to the *Minerve* frigate, and from her to the *Irresistible* at night, where it remained until the *Captain* was repaired and re-fitted.

At five o’clock Nelson went on board the

Victory, the flagship of Admiral Jervis, and was received by the gallant old hero with open arms, for he embraced him over and over again. Well did Jervis know that, but for the masterful act of Nelson, instead of a glorious and shattering victory, there would have been but an indecisive action, and the whole Spanish fleet would have escaped.

Nelson brought with him the bundle of swords and handed them, as in duty bound, to the admiral, but the latter insisted upon his retaining that of the Spanish rear-admiral as a trophy of his magnificent conquest. Nelson was proud of that sword, and, later on, he presented it to the corporation of the city of Norwich (that being the nearest large town to the village of Burnham Thorpe), to be kept as a memento of the glorious victory of the 14th of February 1797.

The total loss in the English fleet was 300 officers and men killed or wounded, while, as a gauge as to what the Spanish loss must have been, it is recorded that on the four prizes alone 693 were killed or wounded.

That Nelson's tacking his ship to the north-west was a distinct violation of orders there is no doubt; and had he failed, he would undoubtedly have been court-martialled, perhaps

expelled the service. But Nelson's power of instantly grasping the possibilities of a situation, and doing the proper thing at the right time, made him ignore instructions and risk life, reputation, and fortune upon his own unaided judgment. Captain Tucker, in his *Life of Earl St. Vincent*, says:—

“This gallant movement of Nelson's was in opposition to his orders, though imperatively called for by change of circumstances, and on this account, in all probability, Nelson's name was not mentioned in St. Vincent's official despatch. But he fully appreciated the importance of the movement.

“Captain Calder having in the evening hinted that the spontaneous movement of Nelson and Collingwood was unauthorised, St. Vincent answered:

“‘It certainly was so; and if ever you commit *such* a breach of your orders, I will forgive you also.’”

The night of the 14th was one of great suspense to the English captains, for at any moment the battle might be renewed; indeed it ought to have been renewed, but Don Joseph felt he had had enough of fighting for the time being, and conducted his shattered remnant to Cadiz, where he was received with every mark of disapproval.

So disgusted were the Spaniards at the issue

of the battle, that the officers could scarcely walk about without being molested, and images of naval officers were paraded in the streets with epithets denominating cowards or cowardice attached. Spanish naval supremacy had received such a blow that it never recovered.

Orders were given out next day—the Spaniards not having put in appearance except two vessels, which suddenly sailed towards the English fleet apparently to give battle, but at the sight of the line of ships awaiting them, put their helms up and bolted away quicker than they came—to proceed to Lagos to refit and secure their prizes. While making their way thither they came into the tail of a gale, which, had they encountered it in its full force, would undoubtedly have caused many of the ships to founder, so battered were they. As it was, it took the crews all their time to keep the ships afloat by continuous pumping.

On arriving in Lagos Bay, Captain Calder was despatched home with the official report of the battle, and also the private accounts by the admiral and his captains—receiving the honour of a baronetcy for being the bearer of such good news,—and great was the rejoicing at the failure of the enemy's plans. England was on the tiptoe of anxiety, for it was well known

that if the Spanish fleet out-manœuvred Sir John Jervis, and raised the blockade of Brest, the combined fleets could have overwhelmed the ships upon the Channel station, and carried the war into our own borders. It can, therefore, be well understood how delighted every one was. Salvoes of cannon were fired from the Tower of London and the Castle at Edinburgh, Parliament voted thanks to the fleet, Sir John Jervis received an earldom and became Earl St. Vincent, the vice-admirals Thompson and Parker received baronetcies, while Commodore Nelson received the Order of the Bath and was voted the freedom of London, which, enclosed in a golden casket valued at a hundred guineas, was presented to him later on when he arrived home. But of all the praises poured upon our hero none affected him so much as a letter from his aged father, who, writing to congratulate his noble son, wrote :—

“I thank my God with all the power of a grateful soul for the mercies He has so graciously bestowed upon me in preserving you. Not only my few acquaintances here, but the people in general, meet me at every corner with such handsome words that I was obliged to retire from the public eye.

“The height of glory to which your professional judgment, united with a proper degree of bravery,

guarded by Providence, has raised you, few sons, my dear child, attain to, and fewer fathers live to see.

“Tears of joy have involuntarily trickled down my furrowed cheeks. Who could stand the force of such general congratulation? The name and services of Nelson have sounded throughout this city of Bath from the common ballad-singer to the public theatre.”

As soon as Sir John, now Lord St. Vincent, could get his fleet ready for sea, he proceeded to Cadiz, and there he blocked up the remainder of the Spanish fleet.

Before leaving Lagos Nelson became, by a flag promotion, Rear-Admiral of the Blue, and on the first of April he hoisted his flag, being then thirty-eight years of age.

CHAPTER II.

CADIZ AND TENERIFFE.

OF all services in the navy that of blockading a port is probably the most wearisome. To such a restless, vigorous mind as Nelson's it would be aggravating to a degree; but he was spared much of the annoyance by being despatched on a mission to intercept three ships of the line laden with treasure, then on their way to Spain, and expected daily.

"Two are first-rates," he wrote to Mrs. Nelson; "but the larger the ships the better the marks, and who will not fight for dollars?"

From the 5th of March to the 12th of April he cruised about the entrance to the Mediterranean, and during this period he proposed to Admiral St. Vincent that a mission ought to be despatched to Elba to protect the convoy which was then about to remove the garrison, and which consisted only of some small cruisers, while it was known that some French line-of-battle ships were cruising about to intercept them.

“I own, sir,” he wrote, “my feelings are alive for the safety of our army from Elba. If the French get out two sail of the line, which I am confident they may do, our troops are lost, and what a triumph that would be to them. I know you have many difficulties to contend with, but I am anxious that nothing should miscarry under your orders. If you think a detachment can be spared, I am ready to go and do my best for their protection.”

On the 12th of April the necessary permission and orders were given to him, and, transferring his squadron to Sir James Saumarez, he started, his force consisting of the *Captain*, “little better than a wreck”; the *Colossus*, seventy-four; and the *Leander*, fifty; together with some small cruisers. On the 21st April he fell in with the convoy, which he brought safely to Gibraltar, thus completing the evacuation of the Mediterranean, and on the 24th of May he rejoined Lord St. Vincent off Cadiz.

Stirring events were transpiring at this time at home.

As though the absolute dearth of money was not enough trouble for the Administration to contend with, a mutiny had broken out in the ships just returned to Spithead. No one doubts, to-day, that the sailors had just cause for dissatisfaction, their grievances having been

ignored for years, and their petitions to their admirals put aside; consequently no course was left to them to bring their troubles before the authorities save by a revolt. The principal grievances were :—

1. The distribution of prize-money. Nearly all went to officers after the heavy deductions made by the Government officials, and the men's quota was ridiculously short of what they ought to have received.

2. The rate of pay of the seamen in the navy was the same as it had been in the reign of Charles II. All necessities being much dearer, they were receiving what was practically starvation wages.

3. The brutal conduct of many of the officers towards the crews. Such tyranny as was common then cannot be understood to-day, unless the personal narratives of seamen be read. Captain Marryat has disclosed many of them in his novels. Whippings were inflicted for the slightest misconduct; many of the seamen were constantly in irons; kickings, cuffings, beatings with cudgels, belaying pins, or rope-ends, daily occurrences; while hangings were inflicted for almost trifling offences, and in many cases without a fair trial.

There were other grievances, but these were the most important.

In April, when Lord Bridport gave the signal to weigh anchor on the *Queen Charlotte*, the crew refused, giving three cheers instead, as a preconcerted signal. These were taken up by every vessel, instantly, and a red flag was run up to every masthead. The officers were politely and respectfully informed that the crews had taken possession of the fleet until their grievances were attended to. Order and discipline were strictly observed, and only the most obnoxious of the officers removed on shore. A meeting was held in the cabin of the *Lord Howe*, where an oath was taken by each man to stand firm to his comrades, and petitions drawn up, one for the Admiralty and one for the House of Commons. These petitions were couched in most respectful language, and set forth the unshaken loyalty of every man to his King and his country, but, detailing their grievances, asked for redress in manly terms.

The Board of Admiralty proceeded to Portsmouth, and Earl Spencer endeavoured to negotiate with the men. He stated that he was firmly convinced that only strict necessity had led to their action; that their grievances were undoubtedly true and ought to be re-

dressed; and that if they would return to their work all should be remedied. The men's leaders respectfully informed him that, while they respected his good faith, only a Royal Proclamation and an Act of Parliament would satisfy them.

Earl Spencer having failed, Lord Howe was sent down, and he assured the men that not only would Parliament amnesty all those engaged in the mutiny, but would certainly redress their grievances. The great respect in which Lord Howe was held lent weight to his words, and the men accepted his promises in good faith and returned to obedience. The fleet, twenty-one sail of the line, then left for the blockade of Brest.

Scarcely had this difficulty been settled when a second mutiny broke out among the vessels stationed at the Nore, and the ships then blockading the Texel deserted the admiral, and sailing to England, ranged themselves alongside the mutineers.

Long and difficult was the settlement of this second and more serious affair, but eventually it too was got out of the way. The rate of pay was increased, also the share in prize-money, hospital fees on retirement brought up from seven pounds to ten pounds, and a promise

given that the charges of cruelty should be inquired into and such conduct prevented in future. An amnesty was proclaimed, except for the ringleader, who was hanged in sight of the crews of all the vessels, and the ships were despatched on active service, no leave being granted to any one.

One of these crews was in the *Theseus*, to which vessel Nelson changed his flag on the 27th of May, and every one wondered what would happen.

Nelson had spoken his mind about these mutineers. That at Spithead he could forgive: the grievances were real and were redressed; but that at the Nore raised nothing but disgust in him. "I am entirely with the seamen in their first complaint," he said. "We are a neglected lot, and when peace comes we are shamefully treated. But for the Nore scoundrels! I should be happy to command a ship against them."

Such was the magnetism of Nelson's character, however, imbuing others reflectively with many of his qualifications; such was the love borne towards him by the seamen, and such the faith in his truth and justice, that scarcely a month had passed when one morning a folded-up paper was found on the quarter-deck. On

its being opened the following words were seen written on it, and at the foot a note to the effect that it was signed on behalf of the whole crew :—

“Success attend Admiral Nelson! God bless Captain Miller! We thank them for the officers they have placed over us. We are happy, comfortable, and will shed every drop of blood in our veins to support them; and the name of the *Theseus* shall be immortalised as high as her captains’.”

Nelson used to say that if there was general trouble among a crew, the captain and officers were to blame, and, of a surety, Nelson and his officers, no matter what crew they commanded, had nothing but devoted men to command.

Brave men always admire and love brave leaders. Nelson never used to cry for “boarders” and stand back and watch them. He was first into the fray himself, and had he but a dozen men available, that dozen would hurl themselves like giants upon a thousand, confident of victory—for was not Nelson there among them? What wonder therefore that the cry “Board” was synonymous with conquest.

St. Vincent’s stringent blockade of Cadiz was mainly to induce the Spanish vessels to come

outside and give battle. When Nelson rejoined him he gave him command of the in-shore squadron, which he increased to ten sail of the line, and ordered him to harry the Spaniards as much as possible to drive them outside. This was what suited Nelson. At the prospect of a sally forth, he wrote :—

“We are in the advance day and night, prepared for battle; bulkheads down, ready to weigh, cut, or slip, as the occasion may require. I have given out a line of battle—myself to lead—and you may rest assured that I will make a vigorous attack on them the moment their noses are outside the diamond. Pray do *not* send me another ship; if you do, they may believe we are prepared and know of their intention.”

As the Spaniards did not come out, a bombardment of the town and shipping was planned, but as only one bomb-ship was available, it did not look like a serious attempt; more an effort to frighten than damage. The bringing the bomb-boat into the front, however, led the defenders to think that mischief was meant, and they increased their defences by shoving forward their own gunboats. “So much the better. I will make it a warm night in Cadiz,” wrote Nelson to his commander. “If they

venture from their walls I shall give Johnny his full scope of fighting."

The bombardment was very trivial and was repeated next evening, when Nelson took charge of a launch manned by ten men, his coxswain, John Sykes, and Captain Freemantle. Along with other boats and launches he made a vigorous attack upon the mortar gunboats and armed launches of the Spaniards. This was one of the fiercest hand-to-hand fights Nelson ever experienced, and in his letters afterwards he expresses particular pride in it.

While the struggle was raging one hundred Spaniards were taken prisoners, so that there was some good work done. An armed launch commanded by Don Miguel Tregoyen, and containing thirty men, bore down upon Nelson's boat, and first in one boat and then in the other a terrible hand-to-hand fight ensued. It was cut-and-thrust fighting at half-sword's length most of the time. On both sides it was a titanic battle, and ended when eighteen of the Spaniards were killed and every one of the others wounded, and the launch captured by Nelson and his crew. In the midst of the *mêlée*, when it was every man for himself and death or wounds in every stroke, Nelson was in grips with one big Spaniard when a second

made a stroke at him with his cutlass. Utterly unable to defend himself from this second combatant, he would have been killed but that his coxswain—himself fighting desperately and unable to defend his commander in any other manner—actually interposed his own head to receive the stroke intended for Nelson. “His own life was worth nothing,” he said, “but Nelson’s was saved.”

Right up to July 5th these little attacks were made, and Nelson was in glorious spirits all the time, though his bodily health was steadily breaking down. When they ended by the English bomb-boat being destroyed by the fire from the forts, Nelson’s fertile brain developed a new excitement.

The three treasure-ships—containing, it was known, bullion to the value of six to seven million pounds sterling—had not as yet been sighted, but a rumour reached the fleet that three vessels supposed to be them were sheltering at Santa Cruz in the island of Teneriffe.

To hear this was, to Nelson, tantamount to saying “Capture them,” and he gravely proposed to St. Vincent not only to seize them from under the guns of the forts but to take possession of the island itself. To this latter St. Vincent could not agree, despite all arguments

brought to bear by Nelson, but finally he said he would allow his rear-admiral to take a few vessels and endeavour to seize Santa Cruz and hold it to ransom till the treasure was delivered up. This was on the 14th July, and along with his orders, which included one that he had not to expose his own person, and another not to land, himself, unless imperatively necessary, St. Vincent wrote: "God bless and prosper you; I am sure you will deserve success. To mortals is not given the power of commanding it."

The force that Nelson took with him on this expedition to reduce a well-defended town was three sail of the line (seventy-four guns each), one of fifty guns, three frigates, and a cutter called the *Fox*. He sailed on the 15th and sighted Teneriffe on the 20th, being about fifty miles off Santa Cruz. All the marines and landing parties were transferred to the frigates under orders to approach under cover of night, land, capture the forts, and seize the shipping. A gale of wind, however, and baffling currents in shore prevented the frigates reaching the landing-place during the night, and when morning broke they were still a mile from shore, and what was worse—discovered.

Troubridge, Bowen, and Captain Oldfield, who commanded the marines, seeing surprise

hopeless, returned and consulted with Nelson as to what was best to be done. This was at six o'clock in the morning, the line-of-battle ships having now come up to about four miles of the place. Troubridge said he thought the best plan would be to capture the heights behind the town, and the landing parties were accordingly landed at nine o'clock; but anticipating this action the Spaniards had already occupied the heights in force, and it was impracticable to make the effort. The men were re-embarked and distributed among their proper ships.

The surprise of the place having failed and the second plan miscarried, Nelson determined to make a bold attack in front upon the town itself. That there were thousands of defenders, and his whole force was below a single thousand, never entered Nelson's thoughts. It must be done; his honour was at stake! At half-past five the squadron reached an anchorage between two and three miles north of Santa Cruz, and then Nelson went on board the *Seahorse* frigate to drink tea with Captain Fremantle and Mrs. Fremantle, who was with her husband, they being just recently married. He explained his plans to his captains, and having made provision for every emergency, he returned on board his own ship, and sitting down in his

cabin wrote the last letter he was fated ever to write with his right hand—so it is worthy of being here transcribed at least in part. It was to St. Vincent, and ran:—

“I shall not enter on the subject why we are not in possession of Santa Cruz. Your partiality will give credit that all has hitherto been done which was possible, but without effect. This night I, humble as I am, command the whole destined to land under the batteries of the town, and to-morrow my head will probably be crowned either with laurels or cyprus. I have only to recommend Josiah Nisbet to you and my country. The Duke of Clarence, should I fall, will, I am confident, take a lively interest for my son-in-law on his name being mentioned.”

The letter written, sealed, and directed, Nelson sought out what papers he had belonging to Mrs. Nelson. Full of forebodings of evil, he was convinced that the night would prove fatal to him, and he determined to destroy everything relating to his wife. When so busied, his step-son Josiah entered the cabin, and Nelson saw he had a sword strapped on. He asked why, and Josiah replied saying he intended to accompany his step-father. To this Nelson was emphatic in his request that instead of going on shore he must stay on board ship. Josiah was equally firm in his persistency about going with

the storming party. At last Nelson spoke out what was evidently strongly impressed upon his mind.

“Should we both fall, Josiah,” he said, “what would become of your poor mother?” adding, as if to impress him of his duty, “the care of the *Theseus* falls to you; stay, therefore, and take charge of her.”

“Sir,” replied Nisbet, “the ship must take care of herself. I will go with you to-night, if I never go again.”

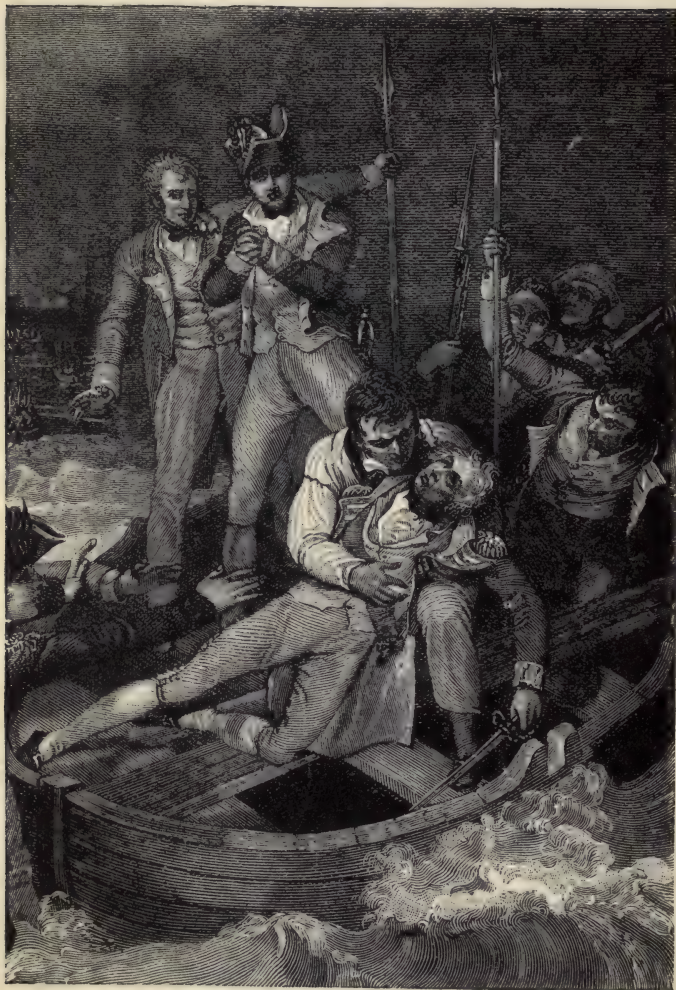
Thus did the watchful care of Providence interpose between Nelson and his determination, for to the insistence of his step-son he had before morning to attribute the saving of his life.

The town of Santa Cruz was surrounded by a wall, although not a very high one, and close to it, outside the walls, was a citadel, while still farther removed to the left, a battery, with a fort of twenty-six guns beyond; to the right was another fort, and in the interval between the town and citadel a mole, defended by twenty-six-pounder guns and 400 to 500 soldiers. Nelson's plan was to storm the mole, and, after carrying it, push on to the square in the town, turn the fire of the forts, and carry them from the rear. The attacking party con-

sisted of nearly 1000 men, in six divisions of boats, and at eleven o'clock they simultaneously put off. The night was dark and stormy, and it was not till half-past one that the boats arrived to within half-gunshot distance of the mole. Nelson then gave orders—seeing surprise was hopeless—owing to the immense concourse of defenders gathered to resist the landing, for the boats to cast off from each other (in these storming parties the divisions of boats were connected by ropes), and with a huzzah, each act on its own initiative. The bells of the church in the town rang out warning; a fusilade from thousands of pieces opened upon the boats, while the forts thundered out their shot from a hundred cannons.

What with the rushing of the sea, the adverse currents, and, above all, the blackness of the night, nearly all the boats missed the mole, only five, one of which was Nelson's own, reaching it. Yet the dauntless intrepidity of the crews was such that the guns of the mole were captured, and the mass of its defenders swept away in a few minutes. The guns were spiked, and then it was discovered that there was no cover to the rear, and a continuous hail of grape shot from the citadel rendered any further advance of the small party

futile. The order to return to the boats was given, and those who were still alive made their way back to them as hurriedly as possible. It was at this moment, amid the struggle to regain the boats (the most of which were aground owing to the tide receding), and the rain of deadly missiles, that Nelson received a wound which eventually deprived him of his right arm. The accepted story of the occurrence is that the shot struck his *elbow* as he was getting *out of the boat*. On receiving the wound, he transferred his sword—it was that of his Uncle Suckling—to his left arm, and fell backwards into the boat. It must be remembered that Nelson's boat had arrived almost first, and that her crew had stormed the mole; also that the fight had lasted long enough to allow the boat to ground; further, that the boat would be stem on to the shore. Is it not reasonable to suppose that it was while getting into the boat after the fight that the accident occurred, for that Nelson would calmly sit in the stern-sheets of his launch the while his men battled is impossible to believe? He could not possibly have done this: his fiery and heroic nature forbade it. Besides, the shot must have come from the rear to strike his elbow. All these considerations tend to throw a doubt



NELSON WOUNDED AT TENERIFFE.

upon the accepted record. His step-son, being close to him, laid him down in the bottom of the boat, took off his silk handkerchief, and bound up the arm to the best of his ability, while a bargeman, called Lovel, took off his own shirt, and tearing it up, extemporised extra bandagings and a sling. Meanwhile five or six of the crew were getting the boat off the ground and afloat, and, undermanned as they were, Nisbet ordered the steersman to put her under the battery as the safest place, while he took an oar himself.

Captain Fremantle had also been wounded in the arm just after Nelson, but, recovering his feet, he was able to make his way to a boat, and got quickly back to his ship with what men he could save. Captain Bowen was killed, as also Lieutenant Weatherhead—an old *Agamemnon* highly esteemed by Nelson. There was hardly a man of those not killed in the *mêlée* who was not wounded in some part of the body.

Nelson begged Nisbet to raise him, and he looked around. At that moment a 36-lb. round shot struck the *Fox* between wind and water, and she sank, her ninety men being cast into the waves. Nelson immediately ordered his boat to proceed to their assistance, and by

his own personal endeavours, and by those of the other boats which got near enough to assist, eighty-three men were rescued.

As the boat reached the *Seahorse*—the nearest vessel—Nisbet urged his step-father to go on board of her. “No,” he replied, “I would rather suffer death than alarm Mrs. Fremantle by letting her see me in this state when I can give her no tidings of her husband. Push on for the *Theseus*.”

Arrived alongside, Nelson called for a rope, and, declining assistance, clambered on board. “Let me alone,” he cried; “I have my legs yet and one arm.” Adding, “Go back to save whoever more you can.”

Midshipman Hoste writes the account of this return of Nelson to the *Theseus*:

At two in the morning Admiral Nelson returned on board, being dreadfully wounded in the right arm. I leave you to judge of my situation when I beheld our boat approaching with him—who, I may say, has been a second father to me,—his right arm dangling by his side, while with the other he helped himself to jump up the ship’s side, and with a spirit which astonished every one, told the surgeon to get his instruments ready, for he knew he must lose his arm, and the sooner it was off the better.

The storming party, which had missed the

mole in the storm and darkness, were mostly driven on to the rocky coast, their boats stove in and their ammunition lost, being soaked in salt-water. Troubridge managed to save and collect some 340 men (80 pikemen, 80 marines, and 180 small-arm men are the approximate numbers). With these he made his way into the town, climbing the walls without scaling ladders and taking some prisoners, whom he disarmed, and whose ammunition he distributed among his own men.

Reaching the point fixed for the rendezvous—the town square or market-place—they learned that the others had been beaten off, and being covered by field-pieces at every avenue, and several thousands of Spaniards approaching, their situation was perilous in the extreme. Troubridge sent Captain Hood with a flag of truce to the commandant, saying that if the Spaniards approached a single yard nearer he would burn down the town; but if they were allowed to retire unmolested, he would see that the town was not bombarded by the ships, at the same time specifying that all prisoners must be given up. The very audacity of such a proposal, situated as the English were, must have appealed to the chivalry of the Governor, for

he acceded to Troubridge's request, and, in addition, ordered food and refreshment for the men, and that the wounded be conveyed into hospital. Thus a great part of the crews got safely back—several of the boats which missed the mole had kept to sea and returned safely—and when the tale of the lost was taken it was found that over two hundred and fifty men had been killed and wounded—nearly as many as had fallen at the battle off Cape St. Vincent!

Nelson dictated a letter of thanks to the Governor, praising him for his humanity, and then ordered his captain to direct their course back to Cadiz. That Nelson was depressed beyond measure may be gathered from his letters:

“I am become a burden to my friends and useless to my country.” “Who would use the services of a one-armed admiral?” “When I leave your command I become dead to the world: I go hence and am no more seen.”

To reward Nisbet for his services to Nelson, St. Vincent promoted him to be commander, and Nelson was allowed to leave for England in the *Seahorse*, from which he landed at Spithead on 3rd September, proceeding at once to Bath to join his father and Mrs. Nelson.

During the voyage to England Nelson suffered from intense despondency as well as

physical pain. This latter, the result of improper fastening up of one of the ligatures of



LADY HAMILTON.

From a Painting by Johann Heinrich Schmidt, of Dresden. Now published for the first time. By kind permission of Herr Fritz Arndt-Oberwartha.

the stump after amputation of the arm, caused him excruciating agony. But pain of body was as nothing to the pain of mind he endured when he recalled his failure at Santa Cruz, and reflected that had he himself landed the first time all might have turned out prosperously, for he would have seized the heights, which Troubridge had neglected to do, and his words, "*My pride suffered,*" tell plainly what his feelings were.

On the 27th September King George III. invested Nelson, personally, with the Order of the Bath, and this order Nelson always regarded as one of his most prized decorations. In addition to bestowing this favour, Nelson was awarded a pension of £1000 a year.

Restored to health, the buoyancy of his disposition reasserted itself, and he became as eager for more fighting as he had been despondent at his failure at Santa Cruz. The *Foudroyant*, of eighty guns, had been selected for him, but as she was not ready, and he could brook no delay, he asked for the *Vanguard*, of seventy-four, and, hoisting his flag in her on the 29th March 1798, he sailed to re-join St. Vincent off Cadiz, which he effected on the 30th April following.

Nelson's record up to now had been extra-

ordinary, for it included four actions with the enemy; three actions with boats in cutting out and destroying the enemy's vessels; service with the army four months; commanding the battalions at the sieges of Bastia and Calvi; capturing seven sail of the line, six frigates, four corvettes, and eleven privateers; taking, capturing, or destroying fifty sail of merchant vessels; and being engaged against the enemy one hundred and twenty times, during which he had lost his right eye, his right arm, and had been bruised and wounded all over his body.

Touching the matter of the loss of his eye and arm, an incident may be recorded here. According to regulations, any officer suffering the loss of a limb or member in battle is entitled to "smart" money, such "smart" money being calculated according to the value of such member and the rank of the sufferer.

Shortly before sailing, Nelson applied at the proper office for one year's pay as "smart" money for the loss of an eye. The clerk in charge requested him to produce a doctor's certificate testifying that the eye had really been destroyed; for it must be remembered that, though the sight was gone, the eye was not very much disfigured. Forgetting this at the moment, Nelson was highly irritated, and said

any one could see his sight was destroyed at the most casual glance; but the clerk persisted in his request. Nelson accordingly sought out a physician and obtained the necessary document, and, his good-humour being restored, he remarked that perhaps it were just as well to get a second certificate to prove that his right arm had been amputated, and he desired the physician to write him one about that loss as well.

Returning to the office he presented the certificate to the clerk, and he, on referring to his register, discovered it was only a captain's eye, and not a rear-admiral's, which had to be allowed for. The clerk made quite merry with Nelson over this discovery, and Nelson became as lively as he was, remarking he would soon come back again, which he did shortly, and presented the second certificate with the remark, "This time it is a rear-admiral's arm which is claimed for, and not a captain's." When this matter had been settled, he said, on taking leave, "In all probability I may come again, and next time it may be a full admiral's leg, or perhaps two."

Before closing this first section of our hero's life, it may be advisable to write a word or two regarding his domestic happiness.

Up to now no shadow had come between Nelson and his wife. His every letter breathed the fondest devotion; his happiness in her society while on shore had been perfect. He was proud of her, and ever referred to her, in conversation, in words which could only be used by a loving husband regarding a loving and well-loved wife.

Before his marriage Nelson wrote to her in these words, after repeated protestations of devotion to her: "These, I trust, will ever be my sentiments; if they are not, I do verily believe it will be my *folly* that occasions it."

Now that he has sailed away, with tender farewells to the woman he adores, sailed on that fateful voyage which has to part husband and wife for so long a time, a time wherein he is destined to win a glorious name in the annals of his country, and yet a time in which he has to perpetrate a folly that will bring shipwreck upon his domestic felicity, these words are well worth recording.

PART III.

THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUKIR.

IN order rightly to estimate and follow with understanding this second period of our hero's life, it is incumbent to leave his story for a while and follow that of his enemy, "the little corporal." Like Nelson, Napoleon was small and weak-looking, but, like Nelson, he had the dominant will which overcame his bodily defects and triumphed over them.

When first Napoleon assumed the uniform of an officer of artillery, his grotesque figure in his great military boots, his small body overwhelmed by the uniform, and his face almost hidden by the official headgear, caused nothing but laughter among the ladies, one of whom dubbed him at once "Puss in boots." For a moment his passionate nature almost

forced a scathing reply to his lips, but eventually he answered constrainedly, "Yes, Puss in boots; yet as Puss conquered the ogre, *so will I.*"

From gunner the little corporal has arrived at the proud position of chief, or almost chief, commander of the Republican forces, and, on land, ranks as high as does Nelson on sea.

Napoleon was the adored of the French people, but while engaged in the conquest of Italy there had been developing in his mind those schemes which were eventually to overthrow the Republic, ruin himself, and result in the regenerated, robust, and noble France we know to-day. His thoughts had centred upon a new France, a France upon the shores of Egypt, where, between two worlds, it could dictate to and rule both. Could England but be checked, and the nations of Europe be curbed, France would rule the world, and he—he would be the instrument in power.

Napoleon drew up his scheme and laid it before the rulers of the Republic. The conquest of India captivates the Directory, the humiliation of England is what each member longs for. If the plan be feasible, why not consider it?

They do decide. Napoleon has become popular. At every corner of the streets the cry is raised "Bonaparte!" At the cafés no name but his excites the people; he is a little god for the populace. A dread assails the Directory that if this rising man be not quickly despatched, their petty lives may be as insecure as their predecessors'. Hurriedly they discuss the idea. The object is to get rid of their bugbear; it would be cheap at the cost of 40,000 men and the fleet they possess; the money at Berne will pay for all, as he suggests; let him go and perish on the sands of Egypt!

Toulon, Genoa, Ajaccio, and Civita Vecchia are appointed rendezvous where 40,000 men may gather, enthusiastic to be led to greater glories than those in Italy by the commander they adore.

A fleet of thirteen ships of the line, two of sixty-four guns, fourteen frigates, seventy-two brigs and cutters, and four hundred transports, manned by 10,000 sailors is prepared, and orders issued for 36,000 soldiers to embark for the conquest of Egypt and India, under the guidance of Napoleon.

On the 19th May 1798, and in glorious sunshine, amid salvoes of artillery and acclamations by hundreds of thousands of people, this

armament set sail for Toulon *en route* for Genoa and the other two stations, to pick up the balance of the army of occupation, and this effected, a fair wind bore the vessels in the direction of Malta, for the conquest of Malta was the object prior to the descent on the land of the Pharaohs.

Rumours of this preparation in Toulon reached the English Government and St. Vincent, also, to his great perturbation, for how could he spare a man or a vessel, situated as he was. Italy was now conquered by France, Spain in alliance with her, Portugal on the point of closing an offensive and defensive alliance on any terms, no depôt in the Mediterranean available, Sicily threatened, no chance to obtain stores anywhere. What could he do? If anything had to be done there was one man, and one man only, to do it—Nelson!

In this state of uncertainty the English admiral received a despatch from the Government informing him that there were good grounds to believe that an extensive armament was being prepared at Toulon, but for what purpose no one knew. It was advisable to detach a few vessels to watch this next move of France, and if any one might be suggested as the officer controlling it, Sir Horatio Nelson

would meet with their wishes in the matter. If he liked to go with his whole fleet the Government would approve, as the action of the French Government was suspicious, and must be watched and checked.

St. Vincent decided that he ought not to abandon the blockade of the Spanish fleet in Cadiz, and that the only plan possible would be to send Nelson to watch the progress of events and transmit word to him if anything serious occurred requiring his own presence on the scene of operations. Accordingly a squadron, consisting of the *Vanguard*, seventy-four guns; *Orion*, seventy-four; *Alexander*, seventy-four; *Caroline*, *Flora*, *Emerald*, and *Terpsichore* frigates; and *Bonne Citoyenne* sloop, was prepared, and placed under the control of Nelson, sailing on the 9th of May in the direction of Gibraltar.

Had Nelson been enabled to carry out his orders the history of Europe would have been vastly different to-day; the advance of real liberty would have suffered, and the *zeit-gheist* which governs nations been retarded, while Nelson would not have been the man he became!

France had become infidel, and England was appointed by Providence to be the power to

bring her to repentance, full and complete, before she could emerge the greater France she is to-day.

On the 9th of May the fleet sailed, and on the 19th the *Vanguard* and its accompanying vessels were, apparently, hopelessly crippled in a terrible gale.

Only a few leagues divided the fleets, but these leagues were enough; Nelson's vessels were hidden in the darkness of the storm, and protected from discovery. On the 20th the main topmast and mizzen topmast of the *Vanguard* went overboard, followed by the foremast in three pieces, together with all their necessary rigging, which had to be cut away, while the ship rolled, an almost helpless mass, in the trough of the sea. The sounding well told that she was leaking, and while some struggled at the work of navigating her with her remaining fragments of canvas, the rest were hard at work at the pumps endeavouring to keep her afloat. Every moment the dangers became greater, for Corsica loomed in sight, and she might in her helpless state be hurled to destruction on its inhospitable shore. The old hulk creaked and strained, the few sails which could be used could not keep her to the wind, and Captain Ball, with the *Alexander*,

hove to and tacked to her rescue. Of all the captains this was one that Nelson desired no favours from. Misunderstanding his nature, he disliked the man, and now, when destruction was almost inevitable, he answered his signals that he required no help, but would save his ship alone. Captain Ball recognised the noble pride of seamanship in Nelson, yet knew that to take her in tow was her only salvation. He repeated his offer, and floated a buoy with a line attached for Nelson to pick up. This the crew effected, and before long the towing hawser was on board, and, under the power of the *Alexander's* sails, the half-wrecked *Vanguard* made weigh and forged slowly from her dangerous position. All next day the *Alexander* struggled at her apparently hopeless task in a heavy swelling sea, and so hopeless it was that Nelson himself ordered her to let go her hawser, but Captain Ball emphatically refused to do so, and continued the work. Success attended his gallant efforts, for on the 23rd he brought his tow to the lea of the southern extremity of Sardinia, and the *Vanguard* was able to anchor, along with such of her consorts as had been able to keep together. Captain Ball's disinterested conduct impressed Nelson excessively, and from that day a friend-

ship—a friendship which assisted in the victories of later date—arose between the two men.

Nelson’s account is given in a letter to his wife:—

“I ought not to call what has happened on the *Vanguard* by the cold name of accident. I believe firmly it was the Almighty’s goodness to check my consummate vanity. I hope it has made me a better officer, as it has made me a better man.

“Figure to yourself on Sunday evening at sunset a vain man walking in his cabin with a squadron around him, who looked up to their chief to lead them to glory, and in whom their chief placed the firmest reliance that the proudest ships of equal numbers belonging to France would have lowered their flags.

“Figure to yourself on Monday morning, when the sun rose, this proud man, his ship dismasted, his fleet dispersed, and himself in such distress that the meanest frigate out of France would have been an unwelcome guest.”¹

The King of Sardinia lived in terror of the victorious Republicans, and he forbade Nelson and his ships rescue in the harbour of St. Pietro; but Captain Ball persisted, and towed the *Vanguard* inside, that she might be re-fitted. Here other vessels joined later, but all the frigates were dispersed and had to take shelter where possible, and, unable to find the

¹ Southey.

whereabouts of their commander, made their way back to Gibraltar, and thus deprived the squadron of their services.

Let us mark how providentially the storm worked for Nelson. First, it saved his little fleet from destruction by the French; next, it forced it to remain at Sardinia a while to re-fit; and thirdly, it deprived Nelson of all his frigates, a blessing in disguise, which only becomes apparent when Nelson has fought his last fight and fallen victoriously, and the consequent effects of the loss of the services of those frigates ends on the field of Waterloo.

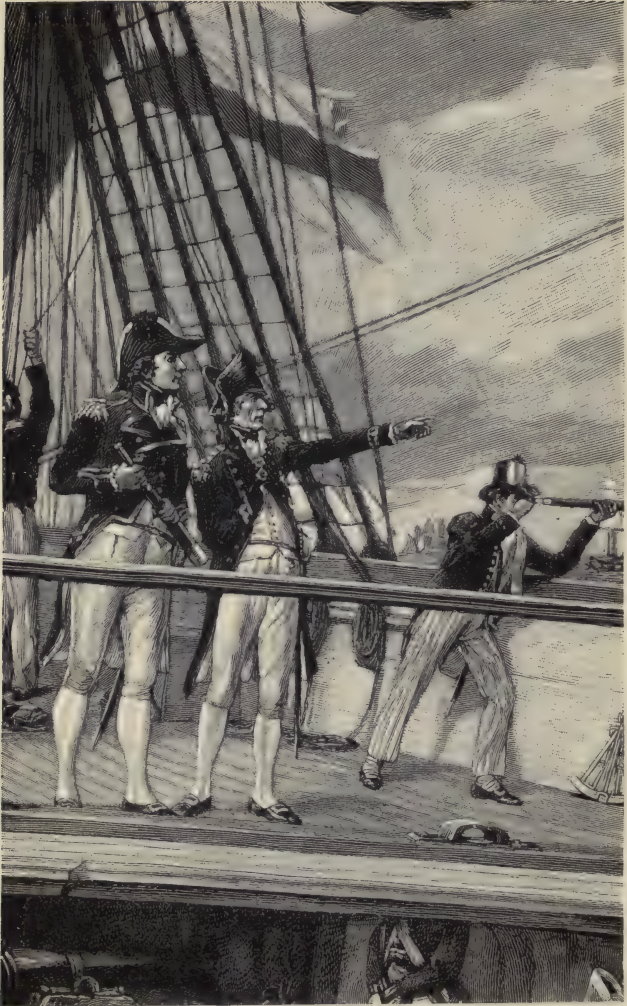
The Earl of St. Vincent had received a despatch by a fast cruiser that reinforcements were coming out to him, and the moment he had this good news he detached the *Culloden* (seventy-four), *Minotaur* (seventy-four), *Goliath* (seventy - four), *Defence* (seventy-four), *Bellerophon* (seventy - four), *Majestic* (seventy-four), *Zealous* (seventy-four), *Theseus* (seventy-four), *Swiftsure* (seventy-four), *Audacious* (seventy-four), and *Leander* (fifty), under the command of Collingwood, to Nelson, and placed their services under his orders. With these magnificent additions Collingwood at once set sail, and it was only the long detention of Nelson at St. Pietro re-fitting, and his

subsequent search for his frigates detaining him, that, when he reached the appointed rendezvous, the two fleets did not miss one another and spend their time in useless searching, while Napoleon carried out his plans in comfort.

Meanwhile, the French had seized Malta, and having plundered the island of its treasures, Napoleon sailed, unmolested, to Alexandria, where the troops disembarked. The harbour at Alexandria being shoal water, the men-of-war could not enter; the transports alone were accommodated, and the fleet had to anchor in the adjoining Bay of Aboukir.

Nelson learned on the 20th June that Malta had been taken and garrisoned by the Republican forces, also that after the conquest of the island the French fleet and convoys had shaped an easterly course. He concluded Egypt was their point of attack, and hoisted orders to make sail thither with all possible speed. Such progress did the English fleet make, that it arrived on the 29th June, a day before the arrival of the French fleet, and, in its passage, actually crossed the track of that fleet on the 22nd without sighting the enemy.

On landing and finding no trace of the French, nor tidings that they were expected,



NELSON'S CHASE OF THE FRENCH FLEET.

Nelson concluded he had erred, and that his foe must have other plans in view than Egypt.

On the 30th June Nelson fired guns to call his vessels together, and late in the evening the English sailed northward for the coast of Syria. That same night the firing of cannon was heard by Napoleon as he neared Alexandria, and thus, separated by less than five leagues, and hidden by the pall of darkness, the two great fleets passed each other, both in total ignorance of the other's close proximity.

When day broke, Nelson was far away, bearing northwards, and Napoleon, standing on the poop of his vessel, was gazing at the minarets of Alexandria.

Nelson found no traces of the fleet upon the coast of Syria, and he searched the northern portion of the Mediterranean equally in vain, until, supplies running short, he sailed for Sicily, where he hoped fresh water and provisions could be obtained. Here again new disappointment awaited him, for Sicily was as dominated by the French as was Sardinia, and not a barrel of pork nor a cask of water could he get. He applied to Sir W. Hamilton. He could not assist; but Lady Hamilton had great influence with the Court, and *she* managed, after much intrigue and effort, to obtain, per-

sonally, an order that if the fleet put in at Syracuse it might have all its wants attended to.

Need it be mentioned that this personal action of Lady Hamilton made a tremendous impression upon the mind of Nelson? and he always considered that, but for her efforts, the battle of the Nile would never have been won.

His stores replenished, Nelson, still of the opinion that, whatever other schemes Napoleon had in view, Egypt was his ultimate destination, set sail for the Morea, and on the 29th July received information that a French fleet had, a month back, been sighted making for Candia. Near Candia more news was obtained, for a brig, spoken, informed him that the fleet had been seen steering south-east. This convinced Nelson, for no fleet would beat against the wind but for a definite object, and the only objective was Alexandria. Towards Alexandria, therefore, the British vessels now headed.

At 2.45 in the afternoon of the 1st August 1798, the watch at the masthead of the *Zealous* discovered the long-sought enemy securely lying in the Bay of Aboukir, and Nelson's long wanderings were ended.

These two long months spent in the search

for Napoleon's fleet had been terrible ones to Nelson. Sanguine at first, he had written buoyantly of his hopes and plans; but as the weeks passed and no traces of the French were discovered, his state passed into one of absolute despondency. His letters at that time are piteous reading, and reflect the intense depression into which he had fallen:

“Years afterwards Nelson spoke feelingly of the bitter mental anguish of that protracted and oft-thwarted pursuit.

“‘Do not fret at anything,’ he told his friend Troubridge. ‘I wish I never had, but my return to Syracuse in 1798 broke my heart, which in any extraordinary anxiety now shows itself, be that feeling pain or pleasure.

“‘On the 18th I had near died with the swelling of some of the vessels of the heart. More people, perhaps, die of broken hearts than we are aware of.’

“But the firmness of his purpose, the clearness of his convictions, remained unslackened and unclouded.”¹

Not only to Nelson had the two months, apparently wasted, been irritating, but to the Government at home they were exasperating, and loud were the outcries about the stupidity of sending so incompetent a young admiral on

¹ Mahan, *Life of Nelson*.

such an important mission. A letter from one of the puisne Lords of the Admiralty was read publicly on board the *Prince George*, denouncing Lord St. Vincent in no very gentle terms for having sent so young a flag officer,¹ and St. Vincent himself was repeatedly condemned for letting such a man as Nelson have charge.

However, all was over now, and Nelson ordered dinner to be served, at which he himself sat, partaking of the first food he had had for several days.

Nelson—wise commander as he was—had a rule to assemble his captains on board his vessel to dinner, when they discussed his plans and movements, getting every man in touch and well posted up in the difficulties and how to meet them, so that in actual battle all worked as one man. Thus in the evening of this memorable 1st of August he laid before his captains the full plans he had formed for the total destruction of the French fleet, finishing up the conversation with the words: "Before this time to-morrow I shall have gained a peerage—or Westminster Abbey."

Broadly speaking, his plan was an adaptation of one of Lord Hood's at Gourjean Roads,

¹ Clark and M'Arthur's *Life of Nelson*.

in which he had participated and marked out as suitable for an attack on an enemy placed similarly.

“Wherever a ship can swing, a second vessel can anchor,” was a motto of Nelson’s, and it was Lord Hood’s plan and his own motto combined that he intended to put into practice during the night.

Admiral Brueys, who commanded the French fleet, had chosen out what he considered to be an impregnable position in Aboukir Bay.

The bay abounded in shoals close inshore, and in the north-western portion an island blocked approach—an island on which was a fort, mounting four heavy cannon and two mortars. From this island extensive shoals stretched out seawards, so that any vessel attempting to attack from that direction would have to bear right out to sea, and these shoals, taken in conjunction with those between the ships and the shore, rendered—so thought Brueys—any attack impossible.

The French were in one line, in form somewhat crescent-shaped, stem to stern, and facing towards the northwards and westwards, the fort protecting the head ship. The formation made a continuous battery, which could con-

verge its fire if necessary from the leading ship to that in the very rearmost position.

Nelson's plan was to place half his fleet on the inside of the leading ships and half on their outside; that is, expose each French vessel not only to two broadsides at once, but also a raking fire from the next in position. As the double over their intervening consorts and foremost ships capitulated, the English would attack the next set of French, converging on the centre where the greatest power lay. This captured or sunk, the rest was easy, for it was three ships to one. It will be seen that no calculation was made for disabled or captured English vessels, and that perhaps was one of the secrets of Nelson's success—an English ship could not be captured!

While, in the *Vanguard*, these movements were settled, and each vessel's place explained, carpenters and crews were removing bulkheads, and storing away all dividing compartments, so as to make a clear way from stem to stern and reduce the chances of fire to the minimum, while freedom of movement from battery to battery had the maximum. Great hawsers were laid along each ship's decks with anchors attached, and these anchors hung over their *sterns*, for as each combatant took up its

place it had to anchor by the stern and not by the bows, thus facilitating forward movement, the slack being behind—where, presumably, the defeated vessel would be—and not in front of the new enemy; also that the ship might swing athwart and thrust itself between two vessels, so as to rake both simultaneously.

So far as number of vessels went, the two fleets were about equal—English, thirteen of the line and one frigate; French, thirteen of the line and four frigates; but the armament was decidedly in favour of the French. The English guns were 1,012, and the men 8,068; the French, 1,196 guns, and 11,230 men. The English fleet, too, consisted mainly of seventy-four-gun ships; the French possessed *L'Orient* of one hundred and twenty guns, and the *Franklin* and the *Guillaume Tell* each of eighty guns. To overcome this disparity Nelson's scheme of action placed not only one of the English on either side a French vessel, but allowed a third fire to plunge into her bows or quarter, and he reckoned upon darkness being a help, as it would prevent the enemy's ships which were not engaged hoisting anchor and hauling in to participate before the van ships had been settled with.

As the various captains made their several

ways to their respective ships all were loud in their praises of the plan of attack, and confident of victory before many hours were passed.

“We must win; we cannot fail.” “It is a great and glorious plan.”

Nelson's fleet was to the westward and beyond the headland and island, where the fort was, and when its advent was reported to the French admiral, he, knowing the difficulties of the situation, made sure that no one could dare to attack in the darkness, and laid his plans for action at daylight next day. It was about three o'clock when the leading ships of the English fleet entered the bay from the north-west and moved majestically forward—“to anchor,” thought Admiral Brueys, for little did he know that night and day were alike to Nelson when the quarry was in sight.

The ships, however, passed where they might have anchored, and he saw that mischief was meant. Instantly orders were passed round to prepare for battle, and to give the rude intruders a dressing down. That his ships could suffer defeat, situated where and as they were, was never calculated upon, although the distance between each vessel—400 to 500 feet—was a long one, to enable the fleet to stretch from side to side of the bay.

To get at the French, the English fleet had to sail directly out to sea, and, describing a semicircle, stand in again, thus avoiding the shoal fort; but the *Culloden*, *Alexander*, *Swiftsure*, *Leander*, and *Mutine* were far to leeward, and, not making the proper course, might have come to grief save that the *Culloden*, leading, touched bottom and remained fast, despite the efforts of *Leander* and *Mutine* to tow her off. However, this one accident, while it galled Collingwood excessively as he watched the progress of the action, impotent himself to help his friend, saved the *Alexander* and *Swiftsure*. The *Goliath* and the *Zealous* led the van, sailing solemnly, silently, and stately in from the sea, and, despite that the fort opened fire upon them, sent back no answering shot. The yards swarmed with men carefully furling the sails, one after the other, and packing them tightly to prevent injury during the fight. It must have been an impressive sight to the French to see this stately advance; it might have been a peaceful merchant convoy for all the answer they made to the fort guns. Rapidly the first French vessels emptied their broadsides, and damaged the bows and quarters of the incoming vessels. Yet still no gun replied to theirs as the majestic ships

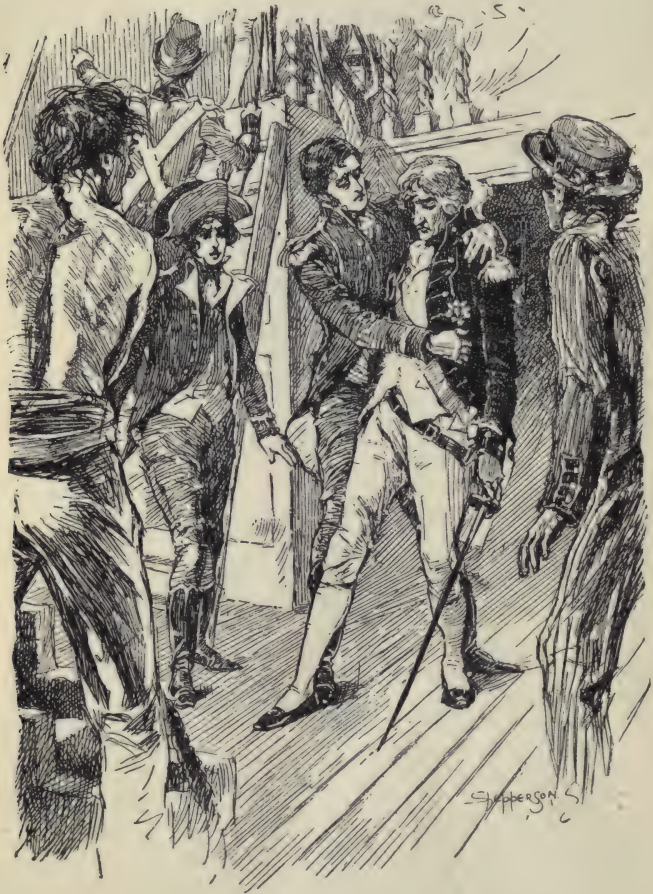
glided onwards, moving backwards towards the forts, now doubling and rounding the French van, and hastening to what Brueys considered certain destruction. On shore thousands of Arabs were gathered to witness the strange scene, eager to watch the battle, wondering which would win, their enemies or liberators, and this battle was never forgotten by them, but told in their tents and caravansaries for years to come.

The sun was sinking red into the west as the *Goliath* rounded the stern of the *Guerrier*, and prepared to anchor on her inner bow, but, missing the grip of the ground, drifted to the second ship—the *Conquérant*—instead, leaving her proper station to be occupied by the *Zealous*, following in her wake. Then began the roar of the English guns. The *Orion*, followed by the *Theseus*, *Audacious*, and *Alexander*, passed the *Zealous* and *Goliath*, and took up their stations abreast of the *Peuple Souverain*, *Spartiate*, and *Aquilon*, the next three French vessels in their order; while on the other side the *Vanguard*, *Minotaur*, *Defence*, *Swiftsure*, *Bellerophon*, and *Majestic* followed the same tactics. In the approach of this column the *Vanguard* suffered terribly, the concentrated fire of all the leading French ships having killed every man at the first six

guns, and even swept away the guns themselves. Yet it held on its way, without reply, until its proper station was reached.

Night had now fallen, and the only illumination was the flash of cannon or the fitful light of the ships' lanterns. Every English ship carried four lights at the mizzen-peak to distinguish them from the enemy, while Nelson's own ship had no less than five flags flying in addition, so that if four were shot away he would still have one.

Within fifteen minutes of that terrible discharge from the *Zealous*, the *Guerrier* was dismantled and out of the fight, leaving the *Zealous* free to make her way onward to her next victim; while on the English side the *Bellerophon*, which had tackled the mighty *L'Orient*, was overwhelmed, mastless and cableless, and with two hundred of her crew killed or wounded and drifting away helplessly. The *Audacious*, *Goliath*, and *Theseus* concentrated their fire upon the *Conquérant*, wrecked her, and she, too, struck, as did also the *Spartiate* to the *Vanguard*. The *Aquilon*, pounded by the *Minotaur*, assisted by the half batteries of the *Theseus*, next gave in, and the *Peuple Souverain* hauled down her colours to the *Defence*, who had been assisted by the *Orion*,



NELSON WOUNDED AT THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.

and who divided her favour impartially between the *Peuple Souverain* and the *Franklin*. Thus five of the van were already captured and eight of the English ships were free to move towards the centre. The *Defence*, *Leander*, *Swiftsure*, *Orion*, and *Alexander* set upon the *Franklin* and *L'Orient* (the latter being Admiral Brueys's flag-ship), commanded by Captain Casa Bianca, who had with him his son.

Fire was seen in the poop of *L'Orient*, and while her guns was steadily served the rushing about of men told that it was serious. The *Swiftsure* directed her fire to where the flames could be distinctly seen, rendering futile the efforts of the men to extinguish them, and before long they burst through the poop deck and set the rigging alight, which burned downwards towards her lower deck. Just three little hours had passed since the first gun was fired. Victory was already assured for Nelson.

Shortly before this Nelson had been wounded; a flying piece of iron struck him on the forehead, tearing loose a large part of the skin, which fell upon his left eye, and being blind in the other one he was unable to see. Feeling the pain, knowing he was bleeding, and being blinded, he thought his end had come, and he cried out—

“I am killed. Remember me to my wife.” He would have fallen, but that Berry, his captain, ran forward and caught him in his arms. As rapidly as possible he was conveyed to the cockpit, and the surgeon, who was at that moment engaged upon the leg of a sailor, hurried to attend to him.

“No, no,” said Nelson; “I will take my turn with my brave fellows.”

Although he was so firmly convinced he had received a fatal wound that he began to send final messages to Mrs. Nelson, he would allow no surgeon to leave the men who had been carried down before him until his regular turn arrived. Then, when it was discovered that, though terrible to look at, the wound was only a superficial one and soon attended to, so great was the delight of those who, maimed and wounded, filled the cockpit, that they cheered along with the surgeons, and word was passed around that their hero was only slightly wounded. Nelson’s head was bound up, and he was carried into the bread-room where an impromptu couch was made, and he was ordered to lie still and rest a while.

It was while here that sounds of cheering reached him, and, inquiring the cause, was told that *L’Orient* was on fire. He asked to be led

up on deck, but was told he must continue to lie where he was. In the confusion, however, he managed to get away, and groping his way up the companion ladder he suddenly appeared on the deck, and began issuing orders for boats to be prepared to save the Frenchmen of *L'Orient* and to have the sails on the English ships drenched.

This latter was unnecessary, as the captains on board what ships were in danger had already taken precautions. Men were drawing buckets of water and sousing the sheets and rigging and bending wetted canvas around the furled sails. Several of those to leeward had perforce to sheer off, but those to windward continued their firing.

For one hour the magnificent conflagration lit up the battle, and by its glare the fighting continued even fiercer than before, for to the French was revealed a number of their best vessels dismantled, captured, silent, and they fought with greater desperation at the sight, while it nerved the English to still greater efforts to complete the victory. Continuously cheers resounded as vessels struck, or shot took deadly effect. The shouting, the cheering, the roaring of the cannon, the burning sparks scattering in all directions, the dense smoke from the burning

vessel added to that of the gunpowder intensified the excitement, and the guns were loaded and fired so rapidly as almost to render them useless from superheating. It was a battle of giants or madmen!

Then suddenly *L'Orient* blew up with an awful roar, and high into the air her burning fragments scattered. A sudden and terrible hush fell among the combatants. The men who were hauling up the guns by the blocks stopped their work, those loading them stood still; even those guns ready for firing were not discharged on either side. A dreadful silence, a silence more terrible than the roar of battle, prevailed, a silence broken only by the cries for help of those struggling in the water, or the groans of the wounded and the swishing of the burnt fragments as they fell into the sea, and then—overawed nature reasserted itself.

Seventy of *L'Orient's* crew were saved by the boats, but her admiral, who lay dead on deck, having expired before the magazine exploded, was blown up with the fragments, as was also the captain and his son, together with the rest of the crew who had fought her bravely during the last three hours. And *with her was destroyed the plundered wealth of Malta, worth £600,000!*

It was now a quarter to twelve o'clock, and the moon arose to illuminate with her white, peaceful rays the scene of conflict, but it was no scene of peace she lit up that night.

Then once more the sound of cannon firing broke out from the *Franklin*. It was a Frenchman recommenced it, and fiercer and more fierce became the combat, till at five o'clock in the morning the sun arose and showed the *Guerrier*, *Conquérant*, *Spartiate*, *Franklin*, *Tonnant*, *Heureux*, *Timoléon*, and *Mercure* captured, *L'Orient* and *L'Artémise* burned, and *La Sérieuse* burned and sunk. The *Guillaume Tell* and *Généreux* alone flew the tri-colour, and these with two small frigates had taken the advantage of being at the rear and unmolested to ship their cables and made a "clean pair of heels." Unfortunately only the *Zealous* of all the English ships was in a fit state to make chase of the runaways, but she was quickly recalled, and the two ships of the line and the frigates escaped to tell the story of the "battle of the Nile."

The British loss in killed and wounded was eight hundred and ninety-five. Only one officer, Captain Westcott, perished. The French loss was 5,225 killed or blown up in the *L'Orient*, and 3,150 wounded or taken prisoners.

As an illustration of the terrible strain of the combat, it may be related that when Nelson sent orders to the ships to secure all the fruits of the victory not yet garnered in, and Captain Miller, of the *Theseus*, ordered his anchor to be heaved up: "My people," he wrote, "were so extremely jaded, that as soon as they had hove one sheet anchor up they dropped under the capstan bars and were asleep in a moment, in every sort of posture, having been then working at their fullest exertion, or fighting, for near twelve hours."

The captain of the *L'Artémise* (M. Estandlet), after striking his colours, infamously set fire to his vessel, and escaped with his crew to the shore—the only dishonourable action which disgraced the name of Frenchmen during that dreadful night, and only equalled by the treacherous action of Napoleon, who, when the prisoners were generously released by Nelson on their *parole* not to fight again against England, instead of being conveyed back as prisoners of war, incorporated them in his army!

Such was the "Battle of the Nile," a victory so great that Nelson said, "'Victory' was not the word to use, but 'conquest.'"

When the last shot had been fired, the battle

ended, and the prizes duly secured, Nelson issued orders for his ship's crew to be mustered for prayer, and a solemn thanksgiving was offered up to God for His mighty protection in the day of trouble. There, amid the dead bodies of the slain, the wreckage scattered over the decks, the countless memorials of a fierce and terrible combat, each man knelt down and returned his thanks to the Almighty for shielding him amid the terrors of the past and granting victory to the arms of England.

As already remarked, the port of Alexandria was too shallow and too full of shoals for vessels drawing a deep draught to enter. Thus Nelson, having no frigates to destroy the convoy ships and stores, was bitterly distressed, and indeed is reported to have said that if he died "frigates" would be found written on his heart.

He had perforce to content himself with refitting as best he could in the open, and having despatched a messenger overland to Bombay to acquaint the British representative of the utter destruction of the French fleet, he gave orders to return to Gibraltar to refit more satisfactorily.

On the 18th August the fleet set sail, leaving three vessels to blockade Alexandria. Three

of the captured vessels were so knocked about that they had to be burned at sea, but the other six he brought to Gibraltar, where he arrived in safety and unmolested.

For this tremendous victory Nelson was created Baron Nelson of the Nile, and awarded a pension of £2000 a year, such pension to descend to his two immediate descendants.

Presents were showered upon him from all sides. The Sultan of Turkey presented him with a pelisse of sables, valued at 5000 dollars, Turkish; also an aigrette of diamonds, valued at 18,000 dollars, out of his own turban, and therefore, among the faithful, considered to be of inestimable value. He also sent 2000 sequins to be distributed among the crews. The mother of the Sultan sent a box set with diamonds, valued at £1000.

The Czar of Russia sent a gold box containing his portrait set with diamonds, and an autograph letter of thanks.

The King of Sardinia sent a gold box set with diamonds.

The King of England granted augmentation of his arms:—"A chief undulated, *argent*, thereon waves of the sea, from which a palm tree issuant, between a disabled ship on the dexter and a ruinous battery on the sinister, all



LORD NELSON AS AN ADMIRAL.

proper; and for a crest, on a naval crown, or, the challenge or plume (presented to him by the Turk) with the motto, '*Palman qui meruit ferat*' (Let him bear the palm who has deserved it). To his supporters, a sailor on the dexter and a lion on the sinister, were added a palm branch in the sailor's hand and another in the paw of the lion, both *proper*."

Mr. Pitt, when asked by General Walpole why a higher rank than baron had not been granted, said: "Admiral Nelson's fame would be co-equal with the British name, and it would be remembered that he had obtained the greatest naval victory on record when no man would think of asking whether he had been created a baron, a viscount, or an earl." An exceedingly plausible way of getting out of a difficulty, for the reward of a baronetcy, the lowest possible one, and one generally given to the *bearer* of good news, was the *minimum* that could be accorded, and it was the gift of the same Government which had, a year before, honoured Sir John Jervis with an earldom for a far less glorious deed.

The East India Company gave Nelson a grant of £10,000, the Turkish Company a piece of plate, the City of London a sword! the Government a barony which cost it nothing!!!

CHAPTER II.

THE WANT OF FRIGATES.

WHEN Nelson regretted bitterly the want of frigates which prevented his destroying the fleet of transports in Alexandria, he little dreamed that the non-destruction of that transport fleet was the very best thing possible, and completely destroyed Napoleon's plans.

It will be remembered that the object of the expedition was to make a raid upon India, and, by exciting the rajahs to rise against the English in Hindostan, and driving them out, allow Napoleon in his turn to annex India for France.

Napoleon, with the help of Kleber—one of his best generals—became master of Lower Egypt, and nothing stood in the way of the invasion of India. Yet, suddenly, all the French general's plans were altered, and a new dream of conquest came into his head. The convoy vessels had escaped destruction! Why not use them for a great conquest of

Syria? His troops could march by the road taken by the Israelites to Canaan. There need be no fighting. It would be but a triumphal procession until Jaffa and Acre were reached. His stores, cannon, etc., could be conveyed by the convoys, and be at Jaffa when he arrived; these would enable him to reduce both places. From thence the way was easy; he would rouse the Mamelukes into revolt; by their help conquer the Turk, capture Constantinople, place himself at the head of the Mahometans, and, crowned with victory, take the Austrians in the rear, and with repeated strokes annihilate the Empire, annexing it to France; enter into Paris as the conqueror of Europe, and become the monarch in fact, if not in name, of the French people! The dream was a glorious one, and the sight of the convoy caused it.

Almost as soon as thought of, the details were planned, the army gathered together, and the march towards Jerusalem began.

The desert passed, Jaffa was reached. It was held by Albanians and Arnouts, but these surrendered under promise of pardon on their laying down their arms. Three thousand of them were paraded, and Napoleon ordered them to remain together. Then, with a

brutality worthy of the man who committed the massacre at Moscow later on, he, in defiance of his pledge, to strike terror into the hearts of the people, and at the same time rid himself of the cost of keeping these prisoners of war, ordered them to be fettered, bound together in small squares, and set out in the open, where they were mowed down by successive volleys of musketry.

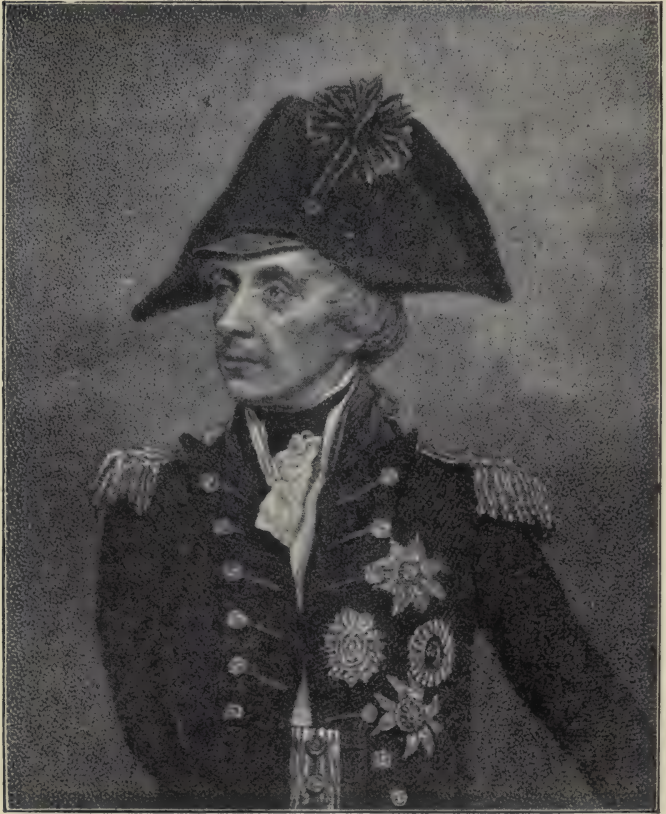
“In vain they appealed to the capitulation by which their lives had been guaranteed. Bound as they stood, they were fired at for hours successively, and such as survived shot were despatched with the bayonet.”¹

The full details of this atrocious act, under the eyes of Napoleon and by his orders, may be read in Bourdin (vol. ii. p. 225). The massacre in the prisons of Paris a few years before, the carnage on St. Bartholomew's Eve, the horrors of Lyons and Marseilles under the “butcher of Paris” were identical in cruelty; but they were the work of incensed human wolves. This was a deliberate order given in cold blood, after careful consideration, by an intellectual man who claimed to be the instrument of God: the man of Destiny.

The reduction of Acre was considered to

¹ Alison, *History of Europe*, vol. vi. p. 290.

be a light task, as his convoys containing his



LORD NELSON.

From a Print in the possession of J. F. Meehan, Esq., of Bath. By kind permission.

stores and cannon would be there to meet him
in the bay of Acre.

This convoy did arrive duly in the bay, but under the charge of the *Tiger* of eighty-four guns and the *Theseus* of seventy-four, for simultaneously with its approach to the bay these two vessels also arrived and captured it. Sir Sidney Smith was in charge of the vessels, and he landed the guns and ammunition which Nelson regretted he was unable to destroy, conveyed all to Acre, and fortified that citadel with them.

At Acre Napoleon received his first great defeat, and from Acre he was compelled to retreat, almost denuded of stores, across the deserts, where his men died like flies, and the trend of his life and actions was altered from that moment!

“No event, down to the retreat from Moscow, so deeply affected Napoleon as the repulse of Acre. It had cost him 3000 of his bravest troops, slain or dead of their wounds; a still greater number irrecoverably mutilated, or with the seeds of plague contracted during their stay at Jaffa.

“Worse than all, the illusion of his invincibility was dispelled! It was the overthrow of his dreams of Oriental conquest which cut him to the heart!”¹

¹ Alison, vol. vi. p. 302.

In order to dovetail these events, it is necessary to narrate how Sir Sidney Smith arrived at the opportune moment, almost a miracle in those days of sailing ships, when everything hung upon a fitful breeze of wind.

Sidney Smith was born in 1764—five years before Napoleon—midway between the births of Nelson and the babe of Ajaccio; entered the Navy at thirteen, was made lieutenant of the *Alcida*, afterwards commander in 1782, served under Rodney on 12th April in his glorious victory. Wearied of the peace of 1783, he entered the service of Sweden, and received from Gustavus the Grand Cross of the Order of the Sword, and was knighted on his return home. He took service under the Sultan of Turkey; but his heart yearned for England, and when war broke out he gathered a few Englishmen together, bought a small craft, and sailed to join Sir Samuel Hood at the siege of Toulon on his own account. There he was entrusted with the destruction of the light craft in the harbour, which he carried out with splendid success, and so marked were his abilities that he was appointed to command the *Diamond* frigate, of forty-four guns, in which commission he won golden opinions for his daring later on

at Brest, and by a succession of small victories became the terror of the French ; so much so that when in March 1796 he, with his single frigate, a brig, and a lugger, drove ashore a French squadron consisting of a corvette, four brigs, two sloops, and a lugger, captured the shore batteries which protected them, and burned the whole of the vessels except the lugger, which escaped, he was marked out for massacre whenever he should be captured.

“ Being stationed off *Havre-de-grace* in April 1796, he captured with his boats a large privateer, and the taken vessel was by the flowing tide floated into the mouth of the *Seine* above the forts. In endeavouring to haul their prize out of this dangerous situation the British boats were attacked by an immensely superior force of the enemy, and Sir Sidney with eighteen of his followers were made prisoners, the *Diamond* being unable from a dead calm to render any assistance. He was immediately brought to Paris by the French Government, *who affected to treat him as a spy* and sent him to the *Abbaye*, where he was detained in close confinement with the utmost severity.

“ He succeeded in escaping by means of fictitious orders which his friends procured, purporting to order his transference from the *Abbaye* to the *Temple*. The real stamp of the seal to the Minister of the Interior had been obtained by means of a bribe, and with such skill was the stratagem conducted by the French officers who were privy to it, that with them

Sir Sidney succeeded in getting clear off in company with M. Philippeaux, who afterwards accompanied him to Acre, and was the chief engineer in defending that town against the assaults of Napoleon.

“After remaining some days in disguise, he succeeded in getting over along with Philippeaux to London in May 1798. His escape from the far-famed prison of the *Temple* was the subject of uncommon congratulation in England, and he was immediately appointed to the command of the *Tiger* of eighty guns.”¹

A rumour of the movement of Napoleon having reached the fleet, Sir Sidney asked to be allowed to proceed to the Syrian coast. He was authorised to proceed with the *Tiger* and *Theseus*, and, as though the hand of Providence had guided the two expeditions, the winds were precisely favourable, the date of departure exactly right, so that the one from the south and the one from the west arrived together; Sir Sidney's being just one day before the convoy, which as it headed for the bay he was able to seize, and secure its contents.

A day on either side would have revolutionised events and permitted Napoleon to carry out his carefully projected plan!

Thus the want of frigates saved the convoy, rendered the defeat at Acre possible, and the defeat at Acre forced Napoleon to alter his

¹ *Life of Sir S. Smith*, vol. ii. p. 389.

plans and commence that career which ended at Waterloo.

Utterly disheartened, Napoleon gave up his idea of the conquest of India, although he had already written to Tippoo Saib saying he "had arrived on the shores of the Red Sea with an innumerable and invincible army," and invited him to concert with him in the conquest of Hindostan. Arrived at Alexandria, he, in company with Generals Berthier, Lannes, Murat, Marmont, Andreossay, Berthelot, Monge, and Bourienne, sneaked off in the darkness of night on board a ship and hurried back to France, leaving Kleber and his remnants of *Le Grande Armée* to do the best they could, and die, if necessary, in the sands of Egypt!

Napoleon reached the Bay of Fréjus, passing on the way the English fleet unharmed and unattacked, and thence he was able to hurry to Paris to begin that new course of action which ended at St. Helena.

Thus the battle of the Nile had much more far-reaching effects than ever Nelson dreamed of, for while it crushed the French naval power, it also practically destroyed the army owing to the sparing of the convoys and their stores in the harbour of Alexandria, and proved Napoleon was not the irresistible general he claimed to be.

CHAPTER III.

THE TWO SICILIES.

WORN by the terrible strain of the past two years, Nelson's health gave way, and a fever seized him in its grip upon the voyage to Naples, whither he had been instructed to take his fleet—much to his personal disgust; for well he knew the rottenness and the abomination of the Sicilian Government, permeated and soaked as it was to the very roots with wickedness and debauchery, and well did he sum up those ideas when he wrote: "This Court is so enervated—it is a Court of fiddlers and poets, whores, and scoundrels." It was a sink of iniquity, robbery, plundering, inefficiency, lasciviousness, and all the vices attendant upon depravity of heart and soul. Imbecile and helpless, that Court had cringed to the victorious French, then dominant in the Roman provinces, and refused at their bidding to supply a single barrel of flour to the half-starved fleet of Nelson when he asked for supplies before sailing for Alexandria, yet now

the hero was returning victorious, they awaited his advent with childish exuberance, and were prepared to receive him with the adulation due to a god.

The brig *Mutine*, conveying the duplicate of Nelson's despatch to St. Vincent (the original fell into the hands of the French, who captured the *Leander* by the line-of-battle ship *Généreux*, seventy-four guns, which had escaped as before recorded), was the first intimation of the victory of the Nile, and the Court and people went almost frantic at the news.

Sir William Hamilton, H.M. Ambassador to the Court of Naples, despatched a letter to Nelson, who received it before his arrival at Naples, and this letter ran:—

“Come here, for God's sake, my dear friend, as soon as the service will permit you. A pleasant apartment is ready for you in my house, and Emma is looking out for the softest pillows to repose the few wearied limbs you have left.”

Nelson replied, saying:—

“For myself, I hope not to be more than four or five days at Naples, for these times are not for idleness.”

It must be remembered that Sir William Hamilton was no great personal friend of

Nelson's, he having rarely seen him, and the exuberance of the welcome must be sought for



LADY HAMILTON IN EARLY LIFE.

From a Painting by Romney. By permission of Messrs. H. Graves & Co.

elsewhere. This necessitates a short biography of the person who inspired it—Lady Hamilton.

Emma Lady Hamilton was the second wife

of Sir William Hamilton, and was thirty-three years old at this time, while her husband's years were more than double—viz., sixty-eight.

Her original name was Amy Lyon, and she had the misfortune to be born of exceedingly poor parents, beginning life uneducated and devoid of moral training. While quite a child she wandered up to London, expecting to find fortune there, and, thanks to her lovely face—for she was a beautiful child—she was ruined and became an outcast. Mr. Charles Greville, who was the nephew of Sir William Hamilton, saw the poor creature when she was seventeen years of age, and recognised not only the beauty of her face, but saw there lay behind a beauty of character which might, under careful training, develop into extraordinary power. He protected her, and re-named her Emma Hart, and as Emma Hart she was known to the world that visited him. Impulsive by nature, and capable of a far better life, Emma loved Greville passionately and devotedly, and her life could have been passed in perfect happiness in his society. Unfortunately, however, he deemed it his duty to marry.

The Emma Hart of that day was vastly different to the Amy Lyon he had taken in charge four years before, and he feared to inform

her of that determination. He therefore told her that if she would journey as far as Naples to his uncle's house, he would follow her in the course of a few weeks, being prevented by business from going with her. She fell into the trap, and when, in Naples, the truth was revealed, her grief was poignant in the extreme.

Her first step was to obtain the position of Lady Hamilton, and she made Sir William marry her. She became Lady Hamilton, and well and truly did she sustain her character. Many ladies prudishly shunned her; but gradually she made her way until she became the favourite lady of Court, and the personal friend and *confidante* of the Queen.

Her keen wit told her that the man Nelson was to become a great and mighty power in Europe, and she set herself to enslave his mind so that she would receive his reflected glory and become a power in the State, and it was therefore her hand that can be detected in the letter from her husband to the returning hero.

Lady Hamilton has been styled an adventuress, but such a term is inapt. She was only the creature of circumstances, not the maker of them, until she was taught the strict necessity for making sure her position—a position not desired by her, but thrust upon her.

She is described as a tall woman, inclined to *embonpoint*, well-shaped in form and figure, with an exceedingly beautiful face, her head charmingly formed, small ears and white teeth, intensive and expressive blue eyes with well-defined and beautifully-shaped eyebrows, and altogether charming. Some ladies record her as almost the opposite, but from the references to her early life—a life for which birth and circumstances, not choice, was to blame—their criticism must be taken guardedly.

There is no word of immorality ever laid to her charge, and there is every possible reason to believe that the love between her and Nelson was strictly platonic,¹ but of that later on.

Such was the Lady Hamilton who was searching out her softest pillows for the hero, and who had already determined to attach him to her, heart and soul, and share the reflection of the glorious halo she saw instinctively was to be his crown of reward.

The *Vanguard*, having broken down on the 15th of September, had to be towed to Naples by a frigate, while her two consorts, the *Culloden* and *Alexander*, proceeded direct, and arrived there five days before her. The news brought by them that Nelson would arrive in a few days

¹ Southey.

aroused the enthusiasm of the people to the utmost, and the Court almost to a pitch of frenzy. The excitement of the Queen was indescribable. "She wept, she kissed her husband, and embraced every one near her. 'O brave Nelson!' she cried. 'O God, bless and protect our brave deliverer. O Nelson! Nelson! what do we not owe you? O conqueror! O saviour of Italy! Oh, that my swollen heart could tell him personally what we owe to him.'"¹

The Queen wrote to the Neapolitan Ambassador in London:

"I wish I could give wings to the bearer of the news, and at the same time to our most sincere gratitude. The whole of the sea coast of Italy is saved, and this is owing alone to the generous English. This battle—or, to speak more correctly, this total defeat of the regicide squadron, was obtained by the valour of this great admiral, seconded by a navy which is the terror of its enemies. The victory is so complete that I can still scarce believe it, and if it were not the brave English nation, which is accustomed to perform prodigies by sea, I could not persuade myself that it had happened. It would have moved you to have seen all my children, boys and girls, hanging upon my neck and crying for joy at the happy news.

"Recommend the hero to his master. He has

¹ Lady Hamilton's letters.

filled the whole of Italy with admiration of the English. Great hopes were entertained of some advantages being gained by his bravery, but no one could look for so total a destruction. All here are drunk with joy."

Can it therefore be wondered at that when the *Vanguard*, shattered by shot and, in sailor phraseology, "hanging together by its pitch," sailed, or rather was towed, into the Bay of Naples, and dropped anchor on the 22nd September, the reception of Nelson was delirious in the extreme?

Barges containing notabilities of every sort, boats and vessels crammed with the populace, decked out in every conceivable manner, and barges filled with bands, put off to the vessel to greet the hero of the Nile.

Foremost of all was the state barge of Sir William Hamilton, and the instant it touched the landing-planks of the *Vanguard* Lady Hamilton sprang up the companion ladder, and, once on board, she flung herself into Nelson's "arms" in a paroxysm of excitement, crying, "O God! is it possible?" A moment or two later the royal barge came alongside, and the King himself came on board, grasped Nelson's hand with both of his, and addressed him as "Our deliverer."



NELSON'S RECEPTION AT NAPLES.

A roar of welcoming swelled from the multitude of craft surrounding the old *Vanguard*, calling Nelson by all the titles their enthusiastic occupants could in their wild excitement think of, while trumpets blew, clarions sounded, and bands swelled the chorus of rejoicing. It was a greeting never to be forgotten, and Nelson's heart filled with exultation.

Amid the wildest exhibition of delirious excitement Nelson's barge was almost swept towards the shore, and if the greetings of those who had met him had been extraordinary, those of the lazzaroni were even more intense. Thousands of these had provided themselves with birds in cages, and as Nelson landed, they liberated their captive singing birds, and a vast flock of them, like a cloud, added their vocalisation to the sounds of triumph from the people.

A magnificent State ball and fête, such as the Court of Naples, with all its love of pageantry, up till then had never witnessed, was given in his honour, and had his nature not been sterling, he might have lost his head at the adulation showered upon him.

Nelson wrote home to his wife:

“The scene on the boat was terribly affecting. Up flew her ladyship, and exclaiming ‘O God! is it

possible?' she fell into my arms more dead than alive. Tears, however, soon set matters to rights."

Among other despatches received by Nelson was one from the First Lord of the Admiralty, in which he was informed that all the first lieutenants engaged in the battle would be promoted. The word "engaged" caught Nelson's attention. It meant that the first lieutenant of the unlucky *Culloden* would be looked over, and it is characteristic of our hero that he wrote instantly to St. Vincent:

"For heaven's sake, for my sake, if this is so, get it altered. Our dear friend Troubridge has suffered enough. His sufferings were in every respect more than any of us. He deserves every reward which a grateful country can bestow on the most meritorious sea officer of his standing in the service. I have felt his worth every hour of my command."

"I well know he is my superior,"—this later on—"and I so often want his advice and assistance. I have experienced the ability and activity of his mind and body. It was Troubridge that equipped the squadron so soon at Syracuse, it was he that exerted himself for me after the action, it was Troubridge that saved the *Culloden* when none that I know in the service would have attempted it, it was Troubridge whom I left as myself at Naples to watch movements—he is as a friend and an officer a *nonpareil*."

His application succeeded, and the lieutenant of the *Culloden* was advanced, not at the same time as the others, but immediately after them, as a "distinction," which "distinction" galled Troubridge.

Nelson, like all enthusiastic men, loved appreciation. His Government had never appreciated him: on the contrary had always snubbed him. Lady Nelson's love for him was not enthusiastic; it was a gentle, wifely love such as would have filled the hearts of nine-tenths of men to repletion, but to Nelson there was something wanting, and he never knew what that something was. He believed he loved her devotedly; and even when she left him, later on, his love for her was precisely the same as before, and she was his care to the end. But that something he yearned for, unwittingly, was revealed to him now. Those sick days, tended by a beautiful woman, a woman who adored his *bravery* and his devotion to his King and country, a woman who had stolen into his heart for her great services in victualling the fleet when none else dared do so, made a great impression upon Nelson.

He wrote to Lady Nelson:

"Lady Hamilton is one of the very best women in the world; she is an honour to her sex."

Again, a week later, he wrote:

“My pride is being your husband, the son of my dear father, and in having Sir William and Lady Hamilton for my friends. While these approve my conduct I shall not feel or regard the envy of thousands.

“What can I say of hers and Sir William’s attention to me? They are in fact, with the exception of you and my good father, the dearest friends I have in this world. I live as Sir William’s son in the house, and my glory is as dear to them as their own; in short, I am under such obligations that I can never repay but with my eternal gratitude.”

Lady Hamilton had learned the single spot where Nelson was assailable—his intense patriotism, and, knowing it, she drew him to her and bound him with such bonds that he became enamoured of her; not of her person, though he considered her the most beautiful of women, but of her soul, for he was absolutely convinced that she was imbued with the same feelings of loyalty as he was, and he loved that in her, and that alone.

Appreciation of genius develops genius into higher and more glorious flights. To earn the praises of this woman, whom he considered to be “an angel,” to use his own words, stimulated Nelson to supreme efforts.

Nelson's first care when he was restored to health was to guard the coast of Italy and the two Sicilies, and to stir up in the King energy sufficient to make him re-conquer Malta and the Roman States.

Urged by Nelson, the King of the two Sicilies applied to Austria for a general, as he intended to make an effort to recover the Papal States. Austria nominated General Mack. When Nelson heard who had been appointed, he was intensely disgusted, for Mack was an incompetent man, and there is only one doubt about him—was he a knave or a fool?

At the same time as this weak monarch resolved to recover his former land possessions, he determined to become the possessor of Malta, and Nelson sent Captain Ball to blockade the harbours and reduce the island. This was on the 12th October. Twelve days later Nelson joined Ball, and captured Goza, lying adjacent, and planted batteries upon it. He then sailed back to Italy, leaving Ball and his consorts to blockade Valetta and assist the land operations.

The army under Mack was utterly defeated, and the brave (?) General sent word to Naples that all hope was lost, and the Court must seek safety in flight.

In Naples the fury of the people at the humiliation into which they had been plunged by the incompetence of their leaders was intense, and even Nelson was included in the category; and believing he, too, had turned traitor, there was a plot formed to capture him and hand him over to the French. He, therefore, did not leave his ship, but transacted his business through his officers. The Court, also, was watched constantly by groups of the populace, and escape appeared impossible.

In this difficulty Lady Hamilton once again earned his gratitude by her ingenuity and resource. There was a secret way leading from the palace underground to the quay, or rather to a small landing-stage, and, through this, Lady Hamilton persuaded the King and Queen, not only to send their treasures, but also to venture themselves and seek refuge on board Nelson's vessel. This being agreed to, and on Nelson being informed, he had boats placed to receive the two-and-a-half millions of treasure and the Court. All were safely embarked on board the *Vanguard*, despite the fact that a heavy sea was running and every moment there was danger of the whole Court being drowned.

Deserted by their King and Court, the

people surrendered, and their forts were garrisoned. The lower two, Uovo and Nuovo, by Neapolitans who were imbued with republican doctrines; St. Elmo, on the heights, by the Frenchmen. News was sent to the Court, now at Palermo, to this effect, and added to the distress and annoyance, not to use a more forceful word, of the King and Queen.

The passage to Palermo proved a very stormy one—so bad, in fact, that one of the royal princesses succumbed during it; but eventually the King, Queen, and Court, including Lady Hamilton, were safely landed, and the gaieties, frivolities, and licentiousness were resumed, in utter forgetfulness of the poor creatures they had deserted and left to the tender mercies of the soldiery.

To protect the island, Nelson requested Colonel Duckworth to send 1000 men from Minorca, now in the hands of the English, and these arrived, under General Stuart, leaving him free to attempt to recover for the King his revolted provinces. To Troubridge was entrusted this difficult enterprise, and so well did he perform his part that soon all the islands surrounding the bay of Naples were recaptured and handed over to the King, most of the inhabitants being only too glad to get back to

their old allegiance, for bad as their old masters had been, the new ones were worse. The former at least let them alone, the latter oppressed them hardly. Once the garrisons were conquered, the people fell upon them and literally wiped them out of existence.

No sooner were the islands recovered than the Court took a fearful revenge upon all who had abetted the French. The office of priest, age, or sex offered no protection, and cowardice exemplified itself, as usual, in cowardly revenge upon the helpless. Though the islanders were starving, the Court refused to allow a loaf of bread to be given them, and but that the seamen of Nelson's fleet—glorious English souls!—gave up their own rations to feed the starving ones, all must have perished.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BLOT UPON THE ESCUTCHEON.

THE islands recovered, Troubridge continued his work, and little by little won the shores of the mainland back for their pusillanimous owners; and when he had recovered part of Naples itself, he set himself to besiege the three forts—Uovo, Nuova, and St. Elmo of the heights.

Meanwhile, acting under the authority and by the express command of the King, Cardinal Ruffo had gathered together an army of Neapolitans, priests, banditti, and even the emptying of the jails.

These movements occupied many months, during which Nelson resided almost continuously at the house of Sir William Hamilton, sharing the cost of its upkeep, and growing day by day more charmed with his beautiful hostess, whose opinions of "the rebels" he supported. These opinions were but the reflex of those of the Queen, who yearned for revenge, a terrible

revenge upon the representatives of the men who had done to death her sister, Marie Antoinette; and it is apparently at this period that Lady Hamilton obtained such an influence that she warped for a time Nelson's better judgment, and made him stain his name with the only unjust act he ever performed in his life. Indeed, his constant attendance upon Lady Hamilton began to be a public scandal, and reached the ears of Lady Nelson, who proposed to come to Palermo, but Nelson dissuaded her, as he could not guarantee a residence for her in the then distracted state of the country.

To add to Nelson's troubles, the French fleet managed to escape out of Brest harbour through the blockade, and made for the Mediterranean. No one knew their strength. Nelson imagined nine or ten; they were more than double, in fact—twenty-five.

Expresses were despatched in all directions to gather ships together. Ball was ordered to leave Malta and support Duckworth, who held the Majorca station; Troubridge also, except that he had to call at Palermo first. These concentrations Nelson expected would be at Minorca, and he judged that St. Vincent would repair there, and wrote to that station to him

saying, "Eight, nine, or ten sail of the line shall in a few days be off Mahon ready to obey your orders. You may depend upon my exertions, and I am only sorry I cannot move to your help, but this island appears to hang on my stay. Nothing could console the Queen this night but my promise not to leave them, unless the battle was to be fought off Sardinia."

"Should you," he wrote next day, "come upward without a battle, I hope in that case you will afford me an opportunity of joining you, for my heart would break to be near my commander-in-chief and not assisting him at such a time. What a state I am in! If I go I risk, and more than risk Sicily, and what is now safe on the Continent, for we know from experience that more depends upon *opinion* than on acts themselves. As I stay my heart is breaking, and to mend the matter I am seriously unwell."

Nelson then determined to collect his squadron at an island some twenty miles west of Sicily—Maritimo, and despatched fresh expresses to this effect. Troubridge brought his ships from Naples, leaving Captain Foote of the *Sea-horse* senior officer at Naples on behalf of the English.

To account for this change of plan it must be mentioned that though St. Vincent believed

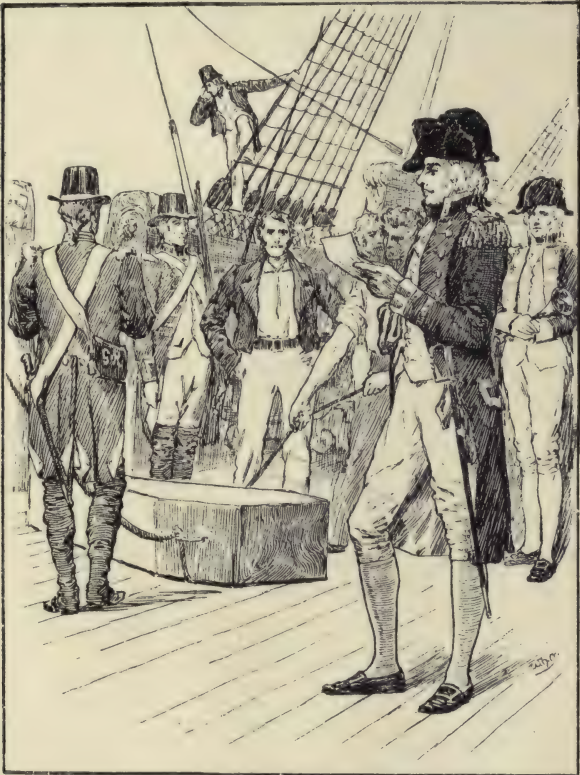
Alexandria was the destination of the French, Duckworth as firmly believed Majorca was, and Nelson was certain that Naples was the point aimed at.

Just before Nelson sailed for the rendezvous at Maritimo, there arrived a present for him—a coffin made from the mainmast of *L'Orient*—as a memento of the great victory. It was certainly a strange thing to send him, but to Nelson in his then state of mind it was received with pleasure, and he had it set up in his cabin behind his usual seat, as consonant with his feelings.

Immeasurably different was the effect upon the fleet, where word went about that their invincible leader was determined to die for his country, and every soul must be actuated by the same patriotism. Had it pleased Providence to allow the fleets to meet, not a British ship nor man would have remained, and wrecks and corpses alone have been the spoils of the victors.

As it was, nothing was done (the French fleet managing to get into Toulon on the 14th May), and Nelson massed his fleet again at Palermo, where on the 6th June Duckworth joined him with four ships of the line, and among them the *Foudroyant*, eighty guns,

which had been the vessel Nelson had been originally appointed to. To it he shifted his flag on the 8th.



GIFT OF A COFFIN TO LORD NELSON.

Captain Duckworth brought news to Nelson that Lord St. Vincent was about to give up

the command and retire to England. Nelson wrote:—

MY DEAR LORD,—We have a report that you are going home. This distresses us most exceedingly, and myself in particular; so much so that I have serious thoughts of returning should that event take place. But for the sake of our country do not quit us at this serious moment. I wish not to detract from the merit, whoever may be your successor; but it must take a length of time—which I hope war will not give—to be in any manner a St. Vincent. We look up to you as we have always found you, as to our father, under whose fostering care we have been led to fame. Give not up a particle of your authority to any one. Be again our St. Vincent and we shall be happy.—Your affectionate,

NELSON.

Unfortunately this letter missed St. Vincent, and no answer being received, and intimation being sent that Lord Keith was now the commander-in-chief, *vice* St. Vincent, Nelson felt himself slighted. Lord Keith, while an accomplished gentleman, was no extraordinary seaman, such as was required at that important pinch, and Nelson knew that he was to take orders from one absolutely incompetent to guide *him*. Thus Nelson's state of mind was anything but pleasant when the King of Naples proffered a request for him to convey

one thousand seven hundred troops, together with the Hereditary Prince as the King's representative: news from the mainland being that the royalists had met with such successes that a general rising in Naples might be now daily expected.

Scarcely, however, had Nelson cleared the harbour when two ships from Keith arrived with news that the French fleet was about to bear down upon Sicily. He relanded the troops and hurried to Maritimo, writing at the same time to Lord Keith.

After waiting at Maritimo some days, Nelson, in response to urgent appeals, sailed back to Palermo, determined to act on his own ideas, reconquer the Neapolitan territory, and re-establish the kingdom of the two Sicilies, as the best counter-stroke to the French efforts. He took Sir William and Lady Hamilton on board, but not the Hereditary Prince nor the troops, and sailed for Naples.

As already stated, the two garrisons of the forts were composed of Neapolitans, who were imbued with the ideas of the Republicans, while in the bay was a small naval force under the command of Commodore Caraccioli. Appealing to the reason of the garrisons, Cardinal Ruffo came to an agreement with them, where-

by the forts were to be surrendered provided their lives were spared and they were allowed to proceed to Toulon; the capitulation to take effect as soon as the transports were ready to receive them.

The Russian and Turkish commanders, Captain Foot as representing England, and Cardinal Rollo for the King of Sicily, signed this agreement, and the transports were prepared; flags of truce were at the same time flown at both forts and on the *Seahorse*. While the garrisons were waiting for the vessels to convey them to France, Admiral Nelson sailed into Naples Bay with seventeen sail of the line.

The terms of the capitulation were made officially known to Nelson, and he refused to recognise them. Rebels they were, and as rebels they must surrender, unconditionally.

It must be stated in justification of this act of his, that he had learned during his passage towards Naples that the truce had been signed, but he had Lady Hamilton on board—a lady imbued with the intense hatred of Jacobins, as was the Queen herself—and that she possessed unlimited sway over Nelson, and had his ear long before he arrived in the bay. Nelson had never done an unjust or dishonourable action in his life. Why should he do so now? Yet

he did so. The representative he left behind had pledged his word to let the men off unharmed. Nelson contradicted that pledged word, and blotted his escutcheon for the first and only time in his life. The garrisons came out, and were embarked on board the fleet, except those already in the polacres, which were anchored beneath the guns of the fleet.

Next day Troubridge landed with 1,300 men, and with 500 Russian troops laid siege to the fortress of St. Elmo, wherein was the French garrison, and forty-eight hours later the admiral (Commodore Prince Francesco Caraccioli) of the "Jacobin" fleet was captured.

The Prince, bound with cords, was taken on board of the *Foudroyant*, but Captain Hardy ordered him instantly to be freed. He was well known to the English officers, and had been allowed by the King to return to Naples to protect his property. Caraccioli arrived on board at nine o'clock. A court-martial, composed of Neapolitan officers, assembled at ten; he was adjudged guilty at twelve, and by Nelson's orders to be hanged at the yard-arm of the *Minerva* at 5 P.M.

The Prince pleaded for a day to arrange his defence. It was denied him! He stated he was not guilty, having been compelled to

serve under threats of being shot; but no chance was given by the vindictive judges, presided over by a personal enemy, Count Thurn. When sentence was pronounced, and he knew he was to be hanged, the Prince pleaded to be shot instead.

“I am an old man, sir,” he entreated. “I leave no family to lament me, and therefore cannot be supposed to be very anxious about prolonging my life; but the disgrace of being hanged is dreadful to me.”

When Lieutenant Parkinson communicated this to Nelson, the latter told him with much agitation to go and attend to his duty.

“As a last hope, Caraccioli asked the Lieutenant if he thought an application to Lady Hamilton would be beneficial. Parkinson went to seek her. She was not to be seen on this occasion, *but she was present at the execution.*”¹

Caraccioli was nearly seventy years of age!

The dead body of the Prince was sunk in the bay with double-headed shot tied to his ankles, and three weeks later his body rose to the surface, and the superstition of the King prevailing, he permitted it to be interred with Christian burial.

¹ Southey.

The mob—to whom the other prisoners were handed over—wreaked their vengeance in the manner customary to mobs, and the sewers of Naples were washed out by the blood of the victims. Age, youth, ability, learning, or sex saved not one victim; all perished to gratify the vengeance of a venal, sensual, wicked Court.

Lord Keith had repeatedly ordered Nelson to assist him at Minorca, but as repeatedly Nelson disobeyed the orders, representing that he dared not leave Naples until the complete restoration of the King's power was effected; and Keith, to his honour, recognising the wonderful talents of his junior, never reported him or used his authority to compel him to obey.

Capua and Gaieta fell, and the whole principality was handed over to Ferdinand. A miserable round of festivities and inanities followed, and while the dungeons were crammed with suffering captives the Court danced in glee.

Nelson was made Duke of Bronté by the King in recognition of his services, and £3000 a year was the guerdon of the Court, of which income he settled £500 a year upon his father. It was days before Nelson could bring himself to accept these honours and rewards, and it

was only when Lady Hamilton pleaded upon her knees before him that his scruples were overcome, though afterwards he became exceedingly proud of his new title.

The King at the same time presented him with a diamond-hilted sword, which had been borne by Charles III. of Spain, and this, Nelson was delighted to receive as a far more fitting recognition of his services.

CHAPTER V.

THE LAST OF THE FRENCH FLEET, AND RETURN HOME.

CAPTAIN BALL and his fleet had been steadily blockading the capital of Malta. Now, Nelson proceeded thither himself, and made arrangements for a stricter blockade. Lord Keith having gone home for a while, Nelson was given command of the Mediterranean till his return.

Two things lay next Nelson's heart: the capture of the two vessels which escaped from the battle of Aboukir—the *Généreux* and the *Guillaume Tell*, and the capture of Malta.

Scarcely had Nelson arrived at Malta on board the *Foudroyant* than a vessel reported a French squadron off the west coast of Sicily, and Keith, who had now returned to resume duty, signalled to Nelson to chase to windward with three ships:

On the 18th February 1800, guns were

heard, and the *Alexander* was sighted chasing four French sail.

“Pray God we may get alongside of them!” writes Nelson. “The event I leave to Providence. I think if I could take one seventy-four by myself I would retire and give the staff to more able hands.”

While chasing these vessels, the restless man wrote to Lady Hamilton:

“Here I am in a heavy sea and thick fog. O God! the wind has subsided, but I trust to Providence I shall have them. 18th, in the evening: I have got her!—*Le Généreux*. Thank God! Twelve out of thirteen—only the *Guillaume Tell* remaining.”

We reproduce a longer description by Lieutenant Parsons in his *Nelsonian Reminiscences*:

“‘Deck there!’ comes the hail from Mr. Stains at the masthead. ‘The stranger is evidently a man-of-war. She is a line-of-battle ship, my lord, and going large on the starboard tack.’

“‘Ah, an enemy, Mr. Stains. I pray God it may be *Le Généreux*. The signal for a general chase, Sir Ed’ard’ (the Nelsonian pronunciation of Edward). ‘Make the *Foudroyant* fly!’

“Thus spoke the heroic Nelson, and every exertion that emulation could inspire was used to crowd the squadron with canvas, the *Northumberland* taking the lead, with the flagship close on her quarter.

"This will not do, Sir Ed'ard. It is certainly *Le Généreux*, and to my flagship she can alone surrender. Sir Ed'ard, we must, and shall, beat the *Northumberland*.'

"I will do the utmost, my lord. Get the engine to work on the sails, hang butts of water to the stays, pipe the hammocks down and each man place shot in them, slack the stays, knock up the wedges, and give the masts play, start off the water, Mr. James, and pump the ship.'

"The *Foudroyant* is drawing ahead, and at last takes the lead in the chase.

"The Admiral is working his fin' (the stump of his right arm). 'Do not cross his hawse, I advise you.'

"The advice was good, for at that moment Nelson opened furiously upon the quartermaster at the conn.

"I'll knock you off your perch, you rascal, if you are so inattentive. Sir Ed'ard, send your best quartermaster to the wheel.'

"A strange sail ahead of the chase!' called the look-out man.

"Youngster, to the masthead. What? Going without your glass, and be d——d to you. Let me know what she is immediately.'

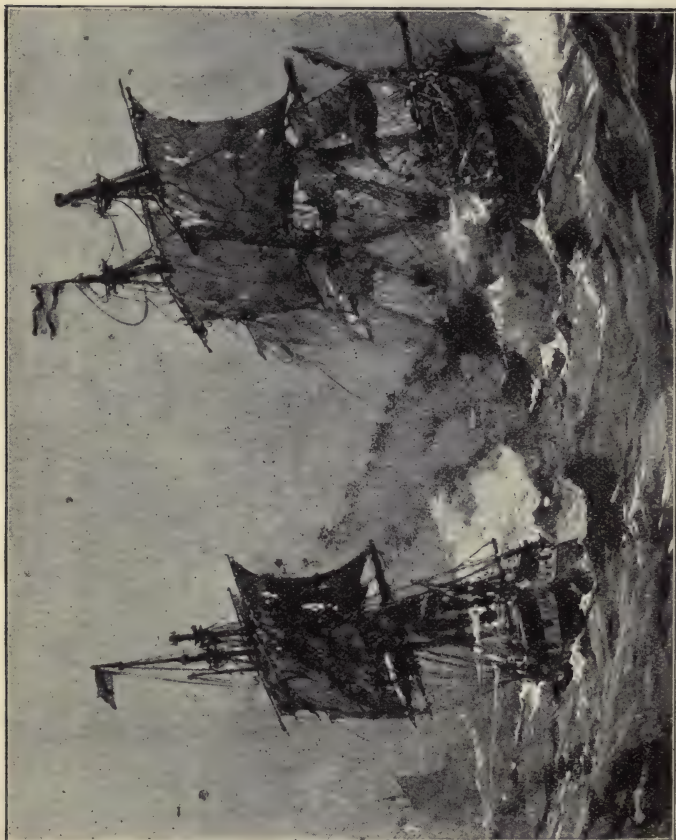
"A sloop of war or frigate, my lord,' shouted the young signal-midshipman.

"Demand her number.'

"The *Success*, my lord.'

"Captain Peard. Signal to cut off the flying enemy—great odds, though—thirty-two small guns to eighty large ones.'

“The *Success* has hove-to athwart hawse of the *Généreux*, and is firing her larboard side. The



FRIGATE "SUCCESS."

Frenchman has hoisted his tricolour with a rear-admiral's flag.'

“‘Bravo! *Success*. At her again.’

“‘She has wore round, my lord, and firing her starboard broadside. It has winged her, my lord; her flying kites are blazing away all together.’

“The enemy is close on the *Success*, which must receive her tremendous broadside.

“The *Généreux* opens her fire upon her little enemy, and every person stands aghast, afraid of the consequences. The smoke clears away, and there is the *Success*, crippled, it is true, but, bull-dog like, bearing up after the enemy.

“‘The signal for the *Success* to discontinue the action and come under my stern,’ said Lord Nelson. ‘She has done well for her size. Try a shot from the lower deck, Sir Ed’ard.’

“It goes over her.

“‘Beat to quarter and fire coolly and deliberately at her masts and yards.’

“*Le Généreux* at this moment opened her fire on us, and as a shot passed through the mizzen stay-sail, Lord Nelson, patting one of the youngsters on the head, asked him jocularly how he relished the music; and observing something like alarm on his countenance, consoled him with the information that Charles XII. ran away from the first shot he heard, though afterwards he was called ‘The Great,’ and deservedly, from his bravery. ‘I therefore,’ said Lord Nelson, ‘hope much from you in future.’

“Here the *Northumberland* opened her fire, and down came the tri-coloured ensign amid the thunder of our united cannon.”

The other ship which escaped at Aboukir, the *Guillaume Tell*, was inside the harbour at Malta at this time, and though Nelson longed to have her too, he resolved to leave her capture to Troubridge, sending the *Foudroyant* back to assist at the blockade and siege.

The *Guillaume Tell* made ready on the night of the 29th March for an attempt to escape, and the *Foudroyant* arrived back from Palermo just three hours before she got outside. The *Penelope* frigate, Captain Blackwood, sighted her first, and hung on to her until the *Lion*, sixty-four, arrived, and there battled with her until the *Foudroyant* got up at six o'clock in the morning.

“At half-past six shot away main and mizzen masts; saw a man nail the French ensign to the stump of the mizzen-mast. Five minutes before eight shot away enemy's fore-mast. Ten minutes past eight, all the masts being gone by the board, the enemy struck and ceased firing.”¹

Thus, the *last* of the French fleet at Aboukir's fight succumbed, and not one single line-of-battle ship escaped destruction—every one was accounted for, and Nelson determined that, with or without leave, being worn out in body and mind, he must go home.

¹ *Foudroyant's* Log.

He wrote Lord Keith for permission, but while that was being obtained a letter of censure was being despatched to Keith, ordering Lord Nelson home. Earl Spencer wrote kindly to Nelson trying to soften the blow, but even he was forced to hint that he had been to blame. Sir William Hamilton was also superseded, and thus the three journeyed homeward together.

What Nelson's real feelings were will never be known, except that he wanted Lady Nelson and Lady Hamilton to be close friends, and to enjoy the felicity of being near both of them. He himself never seems to have appreciated the opinion of the outside world, and repeatedly affirmed he "was not ashamed of any act in his public or private life." He made no secret of his infatuation for Lady Hamilton, either publicly or privately. He wanted both families to live together, and showed an utter disregard of the conventional proprieties of life.

Society would have none of Lady Hamilton; Nelson shared in the slights and insults passed upon her. His Sovereign turned from him after a few casual words; and Lady Spencer, one of his most ardent admirers, was cold with him. Need we wonder therefore that Lady Nelson felt bitterly and keenly her

position, and that a few months later the crisis arrived?

“In the winter of 1800-1801,” said Mr. William Haslewood, Nelson’s solicitor, “I was breakfasting with Lord and Lady Nelson at their lodgings in Arlington Street, and a cheerful conversation was passing on indifferent subjects, when Lord Nelson spoke of something which had been done or said by ‘dear Lady Hamilton.’ Upon which Lady Nelson rose from her chair and exclaimed with much vehemence, ‘I am sick of hearing of dear Lady Hamilton, and am resolved that you shall give up either her or me.’ Lord Nelson, with perfect calmness, said ‘Take care, Fanny, what you say. I love you sincerely, but I cannot forget my obligation to Lady Hamilton, or speak of her otherwise than with affection and admiration.’ Without one soothing word or gesture, but muttering something about her mind being made up, Lady Nelson left the room and shortly after drove from the house. They never lived together afterwards.”

Here Lady Nelson passes out of this story, save that when, on the 13th of January 1801, Nelson took final leave of her, he said: “I call God to witness there is nothing in you or your conduct that I wish otherwise.”

Recalling this, years afterwards, the sweet old lady would often take a miniature of Nelson from a cabinet, look affectionately at it, kiss it

tenderly, and replace it gently. On one of these occasions she turned to her grandchild and said, "When you are older, little Fan, you, too, may know what it is to have a broken heart."

Nelson's father did not believe a word against his son's fidelity to Lady Nelson, and his sisters shared the same belief, for they maintained a friendly, even affectionate, correspondence with Lady Hamilton. But the truth still lies at the bottom of the well.

PART IV.

COPENHAGEN.

CHAPTER I.

COPENHAGEN.

NAPOLEON had now grasped supreme power in France, and, as his conquests succeeded one after the other, he made it imperative that all ports had to be closed against England. As the "right of search" was the only weapon England could wield against this attempt to ruin her trade, he proposed "that the flag should protect the cargo." But to enforce the "right of search" England set herself.

On the 25th of July 1800, the captain of a Danish frigate, the *Freya*, refused to a British man-of-war, permission to search her convoy. The British captain had no resource but to lay his ship alongside the *Freya*, and take her and her convoy to the Downs.

When this was reported to the English Government, Lord Whitworth was sent to Copenhagen, and, to emphasise his arguments,

Admiral Dickson, with nine sail of the line, accompanied him. Arrived at Copenhagen, the envoy found that not only were war preparations being actively carried on, but Copenhagen itself was being fortified; yet such was the adroitness displayed by Lord Whitworth, that he was able to arrive at a satisfactory understanding with the Danish Cabinet.

Enraged at the success of this action of England, and seeing in it a forerunner of the failure of his plans to enforce the Northern Convention, the Czar, now in league with Napoleon, ordered all ships in his ports belonging to England to be seized, which was done to the number of three hundred, the officers and crews being despatched, with Eastern barbarity, a thousand miles inland. This action he took in defiance of a treaty with England, one of the stipulations of which was: "In the event of a rupture between the two Powers, there should be no embargo laid on vessels in the harbours of either." At the same time the Czar demanded the cession of the island of Malta as the price of the vessels and cargo. This insolent demand not being complied with, the Czar ordered, on the 29th October, the embargoed goods to be sold, and the produce of the sale divided among those

who had, or alleged they had, claims against England.

Sweden and Russia then brought pressure to bear upon Denmark, and on the 16th December 1800, a marine confederacy was signed by all three Powers on the basis of Napoleon's ideas, and three days later a second one was entered into with Prussia.

Napoleon was delighted at the success of his manœuvre, for at one stroke he had rendered futile all Nelson's victories, and having no navy himself, nor commerce worth speaking of, he saw England opposed to a united Europe, and her fate sealed.

As though to add a final blow, Prussia invaded Hanover—then part of the British kingdom—and taking possession of that country “in charge,” closed the Elbe and Wezer to English shipping. The Danes seized Hamburg and closed it, so in very few weeks there was not one open port for English traders from the North Cape to Gibraltar, and the Continent was leagued against their greatest benefactor, a benefactor who had poured out on their behalf hundreds of millions of pounds sterling.

Thus, action had to be taken, and taken quickly, and the blow struck at Denmark first,

before her fleet and that of Russia had time to join forces.

The *San Josef*—captured by Nelson at the battle off Cape St. Vincent—had been thoroughly repaired and refitted, and when Nelson intimated that, being restored to health, he was ready to accept what the Admiralty could offer, this vessel was placed at his disposal, and for the first time he hoisted the blue flag at the fore, being now Vice-Admiral of the Blue, by promotion.

The *San Josef* was appointed to the Channel fleet, under Lord St. Vincent, to Nelson's joy, as he was delighted to be once more under the admiral he loved. But his joy was short-lived, for almost immediately came the news that the Government had decided to open hostilities with Denmark, and that Sir Hyde Parker had been appointed to command, with Vice-Admiral Nelson as his assistant.

The *San Josef* being too unwieldy for the Baltic, Nelson shifted his flag on the 12th February to the *St. George*, a more suitable vessel, taking Hardy with him as captain.

Why Nelson was not placed in command of this expedition, where an active and alert man was necessary, and withal a desperate fighting man—for a continued resistance from the

batteries was reckoned upon beforehand ; also why Sir Hyde Parker—an old man, a man utterly unfitted for the service he was appointed to carry out—was chosen, are questions only to be answered by conjecture.

Doubly unfortunate, too, was it, that between Nelson and Parker antipathy existed. Nelson felt the official world was against him ; he knew that he was a man hated in high places, and that every one of those who ruled would be heartily glad if he made a slip and degraded himself.

Parker looked upon Nelson as a forward, conceited fellow, who used to disobey orders, and while comparatively clever in his own way and with his own way, was useless to rely upon if a definite plan had to be carried out. Consequently he treated Nelson coldly and distantly, and the latter resented this conduct—indeed, took a schoolboy's delight in thwarting one of his plans. It was at Yarmouth. Parker had just married a young wife, and she and her husband decided to give a ball on the 13th March, before sailing, as a sort of "send-off," much to Nelson's disgust, for he wanted to be "away and at them." Nelson accordingly wrote unofficially to Troubridge and St. Vincent, and casually mentioned the ball and how

it would detain the ships. An express was despatched to Sir Hyde to sail at once, and one can imagine Nelson's glee when he wrote, on the 11th, to Troubridge :

“The signal is made to prepare to-morrow at twelve o'clock. Now we can have no desire for staying, for her ladyship is gone, and the *ball* for Friday knocked up by yours and the Earl's unpoliteness to send gentlemen to sea instead of dancing with white gloves.”

The fleet consisted of eighteen ships of the line, four frigates, and a number of bombs—in all, fifty-two sail; but was immediately weakened by the *Invincible* striking a sand-bank, and going down with a large part of her crew.

Mr. Vansittart accompanied the fleet as plenipotentiary. Six hundred troops, under Colonel William Stewart (whose account of the battle at Copenhagen is the fullest and most reliable obtainable, and from which most particulars are gleaned by modern writers on the subject), were also taken on board.

Perhaps the memory of how he had stopped the admiral's projected dance influenced Nelson, for in passing over the Dogger Bank he recollected that Sir Hyde dearly loved a turbot, and also that he had heard that turbot were sometimes found on that fishing-ground. As

soon as he was sure of his locality, he set men to fish, and after a while a turbot was hooked.

“Send this to Sir Hyde,” said Nelson; and then, as some one mentioned the state of the sea, he added, “yes, it must go. I know he likes good living, and shall have the turbot.” Sir Hyde was pleased with the present, and returned a note of thanks, and from that moment the reserve between the two men was broken down.

This was not, however, the last of the turbot story. Long afterwards, Mr. Layman told Lord Nelson that a man eminent in the naval profession had asked him to tell him why Parker had taken the laurel off his own head and placed it on Nelson’s.

“What did you say?” asked Nelson.

“I said that it was not a gift,” replied Layman, “as your lordship had gained the victory by a turbot.”

“A turbot?” exclaimed Nelson.

“Yes, a turbot, my lord,” replied Layman. “I well recollect your great desire to catch a turbot, and your astonishing many by insisting on its being immediately sent to Sir Hyde, who condescended to return a civil note. Without which opening your lordship would not have been consulted in the Cattegat, and without

such intercourse your lordship would not have got the detached squadron, without which there would not have been any engagement, and consequently no victory."

"You are right," replied Lord Nelson, smiling as he remembered the incident.

Copenhagen is well situated for security. From the north the only approach is by the Sound, a narrow passage commanded by two forts—one on the Danish side, called Elsinore,¹ and one on the Swedish, called Cronenburg—and a stretch of shoals called the Great Belt, leading into the Baltic, but so intricate, a century ago, that few vessels of any great draught dare attempt it unless piloted by Danes accustomed to the vagaries of the channels and used to the buoys, which from time to time were shifted to indicate the passage. In addition, the town was only approachable by a narrow channel between two shoals, and more, a channel so winding that, without direction-buoys, even native pilots could not attempt to navigate a vessel drawing more than ten feet of water.

Thus the removal of the Channel buoys in the Great Belt, and those in the lower bend of

¹ The first scene of the play of *Hamlet* opens out on the battlements of this fortress.

the King's Channel, together with the fortresses in the Sound, rendered the capital of Denmark practically safe from any attack. The Danes, however, did not rely upon their natural defences, but, as the recognised approach was from the north, *viâ* the King's Channel, they had an exceedingly powerful battery and fort, called the "Three Crowns Battery," past which very few ships could hope to go. To render the place still more impregnable, a line of battleships, with three hulks containing heavy guns between each item, stretched from the Three Crowns Battery to below the town, presenting a continuous line of guns; and these floating batteries being connected with the land behind, the place was deemed impregnable. In front of these batteries was half-a-mile of open water, then a shoal, called the Middle Ground—another half-mile of water—and the Saltholm Flat. These two stretches of water, intricate and winding in their deepest parts, where alone men-of-war could be navigated, formed the only possible approaches to the town.

At the Scaw (the most northern point of Denmark), the fleet stopped to allow Mr. Vansittart to leave on his diplomatic mission—a mission that was nothing short of childish,

no hopes of success being entertained, and which gave the Danes longer time to prepare their resistance, resulting in thousands of deaths, which its omission might have avoided.

To Nelson this delay was most annoying and irritating:

“The more I have reflected, the more I am confirmed in opinion that not a moment should be lost in attacking the enemy. They will every day and every hour be stronger; we shall never be so good a match for them as at this moment. . . . The only consideration is, how to get at them with the least risk to our ships. Here you are, with almost the safety—certainly with the honour—of England more entrusted to you than ever fell to the lot of any British officer. On your decision depends whether our country shall be degraded in the eyes of Europe, or whether she shall rear her head higher than ever. Again, I do repeat, never did our country depend so much upon the success of any fleet as on this. How best to honour her and abate the pride of her enemies must be the subject of your deepest consideration.”

These were the words he wrote to the Commander-in-chief, Sir Hyde Parker, and in them the intense annoyance of the active combatant is clearly manifested. They occur in a long letter, after a memorable meeting on board the flagship, which is reproduced on page 204.

Mr. Vansittart returned on the 23rd March,

and brought, in addition to the news of the absolute failure of his mission, the intelligence that the Danes were rendering their defences more powerful every day and hour, and Sir Hyde called a council of his captains.

Lord Nelson took with him Lieutenant Layman, and he has preserved an account of this council. These are his words:—

“On board the *London* the heads appeared very gloomy. Mr. Vansittart, who arrived the same moment Nelson did, said that if the fleet proceeded to attack, it would be beaten, and the attempt was in danger of being relinquished. The captain of the fleet said to Layman that the Danes were too strong to attack, and a torpor, verging to despondency, prevailed in the councils. While others were dismayed, however, Lord Nelson questioned those just arrived from Copenhagen, not only as to the force, but as to the position of the enemy. Such interrogatories he called ‘bringing people to the post.’ Having learned that the great strength of the enemy was at the head of the line, supported by the Crown Battery, his lordship emphatically observed that to begin the attack there would be like ‘taking a bull by the horns.’ He advocated advancing against the place from the south.”

Sir Hyde Parker appears to have had very little hope of the success of the movement, and when the initial advance was suggested, the

difficulties of passing the two fortresses, one on either side of the Sound, was discussed, and it was decided by him and his advisers that such an advance was impossible. There remained only the Great Belt, but here the pilotage question cropped up. The Great Belt was intricate and dangerous. Nelson lost patience at the discussion.

“Go by the Sound, or the Belt, or *anyhow*; only lose not one hour!” he said.

“But the instructions of the Government?”

“Throw them aside,” was his suggestion. “Under the change of circumstances, Denmark must be crushed, and only an advance upon Copenhagen can effect this. Go to Copenhagen anyhow, only crush her.”

Nelson’s emphatic words are understood on a perusal of a letter he wrote some time afterwards about this council:

“The difficulty was to get our commander-in-chief to either go past Cronenburg or through the Belt (that is, by any passage), because what Sir Hyde thought best, and what I believe was settled before I came on board the *London*, was to stay in the Cattegat, and there wait the time when the whole naval force of the Baltic might choose to come out and fight—a measure, in my opinion, disgraceful to our country. I wanted to get at our enemy as soon as possible, to strike a *home* stroke, and Paul was the

enemy most vulnerable, and of the greatest consequence for us to humble.”

In the end Mr. Vansittart was despatched to London with the results of this council, and St. Vincent—now First Lord of the Admiralty—said Nelson was right. “Get through into the Baltic, crush Denmark *en route*, and attack Russia in detail, her fleet being divided, part at Reval and part at Cronstadt.”

Now, here is Lord Nelson’s own letter, written the day after this important council had met and broken up without any decision being arrived at:—

24th March, 1801.

MY DEAR SIR HYDE,—The conversation we had yesterday has naturally, from its importance, been the subject of my thoughts; and the more I have reflected, the more I am confirmed in opinion that not a moment should be lost in attacking the enemy. They will every day and hour be stronger; we shall never be so good a match for them as at this moment. The only consideration in my mind is, how to get at them with the least risk to our ships.

By Mr. Vansittart’s account, the Danes have taken every means in their power to prevent our getting to attack Copenhagen by the passage of the Sound. Cronenburg has been strengthened, the Crown Islands fortified, on the outermost of which are twenty guns, pointing mostly downwards, and only

eight hundred yards from very formidable batteries placed under the citadel, supported by five sail of the line, seven floating batteries of fifty guns each, besides small craft, gunboats, etc., etc.; and that the Reval squadron of twelve or fourteen sail of the line are soon expected, as also five sail of Swedes. It would appear by what you have told me of your instructions, that Government took for granted you would find no difficulty in getting off Copenhagen, and in the event of a failure of negotiations you might instantly attack, and that there would be scarcely a doubt but that the Danish fleet would be destroyed, and the capital made so hot that Denmark would listen to reason and its true interest.

By Mr. Vansittart's account, their state of preparation exceeds what he conceived our Government thought possible, and that the Danish Government is hostile to us in the greatest possible degree. Therefore, here you are, with almost the safety, certainly with the honour of England more entrusted to you than ever fell to any British officer. On your decision depends whether our country shall be degraded in the eyes of Europe, or whether she shall rear her head higher than ever; again, do I repeat, never did our country depend so much on the success of any fleet as on this.

How best to honour our country and abate the pride of her enemies by defeating their schemes must be the subject of your deepest consideration as commander-in-chief, and if what I have to offer can be the least useful in forming your decision you are most heartily welcome.

I will begin with supposing you are determined to enter by the passage of the Sound, as there are those who think, if you leave that passage open, that the Danish fleet may sail from Copenhagen and join the Dutch or French. I own I have no fears on that subject, for it is not likely that while their capital is menaced with an attack, 9000 of her best men should be sent out of the kingdom. I suppose that some damage may arise among the masts and yards, yet perhaps there will not be one of them but could be made serviceable again. You are now about Cronenburg if the wind be fair, and you determine to attack the ships and crown islands, you must expect the natural issue of such a battle—ships crippled, and perhaps one or two lost; for the wind which carries you in will not bring out a crippled ship. This mode I call taking the bull by the horns. It, however, will not prevent the Revel ships or Swedes from joining the Danes; and to prevent this from taking effect is, in my humble opinion, a measure absolutely necessary—and still to attack Copenhagen.

Two modes are in my view: one to pass Cronenburg, taking the risk of damage, and to pass up the deepest and straightest channel above the middle grounds, and coming down the Garbar or King's Channel to attack their floating batteries, etc., etc., as we find it convenient. It must have the effect of preventing a junction between the Russians, Swedes, and Danes, and may give us an opportunity of bombarding Copenhagen. I am also pretty certain that a passsge could be found to the northward of Southolm for all ships; perhaps it might be

necessary to warp a short distance in the very narrow part.

Should this mode of attack be ineligible, the passage of the Belt, I have no doubt, would be accomplished in four or five days, and then the attack by Draco could be carried into effect, and the junction of the Russians prevented, with every probability of success against the Danish floating batteries. What effect a bombardment might have I am not called upon to give an opinion, but think the way would be cleared for the trial.

Supposing us through the Belt, with the wind first westerly, would it not be possible to either go with the fleet or detach ten ships of three and two decks, with one bomb and two fire-ships, to Revel to destroy the Russian squadron at that place? I do not see the great risk of such a detachment, and with the remainder to attempt the business at Copenhagen.

The measure may be thought bold, but I am of opinion that the boldest measures are the safest, and our country demands a most vigorous exertion of her force, directed with judgment.

In supporting you, my dear Sir Hyde, through the arduous and important task you have undertaken, no exertion of head or heart shall be wanting from your most obedient and faithful servant,

NELSON AND BRONTE.

It was decided by Sir Hyde Parker to adopt Nelson's ideas, but Captain Otway, of the *London*, having experienced the navigation

difficulties of the channels, brought them so forcibly before Sir Hyde, that at the last moment he changed his mind and determined to try Elsinore and Cronenburg as the safer way after all. On his sending word to Nelson of his change of plans, that seaman's answer was characteristic.

“I don't care a d——n by which passage we go, so that we fight them.”

On the 26th March the fleet was six miles north of Cronenburg, detained by heavy winds, and here Nelson's general plan of attack was agreed to; for which purpose, as it meant fighting in shallow water, he changed his flag into the *Elephant*, seventy-four, Captain Foley, the same captain as had led the inside line at the battle of the Nile.

On the 30th the wind changed again, and the fleet got under weigh. Deeming that the Swedish side, being less fortified, was the safer one, the vessels kept to that shore, while Elsinore poured a hail of shot at them without touching a boat; by evening anchoring five miles off Copenhagen (north).

Parker and Nelson embarked on board a schooner and proceeded to reconnoitre. “We soon perceived,” says Stewart, “that our delay had been of important advantage to the enemy,

who had lined the northern edge of the shoals near the Crown batteries, and the front of the harbour and arsenal with a formidable flotilla. The Trekroner battery appeared in particular to have been strengthened, and all the buoys of the Northern and of the King's Channel had been removed." He could have added that false buoys had been placed here and there to mislead our vessels, for such was the case.

While Sir Hyde was visibly affected by the apparent difficulties, Nelson made light of them as usual. "It looks formidable to those who are children at war, but to my judgment, with ten sail of the line, I think I can annihilate them."

Nelson asked Sir Hyde to give him ten ships, but he allotted him twelve, as he believed his talented junior under-estimated the tremendous difficulties. These twelve were:—*Elephant*, seventy-four; *Defiance*, seventy-four; *Monarch*, seventy-four; *Bellona*, seventy-four; *Edgar*, seventy-four; *Russell*, seventy-four; *Ganges*, seventy-four; *Glatton*, fifty-four; *Isis*, fifty; *Agamemnon*, sixty-four; *Polyphemus*, sixty-four; *Ardent*, sixty-four. To these were added the frigates *Amazon*, *Désirée*, *Blanche*, and *Alcmène*; the sloops *Dart*, *Arrow*, *Cruizer*, and *Harpy*; fire-ships *Zephyr* and *Otter*; and the

bombs *Discovery*, *Sulphur*, *Hecla*, *Explosion*, *Zebra*, *Terror*, and *Volcano*. The frigates, fire-ships, and sloops Nelson gave in charge to the gallant and ill-fated Captain Riou; the gun brigs, or bombs, to Captain Ross; the rest he took charge of himself from his flagship *Elephant*.

With this fleet Nelson sailed down the outer channel, beyond the Middle Ground to the south of Copenhagen, and at the foot of that dangerous shoal he found an anchorage for his ship and boats, a northerly wind carrying him there very quickly. Sir Hyde remained to the north of the Middle Ground, and his share was to be to advance against the great batteries and silence them, or hold them engaged until Nelson completed his department of the battle by destroying the fleet and floating batteries.

Previous to leaving Sir Hyde, Nelson, under cover of night, buoyed the Northern Channel in case of having to retire northwards, for Nelson never overlooked anything: the smallest detail was to him of the utmost importance. The anchorage was a dangerous one, the vessels being crowded together and within range of the guns on the southern batteries, but Nelson's fortune was proverbial. The Danes fired a few bombs and these fell among the fleet, but, fortunately, the bed of the mortar

gave way and could not be replaced, otherwise terrible damage might have been done.

A northerly wind had brought the ships down, and directly the anchor of the *Elephant* held, Nelson said :

“Here I am, and I will fight them the moment I have a fair wind.”

This was in the evening of the first of April 1801.

That night all the captains gathered as usual with Nelson at dinner, and drank success to the coming fight and for a change of wind. Then when dinner was over he laid the general plan before them, showing each captain what part he had to take in the scheme of action.

The leading ships had to close with the first five batteries, and the next ones, keeping outside, overlap them and continue thus until the whole were covered ; the frigates to keep the Trekroner Fort engaged, and the bombs to get between the ships of the line and add their fire. As the more southern floating batteries or ships were silenced, the ships there engaged to again overlap and take a more northerly position ; and, finally, all concentrate upon the great battery along with Sir Hyde's ships, which would then be in position to help to reduce it.

“From the previous fatigues of this day and of the two preceding ones Lord Nelson was so much exhausted while dictating his instructions, that it was recommended to him by us all, and, indeed, insisted upon by his old servant Allen, who assumed much command on those occasions, that he should go to his cot. It was placed on the floor, but from it he still continued to dictate. Captain Hardy returned about eleven. He had rowed as far as the leading-ship of the enemy, sounding round her, and using a pole when he was apprehensive of being heard. He reported the practicability of the channel and the depth of water up to the ships of the enemy’s line. Had we abided by this report in lieu of confiding in our masters and pilots we should have acted better. The orders were completed about one o’clock, when half-a-dozen clerks in the foremost cabin proceeded to transcribe them. Lord Nelson’s impatience again showed itself, for, instead of sleeping undisturbedly as he might have done, he was every half-hour calling from his cot to those clerks to hasten their work, for that the wind was becoming fair. He was constantly receiving a report of this during the night.”¹

During the night the wind slowly changed, and in the early morning it blew from the south, as though, even, Nature was on Nelson’s side and favouring him in every way possible.

“The Danes meanwhile had not been idle. No sooner did the guns of Cronenburg make it known

¹ Stewart.

to the whole city that all negotiation was at an end, that the British fleet was passing the Sound, and that the dispute between the two crowns must now be decided by arms, than a spirit displayed itself most honourable to the Danish character. All ranks offered themselves to the service of their country. The University furnished a corps of twelve hundred youths, the flower of Denmark. It was one of those emergencies in which little drilling or discipline is necessary to render courage available; they had nothing to learn but how to manage the guns, and were employed day and night in practising them. When the movements of Nelson's squadron were perceived, it was known when and where the attack was to be expected, and the line of defence was manned indiscriminately by soldiers, sailors, and citizens."¹

At six o'clock in the morning the clerks finished their work, but before this hour Nelson had breakfasted and made signal for every captain to come on board the *Elephant*, when each received special orders and instructions. At eight the pilots were summoned and instructed; then the signal for action made, and the fleet prepared to move towards the battle ground.

Nelson now found out how foolish it was to trust the pilots instead of relying upon Hardy's report, for they were—the buoys being

¹ Southey.

removed—in a perfect fog, and untrustworthy. It was a miserable time to Nelson. He says: “I experienced in the Sound the misery of having the honour of our country entrusted to a set of pilots who have no other thought than to keep the ships clear of danger and their own silly heads clear of shot. Everybody knows what I must have suffered, and if any merit attaches itself to me, it was for combating the dangers of the shallows in defiance of them.”

Mr. Brierley, the master of the *Bellona*, came forward and said if Lord Nelson was willing to entrust the fleet to his guidance, he had experienced this navigation, and he would lead. The other captains backed him up, knowing he was a reliable pilot, and Nelson allowed him to take precedence. At half-past nine the signal was made to weigh anchor in succession.

The *Edgar*, appointed to place herself opposite the fire of the enemy's fleet, led; the *Agamemnon* followed. The *Edgar* rounded the tail of the middle bank, but the *Agamemnon* was not so fortunate, as she touched and grounded, to Nelson's great grief, for he wanted the old ship, dear to him in its memories, to distinguish herself once again, and here she was hard and fast aground, the same as the *Culloden*

was at Aboukir! The mishap altered arrangements, and the *Polyphemus* was signalled to take her place; and though this was effected quickly, much time was lost, and the *Edgar* had to open the battle and sustain it for some time without support; and more than that, owing to the difficulties of navigation, the *Polyphemus*, instead of getting towards the head, had to attach herself to the tail of the enemy's line—an efficient position truly, but her power would have been far more use farther up. The *Isis* succeeded in reaching her appointed station safely, but the *Bellona* kept too far to the starboard side, and she, too, grounded like the *Agamemnon*, but fortunately abreast of the rearmost ship of the enemy, and though she was divided by a stretch of water, she was able in her fixed position to keep in action creditably. To add to these mishaps, the next following vessel, the *Russell*, taking the same course, also grounded in company with her, and she, too, had to fight at long range.

Every following vessel would have experienced the like mishap, as the orders were for each captain to pass the preceding vessel on the starboard, which would, in this case, mean the shoal side, but luckily the *Elephant* was next in succession; and Nelson, seeing what had taken

place, *boldly reversed his own orders*, and passed to larboard, between the ships and the enemy, and all behind him followed, thus avoiding, by a miracle, what would have proved a catastrophe. One by one the rest of the ships took up their respective situations; but, as if to add to the troubles of Nelson, the pilots refused to bring the vessels nearer to the enemy than a cable's length, fearing shoal water, whereas Hardy's experiment had proved the reverse, and this incompetency rendered the battle far longer than it should have been.

At five minutes past ten the action began, and within half an hour it was general all along the line, although, owing to contrary winds, only one of the gun brigs managed to weather the shoal, and only two of the bombs reached their stations on the Middle Ground and opened their mortars on the Arsenal, firing over both fleets. Riou took his appointed station over against the Crown Battery with his frigates, attempting to do the work with his small fleet that was intended to be done by three of the best line-of-battle ships.

One can imagine Nelson's anxiety as he saw one-fourth part of his fleet kept out of the action, and the rest below what he, in his most sanguine thoughts, had fixed as the smallest

number competent to perform the work; but once the cry of battle rang out, the volumes of smoke arose from either side, and the crash of iron against wood resounded, he forgot his



troubles, his spirits became buoyant, and his warrior soul rejoiced in the glory of the fighting. Those near him said his conversation was joyous, animated, elevated, and delightful.

But while Nelson had forgotten, as soon as the din of war sounded, his losses in ships beforehand, Sir Hyde did not. Naturally undecided, and timorous of defeat, he saw in the weakening of the attacking line, disaster staring his young colleague in the face, and his anxiety was pitiable to witness. The wind was right for Nelson, but "dead in the teeth" of Sir Hyde's vessels, and he had perforce to await the result, removed from the scene of action.

For three hours the roar of battle rolled along the line, a thousand cannons belched fire and poured their shot within that short stretch of combatants, and as he paced his quarter-deck in a paroxysm of suspense and anxiety, almost terror, for Nelson—for upon the success of Nelson hung the destinies of England—at last he could bear the strain no longer, and despairing of success, said to his captain:

"I will make the signal of recall for Nelson's sake. If he is in a condition to continue the action successfully, he will disregard it. If he is not, it will be an excuse for his retreat, and no blame can be imputed to him."

Captain Domett asked him not to do so until he had communicated with Nelson, and said he would go personally in a small boat, but Sir Hyde replied:



“The fire is too hot for Nelson to oppose: a retreat, in my judgment, must be made. I am aware of the consequences to my own personal reputation, but it would be cowardly of me to leave Nelson to bear the whole shame of the failure, if shame it should be deemed.”

These noble words redound to the credit of Sir Hyde, and stamp him as a brave and honest man, and one worthy to bear the proud name of Englishman.

Determined to ascertain the real state of affairs, Captain Domett put off in his gig for the *Elephant*, but ere he reached her the fateful signal was flying from the admiral's ship.

Nelson was walking the quarter-deck of the *Elephant*, which was fighting the Danish flag-ship *Dannebrog* and the batteries ahead of her, and, says Stewart:—

“Few, if any, of the enemy's heavy ships and praams had ceased to fire. . . . The contest in general, although, from the relaxed state of the enemy's fire, it might not have given much room for apprehension as to the result, had certainly not declared itself in favour of either side. Nelson was at some times much animated, and at others heroically fine in his observations.

“A shot through the mainmast knocked a few splinters about us. He observed to me, with a smile, ‘It is warm work, and this day may be the last to



NELSON AT COPENHAGEN.

any of us at a moment ;' and then, stopping short at the gangway, he used an expression never to be erased from my memory, 'but mark you, I would not be elsewhere for thousands!'

"When the signal, No. 39, was made, the signal-lieutenant reported it to him. He continued his work, and did not appear to take notice of it. The lieutenant, meeting his lordship at the next turn, asked whether he should repeat it. Lord Nelson said:

"'No; acknowledge it.'

"On the officer returning to the poop, his lordship called after him:

"'Is number sixteen [for close action] still hoisted?'

"The lieutenant answering in the affirmative, Lord Nelson said:

"'Mind you keep it so.'

"He now walked the deck considerably agitated, which was always known by his moving the stump of his right arm. After a turn or two, he said to me in a quick manner:

"'Do you know what's shown on board the Commander-in-chief, number thirty-nine?'

"On asking him what he meant, he answered:

"'Why, to leave off action. Leave off action!' he repeated, and then added with a shrug, 'Now damn me if I do.' He also observed, I believe to Captain Foley:

"'You know, Foley, I have only one eye—I have a right to be blind some time;' and then, with an archness peculiar to his character, putting the glass to his blind eye, he exclaimed:

“‘I really do not see the signal.’

“‘Presently he exclaimed:

“‘Damn the signal! Keep mine for closer battle flying! That’s the way I answer such signals! Nail mine to the mast!’

“This remarkable signal was therefore only acknowledged on board the *Elephant*, not repeated.

“Admiral Graves, who was so situated that he could not discern what was done on board the *Elephant*, also disobeyed Sir Hyde’s signal—whether by fortunate mistake, or by a like brave intention, has not been made known—and No. 16 was not displaced. The other ships of the line, looking only to Nelson, continued the action.

“The squadron of frigates obeyed the signal and hauled off. That brave officer, Captain Riou, was killed by a raking shot when the *Amazon* showed her stern to the Tre Kroner Battery. He was sitting on a gun, encouraging his men, and had been wounded in the head by a splinter. He had expressed himself grieved at being thus obliged to retreat, and nobly observed:

“‘What will Nelson think of us?’

“His clerk was killed by his side; and by another shot, several of the marines, while hauling in the mainbrace, shared the same fate.

“Riou then exclaimed, ‘Come then, my boys, let us all die together!’

“The words were scarcely uttered when the fatal shot severed him in two. Thus, and in an instant, was the British service deprived of one of its greatest ornaments, and society of a

character of singular worth, resembling the heroes of romance."

Thus the only effect of the ill-fated signal was to deprive Nelson of the assistance of his frigates, and encourage the Danes in their resistance, as the departure of the frigates—they not understanding the reason for departure—betokened that part at least of the enemy was beaten.

Into the discussion about it, it is as well not to enter, except to say that Nelson was a straightforward, honourable man, and never deserted a friend; so that if it was understood to be a permissible signal, to be disregarded or obeyed as he chose, he did not take it as such, or he would have been the first one to say so, and free his Commander-in-chief from what was, undoubtedly, a stigma and a stain upon his name.

"The action continued along the line with unabated vigour on our side, and with the most determined resolution on the part of the Danes. They fought to great advantage, because most of the vessels in the line of defence were without masts, and the hulls could only be seen at intervals.

"The *Isis* must have been destroyed by the superior weight of her enemy's fire if Captain Norman, in the *Désirée*, had not judiciously taken a

situation which enabled him to rake the *Dane*, and if the *Polyphemus* had not also relieved her. Both in the *Bellona* and the *Isis* many men were lost by the bursting of their guns. The former ship was about forty years old, and these guns were believed to be the same which she had first taken to sea. They were probably originally faulty, for the fragments were full of little air-holes. The *Bellona* lost seventy-five men, the *Isis* one hundred and ten, and the *Monarch* two hundred and ten. She was more than any line-of-battle ship exposed to the great battery, and supporting at the same time the united fire of the *Holstein* and the *Zealous*, her loss this day exceeded that of any single ship during the whole war. Amid the tremendous carnage in this vessel, some of the men displayed a singular instance of coolness: the pork and peas happened to be in the kettle, a shot knocked its contents about, and they picked up the pieces and ate and fought at the same time.

“A youth of seventeen, by name Villemoes, particularly distinguished himself on this memorable day. He had volunteered to take the command of a floating battery, which was a raft consisting merely of a number of beams nailed together, with a flooring to support the guns. It was square, with a breast-work full of portholes, and without mask, carrying twenty-four guns and one hundred and twenty men. With this he got under the stern of the *Elephant*, below the reach of the stern chasers, and under a heavy fire of small arms from the marines, fought his raft till the truce was announced with such skill,

as well as courage, as to excite Nelson's warmest admiration." ¹

Up till two o'clock the battle raged continuously. The noise and din of warfare was tumultuous, as over a thousand cannon hurled forth their deadly missiles. The fire of the Danes slackened as the greater part of their line ceased to reply. The flag-ship *Dannebrog* had been on fire since half-past eleven, although she continued to fight until she drifted out of the line and grounded near the Tre Kroner Battery, where she burned till she blew up with a terrific noise. The next ship to her, the *Sjaeland*, was likewise carried out of the line, her cables being cut. The *Holstein* and *Indosforetten* were almost wrecks. The southernmost ships were in the same plight, and for long had shown no flags, although they continued to fire. In fact, four of the best vessels of the enemy were practically out of action, besides the flag-ship. When Nelson's boats went to claim the ships which had struck, they were fired upon, not only by the ships' crews but also by the forts, until, all the rules of warfare being disregarded, Nelson saw he had to resort to new tactics to bring matters to a crisis. He summoned his clerk, and a letter

¹ Southey.



NELSON'S BLIND EYE (COPENHAGEN).

was drafted out for the Crown Prince. When finished and folded up, only wafers were at hand, and Nelson ordered sealing-wax to be brought from below. A messenger went for it, but was killed. This being reported to Lord Nelson, he replied, "Send another man." At last the wax came, and Nelson sealed it with the impression of his own seal, carefully and methodically, some say on the capstan-head, others declare on the breach of a gun on the off-side of the vessel; however, be that as it may, he would not permit the missive to be despatched until it was properly and orderly sealed.

Asked later as to why he refused the wafer and insisted upon the wax, at such great risk to life and limb, Nelson said, "Had I made use of the wafer, it would still have been wet when presented to the Crown Prince. He would have inferred that the letter was sent off in a hurry, and that we had some very pressing reasons for being in a hurry. The wax told no tales."

Here Nelson's genius in attention to every trivial matter stands out distinctly. Everything had to be done by him calmly and judiciously; no matter what the tumult might be around him, he remained calm and self-controlled.

The letter ran :—

“TO THE BROTHERS OF ENGLISHMEN, THE
DANES.

“Lord Nelson has directions to spare Denmark, when no longer resisting; but if the firing is continued on the part of Denmark, Lord Nelson will be obliged to set on fire all the floating batteries he has taken, without having the power of saving the brave Danes who have defended them.

“NELSON AND BRONTE.”

This letter he despatched under a flag of truce. It was not asking for a cessation of hostilities; it was a warning that if they did not cease firing, now that it was inoperative, he must resort to sterner measures.

The Crown Prince replied verbally, by General Lindholm:—

“His Royal Highness the Prince Royal of Denmark has sent me, General-Adjutant Lindholm, on board to his Britannic Majesty's Vice-Admiral, the Right Honourable Lord Nelson, to ask the particular object of sending the flag of truce.”

To this message, reduced to writing by General Lindholm, Lord Nelson replied in writing:—

“Lord Nelson's object in sending on shore a flag of truce is humanity; he therefore consents that hostilities shall cease till Lord Nelson can take his

prisoners out of the prizes, and he consents to land all the wounded Danes, and to burn or remove his prizes."

The Crown Prince consented, the firing ceased, and the battle of Copenhagen ended, six sail of the line and eleven huge floating batteries having been either taken, sunk, burned, or destroyed by the English fleet.

The loss on the English side was nine hundred and fifty-three. The loss on the Danish side, including prisoners, was above 6000.

Directly the truce was agreed upon, Nelson gave the signal to weigh anchor and join Sir Hyde Parker's squadron, an order most difficult to carry out, for, despite the buoying of the channel a few days previously, the *Monarch* touched bottom in rounding the shoal, and the *Elephant* and *Defiance* grounded about a mile from the batteries and remained fast; but, with these exceptions, the fleet managed to rejoin Sir Hyde in the middle of the Straits.

Apologists for Napoleon's treacherous utilisation of pretended truces have cast this action of Nelson's upon us as an excuse. No one save a blinded bigot but can perceive that Nelson's humanity alone dictated the advisability of a cessation of hostilities. A con-

tinuation meant a useless loss of brave lives to the Danes. His ships, shattered as they were, could still continue the conflict, but it was against beaten foes; yet foes so brave that they could not recognise they were beaten. Napoleon's were but fictions of truces, invented at the moment to secure more advantageous positions to *renew the slaughter*.

When the guns ceased to roar at Copenhagen the scene was heartrending. The sky was overcast, "white flags were flying from the mastheads of the Danes, guns of distress were occasionally discharged from the scene of woe, while the burning vessels, which had floated to a distance, threw an awful and lurid light over the melancholy scene. The English boats, with generous but not undeserved humanity, covered the sea, rendering all the assistance in their power to the Danes who had escaped from the flaming wrecks; and the wounded men, as fast as the ships could be evacuated, were sent ashore; but great numbers perished, for such had been the unprepared ardour of the enemy, that hardly any surgeons were provided to stanch the wounds of the numerous victims to patriotic duty" (Alison, vol. vii. p. 383).

The battle over, Nelson said of it:

"I have been in a hundred engagements, but

that of Copenhagen was the most terrible of them all."

He also said, as he left the *Elephant* to go on board the flagship:

"Well, I have fought contrary to orders, and I shall perhaps be hanged! Never mind, let them!"

Sir Hyde, far from condemning the brave Nelson—who, by one stroke, had shattered the Confederacy and saved the honour of England—met him with free and hearty thanks and congratulations. He ratified all that had been done, and agreed that the truce should be in force for four-and-twenty hours, pending a more lasting agreement; then the night was spent in bringing out the prizes and in getting afloat such vessels as had gone ashore—amongst them the *Elephant*, which, to Nelson's great joy, could still be floated.

The *Zealand*, seventy-four, had been the last ship to strike to Nelson, but, having drifted beneath the guns of the battery, and consequently secure, her captain refused to acknowledge that she had been captured. Nelson ordered a brig and three boats to approach her, while he himself rowed to the commodore to protest against this action of the captain. To his delight he discovered him to be an old

friend, so he climbed on board, and with kind and friendly words he argued his claims to the *Zealand* so well that the commodore could not but admit them.

The day after the battle was Good Friday, but it was a day of woe and desolation for Copenhagen. Scarcely a house but held or mourned its dead. Truly the angel of death had flown over it and cast the shadow of his misery on every one, and as Nelson, with Hardy and Fremantle, landed to have an interview with the Crown Prince, it may well be understood that a strong guard had to be appointed to bring them in safety through the crowds, who felt that he had been the instrument to humble their manhood and debase their pride. Yet, despite some groanings, his reception was not so hostile as was expected.

“The admiral,” wrote a Dane, “was received as one brave enemy ever ought to be received by another: he was received with respect.”

At the interview with the Crown Prince, the preliminaries of the negotiations were arranged, and Nelson congratulated his Highness upon the bravery of his subjects. He told him the French fought bravely, but they could not have stood for one hour what the Danes had stood for four.

He also requested that the young man who had fought his battery so well under the stern of the *Elephant* might be introduced, and on shaking hands with the young hero, Nelson told the prince he ought to make him an admiral, to which the prince replied:

“If, my lord, I am to make all my brave officers admirals, I should have no captains or lieutenants in my service.”

As Nelson said, this was his hardest fight. It was a wonderful fight. Not only were the ships of the enemy dismasted, giving no indication to the English gunners as to their locality by reason of their top-masts towering above the smoke, while in Nelson's line every ship was a fair target—not only so, but when one Danish crew was swept away a fresh one was put on board from the shore, and thus he fought not a few ships but a whole army continuously reinforced. The ships, too, followed no regular course of procedure. One would strike, and as soon as its opponent ceased to fire and the smoke cleared away, it would open fire again with a new crew, new gunners, even a new set of guns. Nelson had only half his gun power available; they had all theirs, for the guns of the inner batteries were placed on board of floating hulks to form a con-

tinuous line of guns from the Trekroner to the shoals in the south. Moreover, Sir Hyde Parker's signal to retire deprived him of his frigates, and their sailing away redoubled the energy of the Danes.

What, then, caused Nelson to be victorious? It was the calm, dogged determination of the admiral, who *would* not be beaten. He held on like grim death, resolved that the death of himself and every man and the sinking of his ship alone would terminate his action. He skilfully laid the plans for this fight weeks beforehand, and had men who could do what he wished. Add to this, the faith his bravery inspired in his captains, the love they bore him, and their determination that where Nelson sank, their ships should also sink; also this potent reason: his guns were manned by the flower of manhood—British seamen, men who knew not what failure was, who fought their guns until they were almost red-hot, and grumblingly withdrew when ordered to allow the guns to rest. Many a starboard gun that day was hauled over to larboard to replace a heated weapon contrary to orders, and amid the blood and splinters, mangled, torn, and moaning humanity, made to speak death with terrible rapidity.

To-day, no one knows the reality of the scenes upon the gun-decks, those fierce fighting times. I, when a little lad, have had my cheeks blanched as I sat among the old sea-dogs and listened to their tales (one of them fought at Trafalgar Bay); and when I learned later on, from books, the reality of the terrible scenes depicted by those men, who laboured almost naked at the guns, I realised that even *their* experiences fell short of the terrible realities.

Thus admiral, captains, and men fought as one man, knowing no dismay or fear, and, like all determined and heroic men, they plucked victory out of defeat and won a triumph at Copenhagen second to none in naval history. There was no manœuvring, no skill of seamanship; it was a terrible stand-up fight against overwhelming odds, and pluck and desperate daring-do won glory to Nelson, his captains, and his crews, and honour to the name of Englishmen.

CHAPTER II.

AFTER THE BATTLE. IN THE BALTIC.

ENGLAND'S honour was entrusted to most incompetent hands when Sir Hyde Parker was placed in chief command of the Baltic fleet. His plans were foredoomed to failure, and Nelson had practically to force his chief to allow him to act on his own initiative. But Nelson's plans were not allowed to be fully carried out. Had they been, the Swedish and Russian fleets would have been destroyed, the whole Confederacy broken up, and England's sea reputation might have been placed so high that no nation would have dared to oppose her. But Nelson was not a favourite. He was too great a man, and his glories so overshadowed the deeds of mediocre admirals that he had to be checked, trammelled, and held back. The statesmen who pretended to be acting for their country's good, let self and self-interest blind them to honour and the right.

For days the wearisome proceedings of the

armistice debate continued. Once they came nearly to an end, for a Dane, speaking in French—a language Nelson did not speak—fearing to say it openly, suggested re-opening hostilities. Nelson, however, knew enough of French to grasp his meaning, and flew at the word.

“Hostilities!” he cried. “Renew hostilities! Tell him that we are ready this moment, ready this very night.”

Paul the Czar was murdered on the night of the 24th of March, and news of this reaching Copenhagen on the 9th of April, a settlement was at once arrived at and a definite armistice arranged.

During its continuance the armed ships and vessels of Denmark were to remain in their actual situation as to armament, equipment, and hostile position; and the treaty of Armed Neutrality, as far as related to the co-operation of Denmark, was suspended. The prisoners were to be sent on shore, an acknowledgment being given for them, and for the wounded also, that they might be carried to Great Britain's credit in the account of war in case hostilities should be renewed. The British fleet was allowed to provide itself with all things requisite for the health and comfort of its men. The

armistice to continue fourteen weeks, and at its termination fourteen days' notice had to be given before the recommencement of hostilities.

Count Waltersdorf, the Danish diplomatist, wrote to Nelson regarding this settlement:—

“Whoever may be the respective Ministers who may sign the peace, I shall always consider your lordship as the pacificator of the North, and I am sure that your heart will be as much flattered by that title as by any other that your grateful country has bestowed upon you.”

Sir Hyde Parker burned and sank all the prizes except the *Holstein*, at which Nelson was excessively displeased, for thus all chance of prize-money was lost to him, his captains, and crews. Sir Hyde did not even remove the brass cannons, let alone the other sort, out of the vessels, but sank them in such shoal water that, later on, the Danes fished them up again.

The armistice concluded, the fleet entered the Baltic on the 12th April. Nelson had to remain behind in the *St. George*, which was not ready for sailing, and while thus separated from the main fleet by some twenty-four miles, a report reached him that the Swedes had sailed out of Carlsrona. The instant he heard it he sprang into a boat lying alongside his vessel,

and gave orders to have her rowed against wind and current to the fleet, not taking so much as even a boat cloak with him.

“His anxiety,” records the officer who was with him upon this extraordinary adventure, “lest the fleet should have sailed before he got on board one of them is beyond all conception. I will quote some expressions in his own words. It was extremely cold, and I wished him to put on a great-coat of mine which was in the boat.

“‘No, I am not cold; my anxiety for my country will keep me warm. Do you not think the fleet has sailed?’

“‘I should suppose not, my lord.’

“‘If they are, we shall follow them to Carlsrona in the boat, by God!’

“I merely state this to show how his thoughts must have been employed. The idea of going in a small boat, rowing six oars, without a single morsel to eat or drink, the distance of about fifty leagues, must convince the world that every other earthly consideration than that of serving his country was totally banished from his thoughts.”

Fortunately they had not to row to Carlsrona, for, by midnight, they reached the fleet, which had not yet sailed, and there he boarded the *Elephant* and hoisted his flag. For five hours, in a bitterly cold night, they had rowed from the *St. George* to the *Elephant*, an ex-

posure that might have killed him—in fact, he suffered for it badly afterwards; but he got there! Nelson over again. *He got THERE!*

Leisurely the fleet crawled towards Carlscrona, Nelson chafing, not so much under the illness caused by his long exposure, as at the dilatory tactics of his superior, and his refusal to let him go to Revel and there crush the Russian power, while Parker waged battle with the Swedes.

On the 20th April the fleet reached within sight of Carlscrona, and when the admiral (Sir Hyde) two days later received a communication from the Russian Minister at Copenhagen, to say that his royal master had ordered his fleet to abstain from hostilities, he actually—although it is most difficult to believe it—sailed away to Kiøge Bay, near Copenhagen, where he anchored his fleet. It is hard to find a parallel in English history for such—from a naval point—imbecility; yet the fact remains. Sailed away without even extracting guarantees, or even making a demonstration! leaving the enemy free to come out of harbour—which it did in a fortnight—and join the Russian squadron at Cronstadt.

We can imagine the terrible rage of our hero at such conduct; how he would pace his cabin

and swear in desperation! We can equally imagine how, during all that time, he was unapproachable by any one; in fact, his reply to Commodore Fisher, who had slighted the action at Copenhagen and attempted to discredit Nelson, in its tenor speaks the wild excitement under which he laboured.

From the 25th April to 5th May the fleet remained at anchor, and on the morning of the latter day despatches were received displacing Sir Hyde and appointing Lord Nelson to be supreme commander. The order came too late. Had the change been effected before, the history of Europe might have been very different to what it was, and England would not have had the huge National Debt it has to-day; but as Nelson said, "The wise heads at home know everything!" It was nothing short of insult to Nelson to appoint him at this time. All that could have been gained had been lost by Sir Hyde's mismanagement. Nothing but trouble, misfortune, ill-luck was in front, and Nelson begged to be allowed to come home. "He did not want to die a natural death in the cold Baltic."

Nevertheless the sailor rose superior to the man, and once free from the incubus which had "*cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd,*" and coffined him,

he set sail for the Baltic. His original plan had been to snatch at the chance of seizing upon the Russian ships at Revel, and destroy the whole twelve of them if he could not capture them; but now he had to go on a more friendly footing, and his plan was to prevent a junction of the two fleets.

On the 12th May the fleet, consisting of twelve sail of the line, appeared off Revel; but he found the Russian ships had escaped to Cronstadt, to which place he immediately followed; and on his arrival, intimated his presence in a polite note to the governor, after which he himself landed.

“Except to you, my own friend,” he wrote Lady Hamilton, “I should not mention it, ’tis so much like vanity: but hundreds come to look at Nelson. *‘That is him! that is him!’* in short, ’tis the same as in Italy and Germany, and I now feel that a good name is better than riches. Not amongst our great folks in England! but it has its fine feelings to an honest heart. All the Russians have taken it into their heads that I am like Suwaroff—*Le jeune Suwaroff.*”

The Russian Government, however, took it ill that Nelson should be in the Baltic while diplomatic action was proceeding between the two Governments at St. Petersburg and

London, and intimated to Nelson that "the only guarantee of the loyalty of his Britannic Majesty's intentions that his Majesty can accept is the prompt withdrawal of the fleet under your control, and no negotiations can take place so long as a naval force is in sight of his ports."

Nelson saw that his position was untenable, and that he must retire southward; the more so, as the new Czar Alexander intimated he had liberated the captains and crews of the arrested ships, and restored them and their commands to liberty, thus accomplishing the great object of the expedition. So he weighed anchor and stood for Rostock Bay, in German territory, where he anchored on the 24th May, until the 19th June, when Vice-Admiral Pole relieved him, to his great delight.

"I was so overcome yesterday with the good and happy news that came about my going home, that I believe I was in truth scarce myself.

"The thoughts of going did me good, yet all night I was so restless that I could not sleep. It is nearly calm, therefore Admiral Pole cannot get on. If he was not to come I believe it would kill me. I am ready to start the moment I have talked with him one hour."

Admiral Pole arrived on the 19th, and the same day our hero left in the brig *Kite*, reaching Yarmouth on the 1st July.

Before concluding this chapter, let us quote Colonel Stewart again, as his account throws a light upon the daily life of Nelson when on board the *St. George*:—

“His hour of rising was four or five o'clock, and of going to bed about ten: breakfast was never later than six, generally nearer to five o'clock. A midshipman or two were always of the party, and I have known him send during the middle watch [midnight to four A.M.] to invite the little fellows to breakfast with him when relieved. At table with them he would enter into their boyish jokes, and be the most youthful of the party. At dinner he invariably had every officer of the ship in their turn, and was both a polite and hospitable host.

“The whole ordinary business of the fleet was invariably despatched, as it had been by Earl St. Vincent, before eight o'clock. The great command of time which Lord Nelson thus gave himself, and the alertness which this example imparted throughout the fleet, can only be understood by those who witnessed it, or who know the value of early hours.”

CHAPTER III.

AFTER THE BATTLE. AT HOME.

ALTHOUGH this great victory of Lord Nelson's broke up the Northern Confederacy and resulted in one of the most triumphant diplomatic victories for England; although it advanced England's name and fame in no measured degree, the words "Lord Nelson received the title Viscount," represent all the notice the Government took of it.

Not even a medal was struck. It was as though there had been a great defeat and disaster instead of triumph.

Every one knew Sir Hyde Parker had acted with hesitation unbecoming an English admiral, and that but for Nelson the expedition sent at such cost to the Baltic would have been futile; but Sir Hyde Parker was a wealthy man—one with high connections—and England was governed then by "connections" and "influence," in conjunction with what was styled "petticoats," for the ladies ruled the

men, the men ruled the State, the State ruled the Commons, and the Commons ruled the people. "Connections," "influences," and the "ladies' opinions" must be considered, and Lord Nelson was not a favourite with "ladies." His connection with Lady Hamilton made him anything but that. He must not be rewarded and praised at the cost of the Hyde Parker faction.

So Copenhagen was discreetly put on one side, and the noble men who fought and bled were never considered by the powers that were.

It will be remembered that the whole source of the trouble was the "power of search," and it was to vindicate this that Parker took the fleet to Copenhagen. The result of the battle at Copenhagen was to vindicate and legalise this right of search; and Napoleon, when he learned this collapse of all his plans, said :

"Europe beheld with astonishment this ignominious treaty signed by Russia, and which, by consequence, Denmark and Sweden were compelled to adopt. It was equivalent to the admission of the sovereignty of the seas in the British Parliament, and the slavery of all other states. This treaty was such that

England could have desired nothing more, and a power of the third order would have been ashamed to have signed it."

There is no *Times* leader on 15th April 1801 upon the subject; merely reference to the despatches, and the intimation that "the Park and Tower guns were fired."

It had always been customary for the City of London to take notice of great victories by sea or land, but on this occasion there was no sign made; and this galled Nelson, on behalf of his brave captains and gallant crews, more than anything else. He felt it an unmerited slight, and on a par with the treatment he had hitherto had meted out to him by the authorities. So much was he displeased with it, that when, on the Lord Mayor's day, he was invited to the feast, he refused to attend, alleging that unless those valiant men who won the great victory were present, his own presence there would be a slight upon them. It was not for himself, it was always for those deserving men below him that he cared. That they were looked over, while smaller actions were commended and rewarded was as gall to his generous soul.

Malta had fallen to England; the French army in Egypt been routed, and the troubles

there removed, by Abercrombie; the Treaty of Luneville had restored a temporary peace to Europe, and Napoleon had time once again to meditate how to conquer and subdue England.

Rumours reached London of his gigantic preparations for invasion by a flotilla, and anxiety was displayed on every side. The fear did not rise to panic height, but it was quite great enough to alarm even the Government. The whole of the northern coast of France was provided with powerful coast defences, batteries were located in every available place, and from point to point crowds of boats were known to be slipping along in the direction of Boulogne. The armies, too, were concentrating, and one day, when some tents were descried on the hills behind Boulogne, it was definitely stated that before many days were past there would be an invasion in force.

Something had to be done to allay these apprehensions, and Earl St. Vincent, then First Lord of the Admiralty, being approached on the matter, proposed that "a particular service" should be originated and entrusted to the hands of Nelson, who alone was capable of carrying it out successfully.

This commission consigned to Nelson the

defence of the south coast of England, from Oxfordness to Beachy Head; and on the French coast his range was from Dieppe to Ostend, including the mouth of the Scheldt.

Incidentally there occurs in the correspondence between Lord St. Vincent and Nelson on this occasion a passage which speaks of the great faith the First Lord had in the vice-admiral, for he says :

“Happy should I be to place the whole of an offensive and defensive war under your auspices, but you are well aware of the difficulties on that head.”

And that this feeling was reciprocal, the following passage in one of Nelson’s letters to Lord St. Vincent amply demonstrates :

“If I succeeded and burnt the Dutch fleet—probably medals and an earldom. I must have had every desire to try the matter, regardless of the feelings of others; but I should not have been *your* Nelson, that wants not to take honours or rewards from any man; and if ever I feel great, it is, my dear lord, in never having, in thought, word, or deed, robbed any man of his fair fame.”

A powerful fleet, well supplied with bomb vessels, was placed at Nelson’s command, and he hoisted his flag on the *Medusa* frigate.

His first move was to set sail for Boulogne. He found it strongly fortified, and, inside the harbour, a great many flats, boats, and small craft. He sailed back to the English harbour, after a slight bombardment, and concerted plans with his officers for a combined attack by means of boats.

On the evening of the 15th August, all the boats were assembled around the *Medusa*; there were fifty-seven in all, and these Nelson arranged into four divisions, each division having its boats coupled together and connected by ropes, so as not to become separated. This was one of the few attacks in his lifetime that Nelson did not personally participate in; but the attacking force was so strong, the bomb-boat fleet so well placed, and the general arrangements for withdrawing prizes so excellently provided for, he felt success was assured. When it was quite dark, the boats pulled steadily and silently for Boulogne Harbour. As at Santa Cruz, cross-currents marred the expedition. The French flotilla was moored stem to stern across the entrance, and crammed with men, every one provided with three muskets to keep up a continuous fire (assistants being provided to supply ready-loaded guns as rapidly as required). In addition, strong net-

work was slung out on poles bearing iron spikes, and with spikes in their sides, to tear the woodwork of an attacking boat, and boarding nettings were stretched from their masts and lower yards, so as to afford protection to the craft.

At midnight one detachment of boats arrived at the entrance. This was commanded by Captain Parker, a captain whom Nelson had only got to know during the Baltic expedition, whom he held in great honour, and for whom he had a very great affection. The other detachments were far behind, or had been drifted away; but notwithstanding this, Parker boldly attacked. Nettings had been expected, and the assailants were provided with sharp cutlasses to sever them, and with the utmost determination and dash the boats rushed to the encounter. A terrible hail of missiles saluted them, killing and injuring many, including poor Captain Parker, who fell desperately wounded as he was cheering on his men. Slashing and hacking at the network, the crews made way, and were soon in possession of part of the craft, when another division came up to assist them. The French then opened the fire of their batteries on their own boats wherever the English had obtained a footing, slaughtering alike their own countrymen and their adversaries.

In opposition to this unlawful and unjustifiable conduct must be set down the humane act of a French captain. He hailed the third incoming division in English :

“Let me advise you brave Englishmen to keep off. You can do nothing here; it is only the shedding of the blood of gallant men to attempt it.”

Let the words be recorded to the credit of a brave foe, and ever remembered.

Till after four o'clock that dark night the struggle continued against dreadful, almost insurmountable, odds, and then the boats sullenly drew back with the loss of one hundred and seventy-two brave men in killed and wounded, while the loss to the enemy was as much again, mainly caused by the playing of their own grape and canister-shotted guns from the rear. Had every boat been able to arrive at the proper moment, the attack would have proved successful. But though it was a failure, it was, yet, a victory in reality, for it taught the French that even under their own guns, and in their own harbours, they had no security. This, in great measure, convinced Napoleon that for success he must look to other plans, and for a few years he abandoned any prospect of landing troops on the English shores.

While narrating this futile attempt of the French to invade England, it may be recorded—for the record is important—that Fulton, the inventor of the steamboat, at that very time, had consulted with Napoleon, and laid before him his invention of the steam-driven boat, which could then have successfully avoided all the English defences and rendered the invasion possible; but not being foreseeing enough to judge the importance of the matter, Napoleon put the invention aside, and lost for ever the one great chance he had of putting into successful operation the grand dreams of his lifetime—the subjugation of his foe, Britain.

Nothing further of importance transpired during the command. Nelson, worn out and desirous of rest, pleaded for release, but in vain, and not until the 22nd March 1802, after the peace of Amiens had been signed, was he permitted to haul down his flag and go ashore. During the weary waiting, Nelson nursed the wounded Parker until his death; and, longing for a home of his own, arranged (through Lady Hamilton) to purchase the lease of a house at Merton, in Surrey. To enable him to pay the purchase-money, he had to sell the diamonds out of his presentation boxes, so exhausted were his funds.

CHAPTER IV.

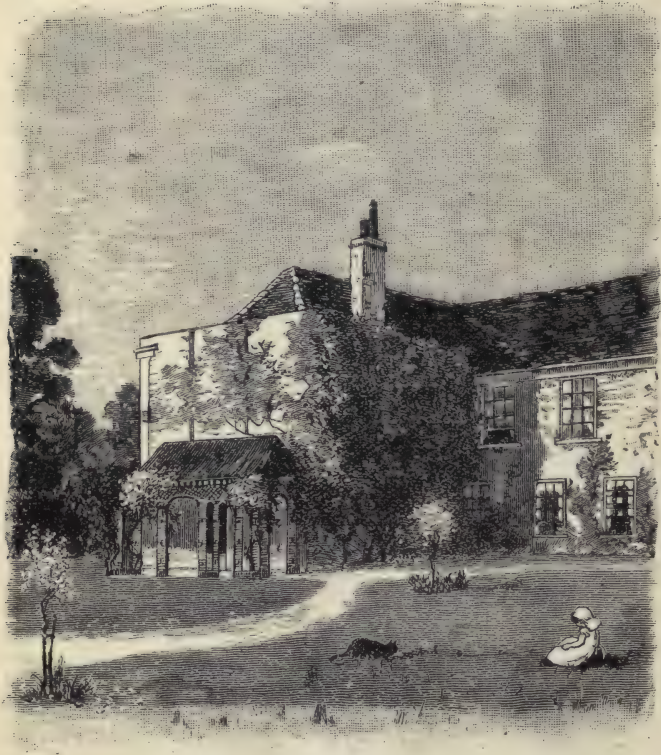
MERTON.

NELSON, though Viscount, was a poor man. His pensions, including those for the loss of his eye and arm, and half-pay, totalled up £3,400 per annum. Of this income, he paid £1,800 per annum to Lady Nelson, £200 to a brother's widow, £150 for the education of her children, £500 interest for borrowed money. Of his income as "Bronte," £500 was settled upon his father, and the great bulk, practically, remitted to his tenants and dependents.

The Baltic expedition had cost him over £2000; £1000 had gone in six weeks during the time he had commanded the "Particular Service"; the costs of Captain Parker's illness had been borne by him; he had also taken over and paid his debts for him, and, to use his own words, "Ruin to my finances must be the consequences."

Bitter must it have been to his generous soul to note how estates and huge pensions had

been lavishly bestowed upon victorious commanders, and, yet, not even a cottage he could



NELSON'S HOUSE AT MERTON.

call his own, been given to him by a Government he had saved times out of number.

There was no hope of a reconciliation with Lady Nelson. What incompatibility caused the final parting he never recorded; only a word or two leads us to understand that she made his life miserable. The truth is, their natures were antagonistic, and, while loving him, as her letters and memoirs testify, Lady Nelson never understood him; nor did he understand her goodness. His enthusiastic soul yearned for appreciation, and she could not give it. At this period of his life he seemed to have a prophetic instinct that his death would not long be delayed; yet, if a longer life was granted to him, it would be one of darkness, for slowly but steadily the sight of his left eye was fading in sympathy with the right. His bodily health, too, was breaking up. Spasms, unbearable in their intensity, seized him every now and then, and, altogether, he appeared to have the firm conviction that he was approaching the end of his life.

“You and I,” he wrote to Vincent, “have not long to live.” That his home might be a rest, he determined it should shelter Sir William Hamilton and his wife, who should live with him in peace and comfort, while his many sailor friends might find friendly anchorage as well.

He had written to Lady Hamilton to furnish the house at Merton in her own way, and look

upon herself as the " Lady Paramount " and act as hostess, while he would be but a guest. Her enthusiastic admiration for the hero found vent in cramming it with every article of decoration which recalled his glories. Pictures of his battles, coats-of-arms, pieces of plate, multitudes of portraits of him and also of herself, covered the walls of the rooms and even the passages, and it was to this house, and to Sir William and Lady Hamilton, that Nelson repaired directly he was free from service and permitted to enjoy his rest.

CHAPTER V.

GLIMPSSES OF HIS HOME LIFE AT MERTON.

MR. MARCHAM, his nephew, writing in the *Times* of November 6th, 1861, in reply to some remarks derogatory to his uncle, which appeared in the *Remains of Mrs. French*, says:—

“I, too, sir, as well as ‘the lady,’ had some knowledge of that person, so much honoured and so much maligned.

“I visited my uncle at his house at Merton, in 1805, for three weeks preceding the 15th of September, when he left to embark at Portsmouth to return no more, and I can assert with truth that a more complete contrast between this lady’s portrait and my thorough recollection of him could not be forced on my mind.

“Lord Nelson in private life was remarkable for a demeanour quiet, sedate, and unobtrusive, anxious to give pleasure to every one about him, distinguishing each in turn by some act of kindness, and chiefly those who seemed to require it most.

“During his few intervals of leisure, in a little knot of relations and friends, he delighted in quiet conversation, through which occasionally ran an under-

current of pleasantry, not unmixed with caustic wit. At his table he was the least heard among the company; and, so far from being the hero of his own tale, I never heard him voluntarily refer to any of the great actions of his life.

“I have known him lauded by the great and wise, but he seemed to me to waive the homage with as little attention as was consistent with civility. Nevertheless, a mind like his was necessarily won by attention from those who could best estimate his value.

“It would have formed an amusement to the circle at Merton if intemperance were set down to the master of the house, who always so prematurely cut short the *sederunt* of the gentlemen after dinner.

“A man of more temperate habits could not, I am persuaded, have been found. In his plain suit of black, in which he alone recurs to my memory, he always looked what he was—a gentleman. Whatever expletives of an objectionable kind may be ascribed to him, I feel persuaded that such rarely entered into his conversation. He was, it is true, a sailor, and one of a warm and generous disposition; yet I can safely affirm that I never heard a coarse expression issue from his lips, nor do I recollect one word or action of his to which even a disciple of Chesterfield could reasonably object. If such did arise, it would be drawn forth when a friend was attacked, or even an enemy unjustly accused; for his disposition was so truly noble that it revolted against all wrong and oppression. His heart, indeed, was as tender as it was courageous. Nor do I think, sir,

that it is a necessary concession to truth that you or others should lower your conception of this popular personage on account of the exaggerated colours in which he is here drawn.

“Those who best knew the man the most estimated his value, and many who like myself could not appreciate his professional superiority, would yet bear witness to his gentleness, kindness, good breeding, and courtesy.

“He was not ‘a rude and boisterous captain of the sea.’ From his early years, by the introduction of his uncle, the Comptroller of the Navy, he was associated with the *élite* of his own profession; and the influences of his own paternal home, and his acquaintance with the first families of his native country, to many of whom he was related, would not allow a man of his intelligence and proper pride to foster coarseness beyond the habits of his age.”

The following gives another glimpse of life at Merton :—

“During the temporary peace Mr. Layman spent some days at Merton with Sir Alexander Ball [Sir Alexander Ball was with Nelson at the battle of the Nile] and Sir Samuel Hood [also with him in the same great battle].

“One day after tea, in the drawing-room, Lord Nelson was earnestly engaged in conversation with Sir Samuel. Mr. Layman observed to Sir Alexander that Lord Nelson was at work, by his countenance and mouth; that he was a most extraordinary man, possessing opposite points of character: little in little

things, but by far the greatest man in great things he ever saw. That he had seen him petulant in trifles, and as cool and collected as a philosopher when surrounded by dangers, in which men of common minds, with clouded countenance, would say, 'Ah! what is to be done?' It was a treat to see his animated and collected countenance in the heat of action.

"Sir Alexander remarked this seeming inconsistency, and mentioned that, after the battle of the Nile, the captains of the squadron were desirous to have a good likeness of their heroic chief taken, and for that purpose employed one of the most eminent painters in Italy. The plan was to ask the painter to breakfast and get him to begin immediately after. Breakfast being over, and no preparation being made by the painter, Sir Alexander was selected by the other captains to ask him when he intended to begin, to which the answer was 'Never.' Sir Alexander said he stared, and they all stared, but the artist continued, 'There is such a mixture of humility with ambition in Lord Nelson's countenance that I dare not risk the attempt.'"

The daughter of the vicar of the parish wrote:—

"In reverend affection for the memory of that dear man, I cannot refrain from informing you of his unlimited charity and goodness during his residence at Merton. His frequently expressed desire was that none in that place should want or suffer affliction that he could alleviate; and this I know he did with a most liberal hand, always desiring that it should not

be known from whence it came. His residence at Merton was a continued course of charity and goodness, setting such an example of propriety and regularity, that there are few who would not be benefited by following it.

“Whatever of censure or of allowance may be pronounced upon the life he was living, there was no effort to conciliate the opinion of society, which he was resolute in braving, nor was it inconsistent with the general tenor of his thoughts. In the sense of profound recognition of the dependence of events upon God, and of the obligation to manifest gratitude in outward act, Nelson was from first to last a strongly religious man.”

Captain Mahan, in his *Life of Nelson*, says :

“During the last two years and a half of Nelson’s life, the chaplain of the *Victory* was associated with him in close intimacy as confidential secretary, with whom he talked freely on many matters. ‘He was,’ said that gentleman, ‘a thorough clergyman’s son. I should think he never went to bed or got up without kneeling down to say his prayers.’

“He always had divine service on board the *Victory* whenever the weather permitted.”

While at Merton, the City and Corporation of London proposed to give him public thanks for his guardianship of the south coast in the “Particular Service,” and he wrote that such should on no account take place :—“Never till the City of London thinks justly of the merits

of my brave companions of the 2nd April, can I, their commander, receive any attention from the City of London." Brave words, and worthy of the noble spirit of brave Nelson, ever foremost to guard the honour of those who so heroically fought and bled under his command. Did all who command, remember their subordinates so faithfully and honourably as Nelson did, there would never be heard the cry of short-handedness in our navy. And when, in our need, a second Nelson shall arise—as assuredly he will—may he be as tender-hearted for those who fight under him as the first Nelson was, and then,—woe betide the foe who meets his fleet!

PART V.

TRAFALGAR.

CHAPTER I.

LED INTO WAR AGAIN.

THE Treaty of Amiens provided, among other things, that England should surrender all her captured possessions to their original owners. The Cape to the Dutch, Malta to the Knights of St. John and Jerusalem; a third Power being mentioned in a subsidiary and secret treaty to be the guarantor of that island.

The English people were enthusiastic over the "Peace"; thoughtful men knew it was but an armistice. Nelson was of these, and loud he cursed the pusillanimity of his countrymen who cheered the Frenchmen in the streets of London, and greeted them as friends.

Yet the respite benefited England, gave her breathing space for recuperation, enabled her

to recover part of her vast expenditure, and prepared her for the still more terrible outpouring of money which was before her.

Napoleon, astutist of diplomatists, yielded not one jot he had conquered. He claimed the uttermost border, and compelled the Signatories to agree to his previous conquests. He utilised the peace to plant his armies here and there in the most favourable stations, ready to pounce upon the nation he desired to devour. The axe and mallet rang in every seaport, men were drafted from all quarters into the great ship-building centres. Toulon, Brest, Havre—wherever ships could be constructed, were busy hives of human bees, building a new and formidable armada to wreak the vengeance of the Dictator upon the premier maritime nation.

A dispute in Switzerland gave Napoleon the chance to break the peace, and his guns thundered and his bayonets glanced and pierced the ranks of the mountaineers until they were again brought under his sway.

England appealed. Napoleon laughed, for was he not preparing what would humble her to the dust? Armies were marched towards Italy to run riot on that peninsula. Spain, subservient to France, was quite as active in preparation of ships of war as was her ally.

This news of unrest, of ceaseless activity in shipbuilding, of movements of troops, of sinister rumours that all these operations had but one end in view—the crushing of England—made the Government anxious, and pressure was brought to bear upon St. Vincent to have ships prepared, fitted-out, and made ready for the conflict imminent. St. Vincent, false to his own traditions, was saving at the cost of the fleet; not repairing what should be repaired, not building new vessels that should be built, and England was, as usual, unprepared, and, for a fleet, had one almost unseaworthy, half-stocked, half-manned, half-armed.

Orders were given to stop the disembarkation of troops from Malta and the Cape, and vessels hastily despatched to reinforce the fleets there. Napoleon was furious; he swore and fumed; he almost assaulted the British ambassador, Lord Whitworth. In his wrath he gave vent to words which told the truth—England, England alone, was his foe, and England he would conquer!

Can it be wondered at, that in this period of unrest, this restless throbbing before the outburst, our hero, longing for the rest he craved, yearning for repose, felt his great patriotic heart pulsating, and sat and indited to the First Lord

these words:—"Whenever it is necessary I am *your* admiral."

Short had been his rest after his herculean labours, but rest must give place to activity; repose to strenuous exertion; the luxury of home—and oh, how Nelson loved his home!—must be exchanged for the inconveniences of the cabin and the din of war.

"War or peace?" he writes to Berry, his old flag-captain. "Every person has a different opinion. I fear perhaps the former as I hope *so much* the latter."

Home pulled hard at his heart-strings, yet the love of country, his magnificent patriotism, was triumphant.

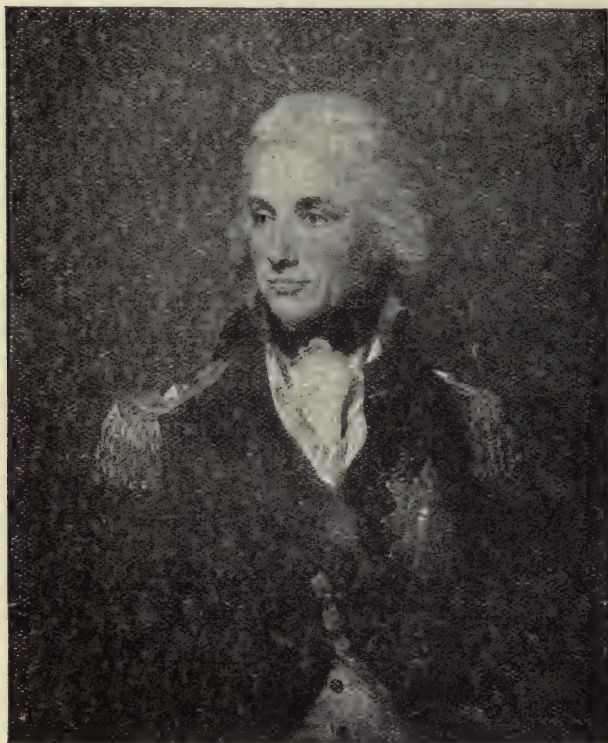
"Government cannot be more anxious for my departure than I am, if a war, to go."

If England was peopled by Nelsons to-day, the world would all be England, and all happy as England, and as free!

Quickly and secretly the *Victory* was made ready for the hero; she had a hundred guns, but long before she was ready a thousand hearts of oak were offering to work those guns.

On the 6th May 1803, St. Vincent sent Nelson orders to prepare for sailing, and on the 12th came the news that Napoleon had broken truce, and our ambassador had called for pass-

ports and forsaken Paris. On the 16th the Government of England declared war against



LORD NELSON.

From a Painting by Lemuel F. Abbott.

France; the same day Nelson received his commission as commander-in-chief of the

Mediterranean, and within eight-and-forty hours he was on board the *Victory*, ready for sailing, which he effected on the 20th.

A month before brave Nelson set forth upon what was almost his last voyage, Sir William Hamilton died in his arms "without a sigh or a struggle," and in his will he testified to the unbounded faith he had in his "dearest friend," saying:

"The copy of Madame le Brunn's picture of Emma in enamel, by Bone, I give to my dearest friend Lord Nelson, Duke of Bronté, a very small token of the great regard I have for his lordship, the most virtuous, loyal, and truly brave character I have ever met with. God bless him, and shame fall upon those who do not say, 'Amen!'"

And so say all loyal and true-hearted men to-day.

CHAPTER II.

LONG, WEARY WATCH.

NAPOLEON'S aim was to crush England. Other countries could be bribed; England must be destroyed. Hence the conception of the Northern Confederacy. Nelson crumbled up this confederacy in four hours at Copenhagen, and Napoleon knew invasion alone could subjugate "perfidious Albion."

For this purpose peace was necessary, and to peace he agreed, without giving any advantages to Europe, desiring seven or eight years wherein to mature his plans.

"I was resolved," said he, "to renew at Cherbourg the wonders of Egypt. I had already raised *in the sea* my pyramid. I would also have had my Lake Mareotis [meaning absolute possession of the Channel]. My great object was to centre at Cherbourg all our maritime forces, in order to deal out a grand stroke at *the* enemy. The ultimate issue could not be doubtful, for we had forty millions of French

against fifteen millions of English. I would have terminated by a *Battle of Actium*."

Las Casas (vol. v., 8 to 15) extends and explains this. He says:—

"The Emperor had resolved on a strictly defensive plan till the affairs of the Continent were finally settled, and his naval resources had accumulated to such a degree as to enable him to strike a decisive stroke. He ordered canals in Brittany, by the aid of which, in spite of the enemy, he could maintain an internal communication between Bordeaux, Rochefort, Nantes, Holland, Antwerp, Cherbourg, and Brest.

"He proposed to have at Flushing, or its neighbourhood, docks which were to be capable of receiving the whole fleet of Antwerp, fully armed, from whence it could put to sea in twenty-four hours. He projected near Boulogne a dyke similar to that at Cherbourg, and between Cherbourg and Brest a roadstead like that of l'Isle de Bois.

"Sailors were to be formed by exercising young conscripts in the roads, and performing gun practice and other operations in the harbours. He intended to construct twenty or twenty-five ships of the line every year. At the end of six years he would have had two hundred ships of the line, at the end of ten as many as three hundred.

"The affairs of the Continent being finished, he would have entered heart and soul into that project; he would have assembled the greater part of his forces on the coast, from Corunna to the mouth of

the Elbe, having the bulk on the shores of the Channel. All the resources of the two nations would thus have been called forth, and then he would either, he conceived, have subjected England by his moral ascendancy, or crushed it by his physical force.

“The English, alarmed, would have assembled for the defence of Plymouth, Portsmouth, and the Thames. Our three corps off Brest, Cherbourg, and Antwerp would have fallen on their central masses, while our wings turned them in Scotland and Ireland. Everything then would have depended upon a central affair, and this was what Napoleon called his Battle of Actium.”

This magnificent conception of Napoleon fell to the ground when he lost his temper at the English counter-preparations, for his continued activity in shipbuilding could not be kept secret, and had alarmed the British Cabinet.

Foiled in both his plans, he decided upon a third, though Nelson knew nothing about it. He determined to construct and collect an immense flotilla of boats, capable of conveying 150,000 troops across the Channel, and land them on the shores of Kent. The bulk of these boats were practically floating batteries, being heavily armed, and the flotilla as a whole, divided into as many portions as corresponded

with the ordinary division of an army. All stores, baggage, and artillery were already on board, so that nothing would be required at the right moment but the assembly of the men forming the army of attack. These were drilled to embark and disembark at word of command, and so skilful did they become, that twenty-five thousand men were known to have embarked in the short space of ten minutes, every man, down to the smallest drummer-boy, being accurately instructed as to where his position was.

Eye-witnesses have left us marvellous accounts of the celerity and mathematical precision of these embarkations and disembarkations, and they were as convinced as was the English Government, that this flotilla was constructed for the invasion of England. Yet such was not the complete plan of Napoleon.

“What was my design in the flotilla at Boulogne?

“I wished to assemble forty or fifty ships of the line at Martinique, by operations combined in the harbours of Toulon, Cadiz, Ferrol, and Brest, to bring them suddenly back to Boulogne, to find myself in this way, during fifteen days, the master of the sea; to have one hundred and fifty thousand men encamped on the coast, three or four thousand vessels in the flotilla, and to set sail the

moment that the signal was given of the arrival of the combined fleet. That project failed! If Admiral Villeneuve, instead of entering into the harbour of Ferrol, had contented himself with joining the Spanish squadron, and instantly made sail for Brest and joined Admiral Gantheaume, my army would have embarked and it was all over with England.

“To succeed in this object it was necessary to assemble one hundred and fifty thousand men at Boulogne, to have there four thousand transports and immense *material*, to embark all that and nevertheless to prevent the enemy from divining my object. It appeared scarcely practical to do so. If I had succeeded it would have been by doing the converse of what might have been expected.

“If fifty ships of the line were to assemble to cover the descent upon England, nothing but transport vessels were required in the harbours of the Channel, and all that assemblage of gunboats, floating batteries, and armed vessels was totally useless!

“Had I assembled together three or four thousand unarmed transports, no doubt the enemy would have perceived that I awaited the arrival of my fleets to attempt the passage; but by constructing praams and gunboats, I appeared to be opposing cannon to cannon, and the enemy was in this manner deceived. They conceived that I intended to attempt the passage by main force, by means of my flotilla. They *never penetrated my real design*, and when, from the failure of the movements of my

squadrons, my project was revealed, the utmost consternation pervaded the councils of London, and all men of sense in England confessed that England had never been so near its ruin.”¹

He says: “They never penetrated my real design,” and there he was wrong. One man did—Collingwood. His views were:

“I have always had an idea that Ireland alone was the object they had in view, and still believe that to be their ultimate destination; that they will now liberate the Ferrol squadron from Calder, make the round of the Bay, and taking the Rochefort people with them, appear off Ushant—perhaps with thirty-four sail, there to be joined by twenty more.”

It is a pity these speculations of Collingwood were not communicated earlier to Nelson; they would have saved him many an anxious hour. As it was, when he set sail on the 20th May 1803, neither he nor the Government had any clear notion as to Napoleon’s plans. Nelson’s idea was that a second descent upon Egypt was meditated, or an attack upon Naples or the Morea, and the work he had to perform was to watch the French fleet in Toulon as a cat watches a mouse, and pounce upon it directly it got to sea, destroying it before it did any harm.

¹ Dumas.

When Nelson left England he had orders to call at Brest, where Lord Cornwallis was blockading a French squadron, and if that admiral found he required the *Victory*, he had to stay to assist before proceeding to his allotted station in the Mediterranean. Why such an instruction was given out, is, and remains, a mystery; but Nelson obeyed it. On the 22nd May he reached Ushant and waited for Cornwallis four-and-twenty hours, fretting at the delay and terribly anxious to be at work where he thought he was most wanted. On the 23rd his patience broke down, and, knowing he must leave the *Victory* as instructed, he actually transferred his whole suite to the frigate *Amphion*, and set sail southwards in the utmost inconvenience possible to be conceived, arriving at Gibraltar on 3rd June. There he placed cruisers to guard the entrance to the Straits, and hurried off to Malta.

He found the fleet in a deplorable condition; it had been utterly neglected by the Admiralty, and was devoid of stores and spare tackle, besides being scarcely seaworthy; but, despite its state of inefficiency, and despite the refusal of the Admiralty to afford him facilities to put the vessels to rights *even at sea*, he determined

upon his plan of campaign, a plan which in the end was the frustrating of all the Napoleonic schemes—to keep his sail of the line in one homogeneous whole, always in touch, and always working in harmony. When one ship required to be victualled, the whole fleet went to the port and waited for her, where one of the line might be wanted, the whole proceeded. Then, during that weary time, his compact little squadron was ready for action at a moment's notice, the instant the French should put their noses out of Toulon.

As regards Toulon, he practically raised the blockade, leaving but a single cruiser to watch and bring him news of anything that transpired. The fleet itself was kept south of Corsica, and moved about from place to place as though nothing was further from Nelson's thoughts than Toulon. To guard the Mediterranean and convoy traders here and there, to watch the Barbary privateers, to protect Sicily and the Morea, and keep an eye on Egypt, required an enormous fleet of frigates—"the eyes of a fleet," as Nelson called them; but to his repeated demands he received no assistance from home, and had to perform the work of fifty with eight.

Added to this, he had to refit his fleet as best

he could. Here and there he obtained a spare spar or some ropes, and with the aid of whatever he could lay his hands upon he did manage to keep them seaworthy; but had one ship lost her topmasts or top gear, there was absolutely no means of replacing the loss. To such an extent had St. Vincent's cheeseparing policy almost ruined the fleet.

Nelson arranged certain rendezvous, and numbered them, so that whenever news came to one—say, 97—there was a place known—say, 127—where he could be found, and yet be hidden from the French and untraceable by spies. His next plan was to lure the French fleet out to leeward, and pounce upon them when beating back to Toulon; but in that he was entirely unsuccessful, for Admiral Latouche Tréville had positive orders from Napoleon not to stir out until the flotilla was ready and the great move to Martinique arranged.

For two-and-twenty months Nelson's fleet never lay in a port, but always in an open roadstead off some neutral coast, or to the north of Sardinia, where he had discovered a magnificent anchorage; in fact, so excellent a harbourage that he begged the Government to purchase the whole island of Sardinia, "which can be bought for half-a-million pounds," and make it

a second Malta; but the half-million was considered better invested in subsidising Germans and Prussians than in "real estate."

After a year spent in this watch-dog employment, Nelson's health began to break down. The day-and-night anxiety told upon him, and he begged to be permitted to hand over the fleet to his second in command, Bickerton, and have a rest in England to restore his health. "Next Christmas," he writes about this time, "please God I shall be at Merton; for by that time, with all the anxiety attendant on such a command as this, I shall be done up. The mind and body both wear out."

As the year waned he became worse, "always tossed about and always sea-sick," yet still he held on, doggedly watching Toulon, and never losing sight of any part of the sea under his charge.

The year 1804 came in, and news of the stirring of the French in Brest and Ferrol reached him. He believed a general assault of the Mediterranean was intended, and with his little compact fleet of nine he prepared to do battle against overwhelming odds, convinced now, that Egypt was the point to be attacked. But nothing came of the matter, and in the May of that year he was promoted to be Vice-

Admiral of the White, and received notice of a change of Government, Lord Melville replaced St. Vincent at the Admiralty, and a much more liberal and generous treatment was meted out to the Navy in consequence.

One of the marvels of this two-and-twenty months was the perfect state of health in which he kept the *personnel* of the fleet. Constant work, occupation, and amusement, admirably arranged, effected this; little by little, ship after ship was put into fighting trim, stores accumulated, and the *morale* generally kept so excellent that when the long watch was over he was able to say:

“I have the pleasure to acquaint you that the squadron under my command is all collected except the *Gibraltar*, complete in their provisions and stores to near five months, and in a perfect state of readiness to act as the exigencies of the moment may determine.”

And when this favourable report is contrasted with an earlier one to the effect that—

“I have but four sail fit to keep the sea. I absolutely keep them out by management,”

it can readily be perceived what work he had effected, not only to keep his ships afloat, but

to be prepared to follow the French fleet anywhere they chose to go, "to the Antipodes, if necessary."

Another spur which made every officer constantly alert, was Nelson's plan of invariably rewarding bravery at the moment and on the spot. Thus, once, when a mere lad—a midshipmite of fifteen years of age—serving aboard a boat sent to overhaul a vessel, on a sudden and violent fire being opened upon her, killing the lieutenant in command, took charge, and the men hesitating, cheered them on to board and take the vessel, Nelson gave him, instantly, his commission as a lieutenant, as an inducement to others to act likewise in similar straits.

There is also a story told of a similar promotion too good to be omitted here—

"One very dark night, the *Victory* being under way, a midshipman, at the imminent risk of his life, leaped into the sea to save a seaman who had fallen overboard, and otherwise would have been drowned. Nelson gave him, too, his commission the following morning; but seeing the jubilation among the young man's messmates, and thinking the act might be a dangerous precedent, he leaned over the poop and said, smiling good-naturedly:

"'Stop, young gentlemen! Mr. Flin has done a gallant thing to-day, and he has done many gallant

things before, for which he has now got his reward. But mind, I'll have no more making lieutenants for men falling overboard.'"

Equally, as he scrutinised the conduct of his officers, did Nelson watch that of the meanest seaman, and as promptly did he reward a brave man by a superior rating for a daring act, so that officers and men were as magnificent a set as ever trod the planks of his Majesty's vessels.

About this time two circumstances arose which materially altered the complexion of the weary watch. Part of Nelson's ground was taken from him, and his sphere of action bordered by the Straits, while the outer borders of Spain and Portugal were entrusted into the keeping of Admiral Orde. The second was, war was declared by Spain against England. The former grieved him greatly; the latter made him determined to stick to his post and not go home, as he might have done.

The history of this opening of a war with Spain does not redound to the credit of the British Government, but it may be partially justified, if not wholly. The facts are, roughly, these—

By the Treaty of St. Ildefonso in 1796, Spain contracted with France to supply her with fifteen sail of the line and 4000 men whenever

that force was demanded; but in 1803 a subsequent convention was signed, on the 19th October, commuting this number of ships and men into a money payment. The actual money payment was £2,880,000, but the figures were not known to the British Government at the time, although they understood it was a large sum. The English Government informed Spain that they were aware of the commutation, but if the sum was simply the equivalent for the subsidies mentioned in the treaty of 1796, and accordingly only a small one, such payment would not be considered a *casus belli* between the two nations.

At the end of the year 1803, a rumour reached England that the figure was three millions, and the English Ambassador handed in a note to the Spanish Government on the 13th December stating that if such were the fact, it must be looked upon as a war subsidy, and equivalent to an act of aggression against England. To this note Spain replied that the subsidy was only the equivalent of the value of the treaty ships, and the matter dropped.

In February great naval preparations were proceeding in the Spanish ports, and again the Ambassador approached the Court in the following note:—

“ I am ordered to declare to you that the system of forbearance on the part of England depends entirely on the cessation of every naval armament within the ports of this kingdom, and that I am expressly forbidden to prolong my residence here if, unfortunately, this condition should be neglected.”

Diplomatic correspondence bridged over the time till September 1804, when the Spanish Government transmitted orders to Ferrol for the immediate commissioning of three sail of the line, two frigates, and several smaller vessels, which, with the four sail of the line belonging to France, and lying in that harbour, brought up the active force to seven sail of the line; to Carthagena and to Cadiz for a similar armament to be prepared; and the whole fleet to rendezvous at Ferrol.

At the same time it became known that four treasure-ships, carrying over three millions in specie, were almost due, and their arrival would be the signal to throw off the diplomatic mask and resume hostilities against England. As a matter of fact, this fleet, along with those at Toulon and Brest, were to form the decoy and invading fleets decided upon by Napoleon—part to invade Ireland and draw off a portion of the English fleet, while the rest of her vessels would be sent out of the Channel in

search of the remainder of the French and Spaniards, leaving a fortnight clear for the operations of the flotilla.

When Admiral Cochrane's despatch brought the disquieting news of the Spanish preparations, instructions were sent to him to prevent the French and Spanish ships leaving Ferrol; and to Lord Cornwallis and Admiral Nelson, each to provide two ships, to intercept and capture the treasure fleet of four.

On the 12th October Nelson received a letter from Captain Gore, who commanded that portion of his fleet which guarded the entrance to the Mediterranean, to the effect that Admiral Cornwallis had sent two vessels, under command of a captain superior to himself in station, and this captain had detached two of his frigates to intercept the Spanish treasure fleet. It is characteristic of Nelson that he at once replied:

“Unless you have much weightier reasons than the order of Admiral Cornwallis, or that you receive orders from the Admiralty, it is my most positive directions that neither you, nor any ship under your orders, do molest or interrupt in any manner the lawful commerce of Spain, with whom we are at perfect peace and amity.”

Later on, however, on the same day, Nelson received the order from the Admiralty, and he instantly detached an eighty-gun ship and four cruisers, and sent them to carry out the orders of the Government.

The interception of the treasure-ships took place, but the Spanish commander, seeing but four ships opposed to his four, refused to be intimidated, and gave battle. This resulted, after ten minutes' action, in one of his vessels blowing up and two hundred and forty men being destroyed (while a further hundred were killed on board the other three vessels), and the consequent capture by the English of the Spanish vessels and over £2,000,000 sterling. This occurred before war had been declared!

This was a most unfortunate occurrence, and while it was justified by some statesmen on certain grounds, it was emphatically condemned by others. As a result, Spain declared war upon England, set herself to arm every available vessel, and threw herself completely into the arms of Napoleon.

At once the warlike spirit of Nelson rose. All thoughts of ease in England vanished; he inspected Toulon with his fleet, and learned that Tréville was dead and Villeneuve had been appointed to command; also, that the

fleet was preparing to come out of harbour at last. He remained off Toulon for a week, and then, in January 1805, he proceeded to Madalena, where he anchored on the 11th.

In December he had learned that 7000 troops were embarked on board the Toulon fleet. On the afternoon of the 19th January 1805, he received the intelligence that Ville-neuve had put to sea in a north-westerly gale; at six o'clock the fleet of Lord Nelson was in motion, and the long—terribly long—watch was ended and active work begun.

CHAPTER III.

THE SEARCH.

To put to sea in a north-westerly gale meant that the French were eastward bound, though their course had been made out by the frigates of Nelson to be south-south-west; this told the tale that they were bound for the south of Corsica, and from thence they had a fair wind for Naples, Sicily, and the East. So, led by the *Victory*, the compact fleet stood in single column for the narrow passage between Biche and Sardinia, which dangerous passage they successfully negotiated, then made all haste down the eastern coast of Sardinia to meet the French at its southernmost end. Up till the 25th January the gale was in force and progress was impossible for both the English and French fleets, the latter suffering far more than the former owing to defective seamanship.

Nelson's agony, for fear he should miss the French, was terrible. For a week he scarcely bit or supped, and never rested. All his small

stock of cruisers he despatched in every possible direction to try to find out their whereabouts, while he made what progress he could towards Palermo in Sicily.

“God send that I may find them.” “Ever since January 21st we have been prepared for battle: not a bulkhead up in the fleet. Night or day, it is my determination not to lose one moment in attacking them.”

Tidings reached him that a dismasted and crippled eighty-gun ship of Villeneuve's fleet had been seen anchored in Ajaccio. This meant either that the fleet had put back into Toulon or weathered Sicily, leaving the one ship behind, and given him the slip, precisely as in the last chase he had in the Mediterranean before the battle of the Nile. That they would go back appeared improbable, for Nelson knew that once Napoleon gave orders he must be obeyed; and so, while the fleet had actually returned to port, he was convinced they had continued on their southerly course.

As fast as his frigates returned, he re-despatched them in other directions, even as far as Alexandria, for intelligence, while his own fleet was placed to divide the Mediterranean into two parts, and keeping watch on both, prevent every operation which he

suspected to be the object of the French fleet.

Fearful was the struggle with the foul winds, ceaseless Nelson's anxiety, his miserable supply of frigates handicapping him, while, in addition, one despatch vessel was wrecked off Cadiz, and a second intercepted by the returning French fleet near Toulon. Then, on the 9th March, he was once more able to leave the Gulf of Palmas, and made a round, showing himself off Toulon and Barcelona and the coast of Spain, and the islands of Majorca and Minorca, to mislead the French that he was proceeding westward, while in reality he worked back to Palmas, when, transports having arrived, he proceeded to re-victual and embark stores, confident that the actual destination of Villeneuve was Egypt, and his position there would enable him to intercept the French fleet. Scarcely had he been there four days when Villeneuve made his second venture, and misled, as Nelson expected he would be, by the reports of the enemy having been seen off Barcelona, he shaped his course between the Balearics and Sardinia. On the 4th April Nelson received advice of this movement, and began to beat against the heavy westerly winds so as to get nearer his quarry.

On the 31st March the *Active* and *Phœbe*

caught sight of Villeneuve, and kept in touch all day, when the *Phæbe* was sent to Nelson to report the discovery. In the night of the 31st the French managed to evade the *Active*, and until the 18th April their movements were hidden from Nelson. Then he learned that they had been seen off Cape de Gatt, with an easterly wind bearing them to the westward. Villeneuve had on the 1st April discovered, from a neutral vessel, the whereabouts of Nelson, and made for Carthage, passed the Straits on the 8th, and anchored off Cadiz on the 9th, where his superior force compelled Orde to retire. The *Aigle* and six Spanish ships joined him, and the whole force of eighteen ships of the line sailed for Martinique; arrived on the 14th May, where it had to rest until the 25th June, when Napoleon calculated his scheme would be ready for carrying out.

Meanwhile, Nelson's anxiety knew no abatement, straddling over the narrow neck of the Mediterranean, uncertain where to go to, and absolutely ignorant of the whereabouts of the enemy, he took in provisions and stores at sea on the 5th and 6th; on the 9th he departed for Palermo, and then on the 18th he learned definite news and made up his mind instantly to pursue the fleet. "I am going out of the

Mediterranean,” he said. He left frigates off Sicily to guard that post, and shaped for Gibraltar. Here he despatched a letter to the Admiralty, saying he intended taking up a position about fifty leagues west of Scilly, ready to follow the French whenever they were discovered, and pursue them either to Ireland or into the Channel, adding, “I have the pleasure to say that I bring with me eleven as fine ships of war, as ably commanded, and in as perfect order and health as ever went to sea.”

Nelson’s ships had two yellow streaks, with black port-holes, giving a chequered look.

On the 4th of May, off Tetuan, a port on the African coast, a trifle east of Gibraltar, where he had gone to take in fresh beef, Nelson learned definitely the fact that Villeneuve had made for the West Indies. Thither he determined to proceed, and, despite the disparity of force, attack him. He stopped the work of taking in bullocks and weighed anchor instantly, his stock of water being completed.

The westerly wind drove him into Gibraltar, and, deeming it would continue so, the officers took the opportunity of sending their linen ashore to be washed. Nelson, however, saw signs of a change, and suddenly he ran up the Blue Peter and fired a gun.

“One of Nelson’s mad pranks,” they said. But it was not; the wind became fair, and before five hours had elapsed he was again under weigh with his eleven ships, leaving Bickerton with half-a-dozen frigates to guard the Mediterranean, and the chase had begun.

“If I fail,” he said, “if they are not gone to the West Indies, I shall be blamed. To be burned in effigy, or Westminster Abbey, is my alternative.”

For two days the wind was fair; then it turned again and he anchored in Lagos Bay, where he utilised the time in completing the discharging of the transports he had in tow.

On the 16th of May he sent a sloop in advance to Barbadoes announcing his coming, and requested that every vessel be embargoed so as to prevent news travelling to Martinique. On the 11th the fleet set sail for the West Indies. On the 4th of June Barbadoes was sighted, and that very day General Brereton, who commanded the troops at Santa Lucia, stated that the united French and Spanish fleets had passed southward bound for Tobago and Trinidad. Nelson did not feel sure, but he was compelled to act on this information, and on the 7th of June he learned at Trinidad that no fleet was there, and, off north, he started full sail. On the

6th of June he learned definite news. Eighteen ships of the line, with smaller vessels, had passed Dominica on the 6th of June. Had General Brereton not misled him he would have fallen in with the enemy on the precise spot where Rodney won his victory, and a second battle, there, would have had to be recorded.

Villeneuve had gone northwards to work to windward, and thus fall upon Barbadoes, but fourteen merchant vessels having imprudently put out of the port, he captured them and learned for the first time that Nelson was on his track with fourteen battleships, which with the five at Barbadoes made nineteen, and he took fright; up sail for the north again to catch a westerly wind without waiting the forty days fixed by his master Napoleon. Thus the fear of Nelson upset all plans, upon the co-operation of which, the invasion of England depended.

Directly Nelson was sure of the truth, he despatched the *Curieux* to England with word that he proposed following Villeneuve northwards and eastwards back to Europe; and, if he could overtake him, bring him to battle. He also sent a vessel to the commanding officer off Ferrol with all particulars, so that he might watch for the enemy.

Both fleets steered northwards in almost parallel lines, and both shaped westward at the almost identical latitude, but the French had the benefit of the start. Nelson kept a straight course for the entrance to the Mediterranean, while Villeneuve steered for the North of Spain; thus one fleet passed north of the Azores, while the second kept to the south. Day followed day, Nelson anxiously watching for signs of the enemy, and hoping to discover him; the enemy as anxiously watching for Nelson, and hoping to escape him. It was a case of hope deferred and suspense protracted; but at last the chase was over. On the 18th of July, Cape Spartel was sighted. There were no signs of the French!

“I am as completely miserable as my greatest enemy could wish me to be,” he wrote home to the Admiralty, “but I blame neither fortune nor my own judgment. Oh, General Brereton! General Brereton!”

As Nelson approached the Straits, he came across six sail of the line under his old friend Lord Collingwood, blockading Cadiz and guarding the entrance to the Mediterranean, but was not able to meet him, to his great regret, being so anxious about the enemy that he felt he must go northwards in search, fearing Villeneuve

might have doubled back and might even now be at Barbadoes.

Meanwhile the *Curieux* had fallen in with the French fleet, nine hundred miles north-north-eastward of Antigua—a week after she had sailed—and kept them in view long enough to learn their numbers and destination. She passed them and arrived at Plymouth on the 7th July. On the 9th the news was in the possession of the First Lord, and despatches speeding towards Rochefort and Ferrol, ordering the respective commanders to unite and take post one hundred miles west of Cape Finisterre. On the 19th July, Admiral Calder, with fifteen sail of the line, took up his position on the spot indicated, and at noon on the 22nd Villeneuve sailed into sight.

The combined French and Spanish fleets consisted of twenty sail of the line, three large vessels armed *en flûte*, fifty guns each, five frigates, and three brigs. The English, under Admiral Robert Calder, Vice-Admiral of the White, consisted of fifteen sail of the line, two frigates, and two cutters.

Calder hoisted his flag on board the *Prince of Wales* (ninety-eight guns), and as soon as he got in touch with the enemy the battle began, and lasted four hours, without a moment's in-

termission: the *Hero* (seventy-four) leading the van in a masterly manner.

“The weather had been foggy,” wrote Calder. “At times during a great part of the morning, and very soon after we brought them to action, the fog became so thick at intervals that we could with very great difficulty see the ship ahead or astern of us. This rendered it impossible to take the advantage of the enemy I could have wished to do by signals, and had the weather been more favourable, I am led to believe the victory would have been more complete.”

Not only did this fog prevent signalling, but the constant firing deadened the air, and a veil of smoke hid the combatants from one another. Between decks it was impossible to distinguish anything; even the men at the guns scarcely made out one another, and they discharged their cannon at the word of command and in the directions sent down from above-decks. No one knew what was happening; every man kept continuously working at the guns, but no inspiring cries arose, as is the custom when an enemy is seen to have suffered damage. It was a grim, earnest struggle. The *Windsor Castle* (ninety-eight guns) suffered most in killed and wounded, while the *Dragon* and

Warrior (seventy-four), as fiercely engaged as she, had not a man killed nor wounded, so absolutely in the dark was everybody as to what they were doing.

At last the *San Rafael* (eighty-four) and the *Firm* (seventy-four), both Spaniards, struck, and Sir Robert Calder brought his squadron to, so as to keep them. The absolute density of the fog rendered further fighting impossible: the cannonading ceased, and the two fleets lay opposite one another, awaiting the weather to clear.

Daylight bringing clearer weather, Villeneuve declined to renew the battle, and Sir Robert Calder did not attack him, as he ought, and as Nelson would, but stood away to the north with his prizes. The English fleet lost 210 killed and wounded, and the vessels suffered greatly in their hulls; but judging from the loss on board the *San Rafael* and the *Firm* (namely, 600), the French and Spanish loss must have been very severe.

Although Sir Robert met with approbation from his commander-in-chief, who despatched him to cruise off Cadiz with a considerable squadron, the people of England looked upon the action with very different eyes, and, so loud was the disapprobation expressed, that

Sir Robert demanded a court-martial. It was found "that in spite of his inferior force, he had not done his utmost to renew the engagement and destroy every ship of the enemy." Accordingly, he was adjudged "to be severely reprimanded."

We have inserted particulars of this matter because, when Nelson sailed on his last voyage, one of his most painful duties was to order a fellow Vice-Admiral of the White home to stand court-martial.

This action stopped Villeneuve's progress towards the Channel, and forced him to put into Vigo and finally into Ferrol to refit. This stoppage frustrated Napoleon's schemes, and the invasion did not come off after all. Nelson's foresight in despatching the *Curieux* in advance must have the credit, as, had he not sent her, Villeneuve would have arrived in the nick of time, and the flotilla would have put to sea and the troops effected a landing in a very few hours. England for forty-eight hours was on the verge of being overrun by France.

To return to our hero. On the 20th—two days before the fight just related—he landed at Gibraltar, going ashore for the first time since the 16th of June 1803. After re-victualling, he

set sail for the north, and on the 15th August joined the Channel fleet off Ushant, then first hearing of Calder's fight with Villeneuve. On the 18th, the *Victory* dropped her anchor at Spithead and the long chase was ended.

CHAPTER IV.

CUTHBERT COLLINGWOOD.

A SON of Cuthbert Collingwood, a freeman of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and by trade a corn merchant, the future Lord Collingwood was born on the 26th September 1748, in a house situated at the head of the Side, then the only approach from the north, and consisting of strange projecting or overhanging houses, which, in their upper storeys, enabled hands to be clasped across the street. Up till 1903 this house still stood, but it has recently been removed to make way for a more pretentious, if less historic, building. There Cuthbert dwelt while he attended the Grammar School, standing close to St. John's Church. Two of his comrades, John and William Scott—the future Lords Eldon and Stowell—lived at that time in Love Lane, on the Quayside, and would naturally pass up the Side on their way to school. The three were almost inseparable companions. The master of the school was Hugh Moises, and it was in his kindly tuition and his instilling

deep religious thought that the foundation of the beautiful character of Cuthbert Collingwood must be sought. In those days lads had early to seek their own living, and when Cuthbert was but eleven years of age he was designed for a naval career, arrangements being entered into by which he was placed in the charge of his uncle, Captain Braithwaite. He told the following story himself as an instance of his youth and simplicity when he first went to sea. As he was sitting crying because of his separation from home, the first lieutenant noticed him, and pitying the tender years of the poor child, spoke to him in terms of much encouragement and kindness, which, as Lord Collingwood said, so won upon his heart that, taking this officer to his box, he offered him in gratitude a large piece of plum-cake which his mother had given him. This was in the *Shannon* in the year 1761. For ten years he served under his uncle, and then under that fine old north-country salt Captain, afterwards Admiral, Roddam. From then until his death Collingwood was identified with Nelson in the naval annals of Great Britain. In his own words, he sums up his history thus:—

“In 1774 I went to Boston with Admiral Graves, and in 1795 I was made a lieutenant by him on the

day that the battle was fought at Bunker's Hill, where I was with a party of seamen supplying the army with what was necessary to them. In 1776 I went to Jamaica as lieutenant of the *Hornet* sloop, and soon after the *Lowestoft*, of which Lord Nelson was lieutenant, came to the same station. We had long before been in habits of great friendship; and it happened here that, as Admiral Parker, the commander-in-chief, was the friend of both, whenever Lord Nelson got a step in rank, I succeeded him: first in the *Lowestoft*, then in the *Badger*, into which ship I was made commander in 1779, and afterwards in the *Hinchinbrook*, a twenty-eight-gun frigate, which made us both post-captains."

While commanding this vessel (the story of the expedition occurs in the earlier chapters of this story) Collingwood buried 180 of the 200 men which comprised the crew.

"In 1780 I was appointed to the *Pelican*, of twenty-four guns," and "the next ship I commanded was the *Samson*, of sixty-four guns."

He then went to the West Indies, and his story and Nelson's run side by side, and can be read between the covers of this book, for Collingwood stood by Nelson when the admiral funked it in the matter of the illicit trading in the West Indies.

“In 1793 I was appointed to the *Prince*, Rear-Admiral Bowyer's flagship, and served with him until he was wounded in the action of the 1st of June, in the *Barfleur*.”

Strange to say, in this great victory of Lord Howe's, which struck terror to the very vitals of the Republic of France, Collingwood was never mentioned in despatches, although many who had done nothing were brought forward to the notice of the Admiralty; yet, though this omission grieved him, he, like his comrade Nelson, bore it patiently. In this battle Collingwood distinguished himself in the management of his vessel, and contributed no trifle to the ultimate success; like Nelson, however, he had no aristocratic connections, and therefore, perforce, remained unnoticed. One little detail we will mention as an example. Having practically conquered the opponent to which he was pitted, and noticing that the *Invincible* was hard pressed, he signalled to her to change places, voluntarily passing to her the honour of receiving the surrender of the ship, while he re-engaged with superior force. Could honest man do more? leaving a certainty for distinction to a crippled comrade, and engaging with superior force for the honour of his country. Yet no notice was taken of this

generous action. Indeed, like Nelson, the key-word to Cuthbert Collingwood's life is—honour!

From the *Barfleur* he passed into the *Hector*, and from thence into the *Excellent*, in which vessel he served with Nelson in the Mediterranean.

In 1791, two years before he was appointed to the *Prince*, he married Miss Blackett, daughter of J. E. Blackett, Mayor of Newcastle, and enjoyed one of the few brief spells of rest from his arduous labours. This Miss Blackett, the "dear Sarah" of all his correspondence, was the granddaughter of his old commander, Admiral Roddam. With her he went to Morpeth; but scarcely had he taken up residence there when "war's wild alarm" summoned him once again to put on his armour for the defence of his native land, and with a heavy heart, for he loved his wife with an intense love, he departed to take part in the battles of his country.

Next follows the battle of St. Vincent, already told, and for this he was rewarded by being made Rear-Admiral of the White, and for a brief space domestic happiness was permitted him till May 1799, when he hoisted his flag on board the *Triumph*, on which vessel he passed

weary days in the terrible, dreary work of blockading in the chops of the Channel. Here he again met his friend Nelson, for on the 27th January 1801, we have a record of a meeting between Collingwood and his wife and Nelson at the "Fountain Inn," Plymouth, where were

"Lord Nelson, my wife, and myself sitting by the fireside, cosing, and little Sarah teaching Phyllis, her dog, to dance."

It was but for one day; but oh, how pleasant to him to see the dear partner of his joys and sorrows! Eighteen hundred and two was well in when he again beheld his wife at Morpeth, and for one brief year he had the felicity of home-life to remember amid the wearisome drudgery and the wild excitements of naval existence. He crops up in our story, and will appear at greater length directly, at Trafalgar, for which victory he was made Baron Collingwood of Caldbourne and Hethpole, in the County of Northumberland; a pension of £2000 per annum being voted to him by Parliament, and the City of London giving him the freedom of the city and a sword; he was advanced to the dignity of Admiral of the Red, and appointed to be Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean.

He never saw wife, child, nor home again. He died at sea on 7th March 1810, and when he passed away, one of the stars of England's glorious crown faded. Man can never replace heroes like Nelson and Collingwood.

“Exemplary in all the duties of domestic life, a firm friend, a kind and faithful husband, an affectionate parent, Collingwood found time, when in command of the fleet off Toulon, and charged with all the diplomacy of the Mediterranean, to devote much of his thoughts to his domestic circle, the education of his daughters, even the relief of the poor in his neighbourhood. A sense of duty, a forgetfulness of self, a deep feeling of religious obligation, were the springs of all his actions. If required to specify the hero whose life most completely embodied the great principles for which England contended in the war, and the maintenance of which at length brought her victorious out of its dangers, the historian would, without hesitation, fix upon Collingwood.”¹

¹ Alison.

CHAPTER V.

DEPARTURE FROM ENGLAND AND ARRIVAL OFF CADIZ.

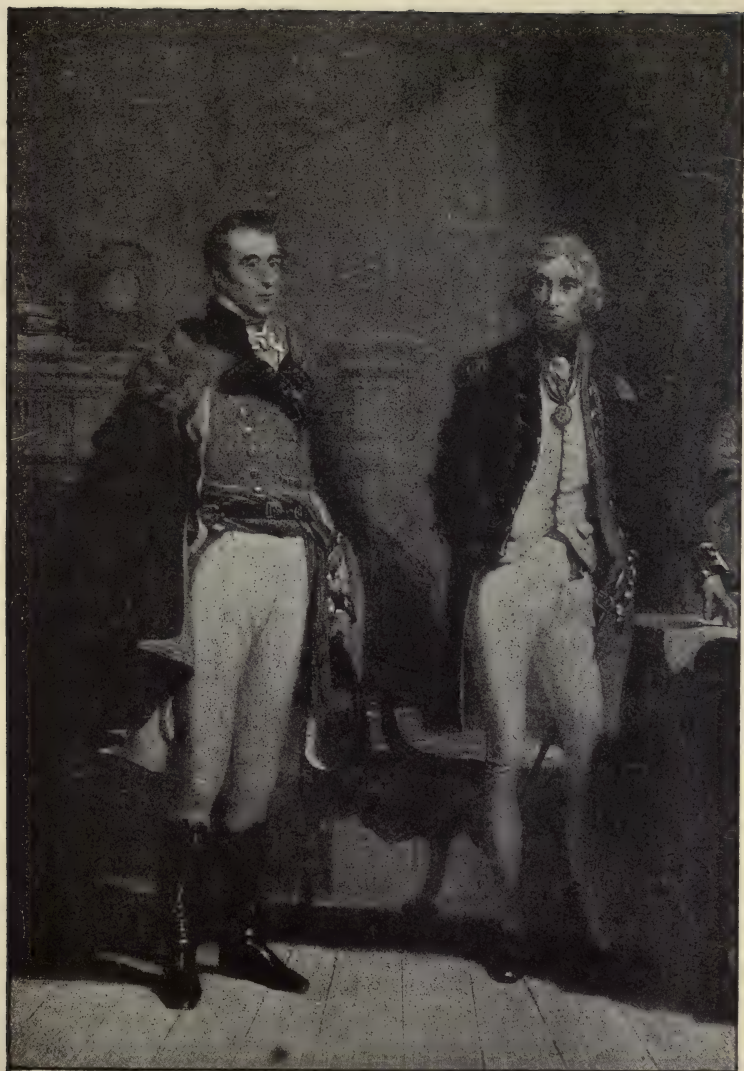
AT 9 P.M., on the 19th of August 1805, Nelson being then but six-and-forty years of age, the *Victory* lying at Spithead, her flag was hauled down and Nelson landed—landed to find a welcome such as a conqueror receives: a tumultuous gathering of every sort of man and woman, crying, shouting, hurraing, cheering—he could scarcely make headway. He was to all a national god, and greeted as such. To touch him was as to receive a blessing; to shake him by the hand was to remember it for a lifetime. Had he ever doubted his popularity, the welcome he received would have demonstrated it to him. It was a triumphal procession which conducted him to his hotel. In London Nelson was received like a conqueror, and followed by the people with huzzas. So much for a great and good name, most nobly and honourably acquired.

“I met Nelson,” wrote Lord Minto, “in a mob in Piccadilly, and got hold of his arm, so I was mobbed too. It is really quite affecting to see the wonder and admiration, and love and respect of the whole world; and the genuine expression of all these sentiments at once, from gentle and simple the moment he is seen. It is beyond anything represented in a play or a poem of fame.”

His advent in the street was the signal for delighted crowds to gather tumultuously and cheer vociferously, so that it was difficult to get about except when hidden in a cabriolet, and he had more trouble in paying visits to the Admiralty than he had in boarding the *San Josef*.

It was while paying one of these visits to Lord Barham, successor to Melville, that for the first and only time the men Nelson and Wellington met. Wellington had just returned to England with the laurels he had won in India fresh upon him. Seeing an officer in the ante-room, and knowing nothing about him, nor dreaming who he could be, Nelson passed the time in frivolous conversation.

“I went to the Colonial Office,” narrated the Duke, “and was shown into the little waiting-room on the right hand, where I found also waiting to see the Secretary of State a gentleman, whom, from the like-



NELSON AND WELLINGTON.

ness to his pictures and the loss of an arm, I immediately recognised as Lord Nelson. He could not know who I was, but he entered at once into conversation with me—if I can call it conversation, for it was almost all on his side and all about himself, and in really a style so vain and so silly as to surprise and almost disgust me. I suppose something I happened to say may have made him guess I was *somebody*, and he went out of the room for a moment—I have no doubt to ask the office-keeper who I was, for when he came back he was altogether a different man, both in manner and matter. All that I had thought a charlatan style had vanished, and he talked of the state of this country, and of the aspect and probabilities of affairs on the Continent with a good sense, and a knowledge of subjects both at home and abroad, that surprised me equally and more agreeably than the first part of our interview had done; in fact, he talked like an officer and a statesman. I don't know that ever I had a conversation that interested me more."

Nelson never cared for soldiers; he had a contempt for them, and one can understand his bantering the great man, not knowing but that he was only an ordinary military attaché; and his change of manner when he knew he was addressing one of our wise generals, and one whom he respected. When official business permitted him, Nelson settled down for a brief rest at Merton, surrounded by his brothers and

sisters and their families, and (in the full enjoyment of the comfort of home) refused all invitations to visit any one. Yet, during the well-earned repose, there came forebodings of evil upon him, and an augury that it was his last chance of earthly comfort. Not only did he restlessly await the summons to be up and doing, but he even instructed the man who had in charge the coffin made from the mast of *L'Orient*, to have his name-plate placed on it, as he feared he would soon need it for good and all. While his conversation is recorded as lively and vivacious, and he is described by visitors as in good spirits, there was a foreboding deep in his heart that very soon his earthly career would be ended and his work done.

Anxiously he followed every movement of the English and foreign fleets. When he learned that his old enemy Villeneuve had put to sea with twenty-nine sail of the line, besides cruisers and frigates, and eighteen English ships, under the command of Admiral Calder, had been despatched to hunt for them, his restlessness was indescribable.

On the 2nd September Captain Blackwood, of the frigate *Euryalus*, arrived in London, express from Collingwood, with the intimation that Villeneuve had at last been traced, and

found to have put into Cadiz on 20th August. He posted, early as it was—five o'clock in the morning—to Merton, where he found Nelson already up and dressed.

At the sight of Blackwood, Nelson cried out, "I am sure you bring me news of the French and Spanish fleets!" Adding, "Depend upon it, Blackwood, I shall yet give Mr. Villeneuve a drubbing."

Yet while Blackwood was at Merton, Nelson said nothing about the conviction he entertained as to his being selected to command the fleet which would be sent against the old enemy; in fact, ridiculed the idea with the words, "Let the man trudge it who has lost his budget." Breakfast over, however, and his friend gone to the Admiralty, he went into the garden for a stroll, and paced one of the walks which he called his quarter-deck, backwards and forwards.

"Lady Hamilton came up to him and told him she saw he was uneasy. He smiled and said, no, he was as happy as possible; he was surrounded by his family, his health was better since he had been on shore, and he would not give sixpence to call the King his uncle. She replied that she did not believe him, and that she knew he was longing to get at the combined fleets; that he considered them as his own property; that he would be miserable if any man but himself did the business; and that he ought to have

them as the price and reward of his two years' long watching and chasing. 'Nelson,' said she, 'however we may lament your absence, offer your services. They will be accepted, and you will gain a quiet heart by it; you will have a glorious victory, and then you may return here and be happy.'

"He looked at her with tears in his eyes. 'Brave Emma! good Emma! If there were more Emmas there would be more Nelsons!'"¹

There is every reason to believe that he never *offered* his services, for Lord Barham had already decided he was the man. When he visited the Admiralty that day it was almost certain that this was intimated to him, and he was persuaded, as well as asked, to take the command. This can be gathered by a letter he wrote, while off Cadiz, to Elliot:

"I own I want much more rest, but it was thought right to *desire* me to come forth, and I *obeyed*."

The day after Blackwood's visit Nelson was making arrangements for going on board the *Victory*, and the day following, Lord Minto wrote :

"He is going to resume the command of the Mediterranean as soon as the *Victory* is ready, which will be within a week."

¹ Southey.

And the day after he himself writes:

"All my things are this day gone off to Portsmouth."

It was on the 14th of September (memorable date!) when Nelson left England. The previous day he records in his journal the following words:—

"Friday night, September 13th, at half-past ten, I drove from dear, dear old Merton, where I left all which I hold dear in this world, to go to serve my king and country. May the great God, whom I adore, enable me to fulfil the expectations of my country! And if it is His good pleasure that I should return, my thanks will never cease being offered up to the throne of His mercy. If it is His good providence to cut short my days upon earth, I bow with the greatest submission, relying that He will protect those so dear to me whom I may leave behind! His will be done. Amen! amen! amen!"

Before leaving the Admiralty, Lord Barham asked him to choose his own captains, but Nelson, true to himself and his country, replied:

"Choose them yourself, my lord. The same spirit actuates the whole profession; you cannot choose wrong."

There was the greatest competition conceivable to serve under Nelson, for, to the captains of the service, he was a naval divinity, how-

ever much he was disparaged by the powers that controlled the Government. Twice or thrice the number of ships available might have been over and over again officered for the expedition.

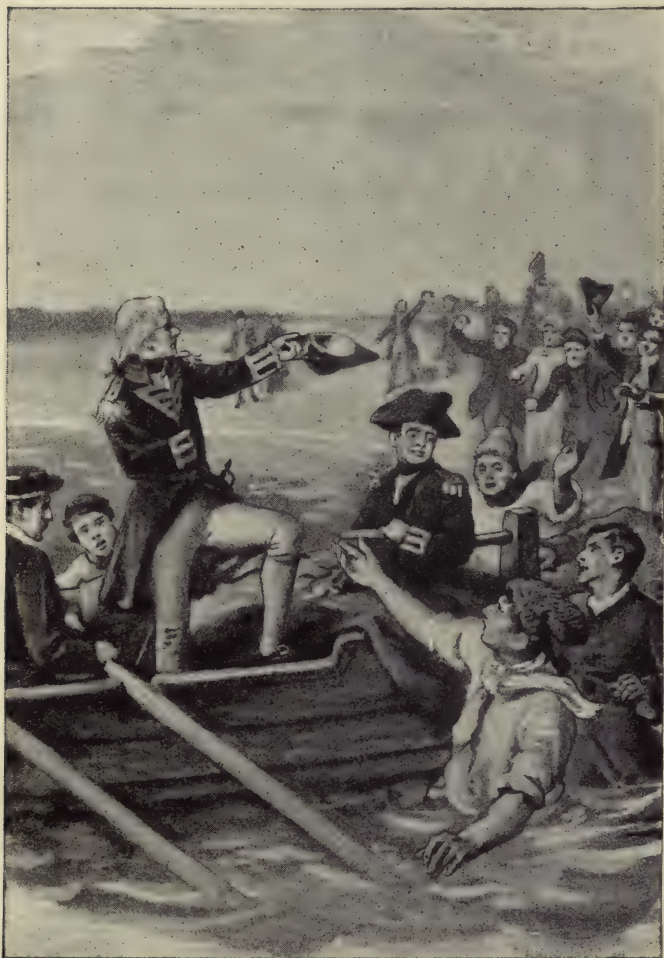
What a scene there was next morning when the hero made for his barge from the "George Inn," from which he had escaped by the back way into Pickle Street! Multitudes pressed forward, eager to catch a sight of the maimed little warrior. Many were weeping; many knelt to implore his blessing as he passed. "England," says Southey, "has had many heroes; but never one who so entirely possessed the love of his fellow-countrymen as Nelson. All men knew that his heart was as humane as it was fearless; that there was not in his nature the slightest alloy of selfishness or cupidity; but that, with perfect and entire devotion, he served his country with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength; and, therefore, they loved him as truly and as fervently as he loved England."

It was most difficult for him to make his way through the press, and when he reached his barge, the concourse, added to by those stationed on the strand to witness the last of the departing hero, was tumultuous in the extreme.

The enthusiasm was tremendous, and Nelson would never have succeeded in embarking but that the Marines formed, by sheer force of discipline, a narrow passage by which, with the utmost difficulty, he succeeded in getting on board. His heart swelled at this demonstration, and, without doubt, it accentuated his thoughts when later on he besought the fleet to do its duty for "England." "Ah," he said to Hardy, his captain, then alongside of him, "I had their huzzas before. Now I have their hearts." Once safe on his barge, he stood and raised his hat, waving it in sympathy with the applaudits. A more glorious "set away" no man could desire, and brave Nelson went to meet the foe "for England, home, and beauty" — "the darling hero of England."

Once on board that *Victory* which only returned to where she sailed to convey the dear, dead body of the man whom "common" England loved, but "noble" (?) England disliked, Nelson began to ponder over the future and lay his plans.

In Cadiz harbour, he knew, were forty-six great ships of war, each of them equal to or superior to those he had, and with them an array of second-raters. He also knew that Cadiz had limited powers to obtain stores, and must de-



NELSON EMBARKS AT PORTSMOUTH, BEFORE TRAFALGAR.

pend on coasters to bring food for the fleet which had taken refuge in its harbour. Would that food supply hold out? would the scarcity force the fleet to seek another refuge? Or would the terrible autocrat of France compel it to venture forth and seek its safety in a fight.

Nelson, while a brave man, was a wise one. He had full control, and *he muzzled the press*. He took no special reporters for the papers with him, and he *stopped the "Gazette"*; hence Trafalgar was won.

Not only did the fleet sail in small groups, but fast cruisers were sent to Gibraltar to suppress notices in the *Gazette*; while, in addition, he forbade any salutes at sea, fearing that such salutes would give intimation of the movements of the force to the blockading squadron. When he arrived, himself, no guns were to be fired, save in accordance with the regular code of signals. Thus, and thus alone, he lulled Villeneuve into quietness and super-confidence and made Trafalgar possible.

It was on the 29th September—his birthday—that Nelson arrived off Cadiz (unrecognised so far as the French and Spaniards were concerned), with a few frigates and a few line-of-battle ships, which formed a central

squadron, sixty miles south-west off Cadiz. He placed the *Euryalus*, commanded by his old friend and signal-master, Captain Blackwood, off the port in command of a few frigates, which formed a chain to where five ships of the line cruised beneath the sky-line, forming an intermediate fleet, and from them to where—sixty miles to the south and west—Nelson's fleet lay, far beyond the ken of Ville-neuve.

There were two gatherings on board flag-ships that evening. The first one was on board the *Victory*, where junior admirals and captains greeted Nelson with tumultuous joy.

"The reception I met with on joining the fleet," he said, "caused the sweetest sensation of my life. The officers who came on board to welcome my return forgot my rank as commander-in-chief in the enthusiasm with which they greeted me. I believe my arrival was most welcome, not only to the commander of the fleet (Collingwood), but also to every individual in it, and when I came to explain the '*Nelson touch*,' it was like an electric shock. Some shed tears; all approved. 'It was new,' 'It was singular,' 'It was simple!' And from admirals downwards was repeated, 'It must

succeed, if ever they allow us to get at them!' 'You are, my lord, surrounded by friends, whom you inspire with confidence.'"

Conceive the joy, the delight, of this company at the full assurance of victory; no matter how powerful the opposing force when Nelson led the way. From ship to ship it spread, and jubilant was every one, from captain down to powder-monkey.

The second gathering was on board the *St. Anne* (three-decker), where Villeneuve and *his* junior admirals and captains were assembled. Here there was no jubilation, for a bomb had burst upon them in the form of a peremptory order from the Emperor to put to sea at once. Anxiously the questions were asked as to the respective numbers of the fleets. Theirs, they knew, consisted of four three-deckers of from 100 to 130 guns, including the *Santisima Trinidad*, the largest ship afloat, six eighty-gun ships and thirty-one seventy-fours, besides a great many frigates and smaller craft; but what was the English fleet? and, most momentous question of all, was Nelson there? Owing to the secrecy of Nelson's arrangements, no report of the reinforcements had reached Villeneuve, and to the best of his knowledge only nineteen sail in all—if so many, for he knew that

Admiral Reuss had gone to the Mediterranean some time before for stores—could be opposed to them, and these only sixty-fours and seventy-fours; while as to Nelson, he could not be there, for but a day before an American skipper had arrived from London, and stated the great admiral was there when he left, and there was not even a rumour of his putting to sea; consequently Collingwood would be the commander, and not the dreaded Nelson. This small comfort did not ease their souls—forty against nineteen was good odds in their favour; but as out they had to go, they hoped by keeping together like a vast cloud, they might over-awe the enemy, and perhaps frighten him away, leaving their course clear to Toulon or, if necessary, to Brest, where, reinforced by the fleet there, their very numbers and hugeness of armament might bid defiance to any fleet England could bring against them, even if Nelson himself led them.

Slowly they began to prepare for the inevitable, and ship by ship, as she was made ready, dropped into the outer harbour prepared to sail. But even then, the desperate sally out would not have so speedily occurred save that Napoleon displaced Villeneuve by Admiral Rosilly, requesting the former to give up com-

mand upon the arrival of the latter; and Villeneuve, becoming desperate, determined that he would make the attempt to escape before the advent of his successor.

The broad lines upon which he had decided to tackle the superior force under Villeneuve having been communicated at that memorable birthday gathering on board the *Victory*, Nelson set himself diligently to keep up the spirits of his men while waiting for the foe. Concerts and theatrical gatherings were arranged for nearly every vessel, while the ships' bands played from time to time "Britons, Strike Home!" and other nautical favourites, to divert the time.

On the 9th of October the celebrated memorandum, together with plans for the expected battle, were handed by Nelson to Collingwood, and being so important, as showing how this great commander bore all contingencies in mind, they are reproduced.

It must be premised that both these commanders were convinced that the Mediterranean was the real point of attack, and the position taken by the main fleet was such as to prevent that movement; the prevailing winds for such position giving them the windward attack are assumed on that ground.

October 9th, 1805.

MY DEAR COLL.,—I send you Captain Blackwood's letter, and I hope *Weazle* has joined; he will have five frigates and a brig. They surely cannot escape us. I wish we could get a fine day. I send you my plan of attack, as far as a man may venture to guess at the very uncertain position the enemy may be found in; but, my dear friend, it is to place you perfectly at ease respecting my intentions, and to give full scope to your judgment for carrying them into effect. We can, my dear Coll., have no little jealousies: we have only one great object in view—that of annihilating our enemies and getting a glorious peace for our country. No man has more confidence in another than I have in you, and no man will render your services more justice than your very old friend,

NELSON AND BRONTE.

Enclosure.

MEMORANDUM.

“VICTORY,” OFF CADIZ,

(Secret.)

9th October 1805.

Thinking it almost impossible to bring a fleet of forty sail of the line into a line of battle in variable winds, thick weather, and other circumstances which must occur, without such a loss of time that the opportunity would probably be lost of bringing the enemy to battle in such a manner as to make the business decisive, I have therefore made up my mind to keep the fleet in that position of sailing (with the

exception of the first and second in command) that the Order of Sailing is to be the Order of Battle, placing the fleet in two lines of sixteen ships each, with an advanced squadron of eight of the fastest-sailing two-decked ships, which will always make, if wanted, a line of twenty-four sail on whichever line the commander-in-chief may direct.

The second in command will, after my intentions are made known to him, have the entire direction of his line to make the attack upon the enemy, and to follow up the blow until they are captured or destroyed.

If the enemy's fleet should be seen to windward in line of battle, and that the two lines and the advanced squadron can fetch them, they will probably be so extended that their van could not succour their rear.

I should, therefore, probably make the second in command's signal to lead through, about their twelfth ship from their rear (or wherever he could fetch, if not able to get so far advanced), my line would lead through about their centre, and the advanced squadron to cut two or three or four ships ahead of their centre, so as to ensure getting at their commander-in-chief, on whom every effort must be made to capture.

The whole impression of the British fleet must be to overpower from two to three ships ahead of their commander-in-chief, supposed to be in the centre to the rear of their fleet. I will suppose twenty sail of the enemy's line to be untouched; it must be some time before they could perform a manœuvre to bring

their force compact to attack any part of the British fleet engaged, or to succour their own ships, which, indeed, would be impossible without mixing with the ships engaged.

Something must be left to chance: nothing is sure in a sea fight beyond all others. Shot will carry away the masts of friends as well as foes; but I look with confidence to a victory before the van of the enemy could succour their rear, and then that the British fleet would most of them be ready to receive their twenty sail of the line, or to pursue them should they endeavour to make off.

If the van of the enemy tacks, the captured ships must run to leeward of the British fleet; if the enemy wears, the British must place themselves between the enemy and the captured, and disabled British, ships; and should the enemy close, I have no fear as to the result.

The second in command will in all possible things direct the movements of his line by keeping them as compact as the nature of the circumstances will admit. Captains are to look to their particular line as their rallying-point. But in case signals can neither be seen nor perfectly understood, no captain can do very wrong if he places his ship alongside that of an enemy.

Of the intended attack from to windward, the enemy in line of battle ready to receive an attack, the divisions of the British fleet will be brought nearly within gunshot of the enemy's centre. The signal will most probably then be made for the lee line to bear up together, to set all their sails, even

steering sails, in order to get as quickly as possible to the enemy's line, and to cut through, beginning from the twelfth ship from the enemy's rear. Some ships may not get through their exact place, but they will always be at hand to assist their friends; and if any are thrown round the rear of the enemy, they will effectually complete the business of twelve sail of the enemy.

Should the enemy wear together, or bear up and sail large, still the twelve ships composing, in the first position, the enemy's rear, are to be the object of attack of the lee line, unless otherwise directed from the commander-in-chief, which is scarcely to be expected, as the entire management of the lee line, after the intention of the commander-in-chief is signified, is intended to be left to the judgment of the admiral commanding that line.

The remainder of the enemy's fleet, thirty-four sail, are to be left to the management of the commander-in-chief, who will endeavour to take care that the movements of the second in command are as little interrupted as is possible.

NELSON AND BRONTE.

Along with this document were two sketch plans, the first indicating the enemy in one line of forty-six, which was the number Nelson anticipated would form their fleet, and the British in three lines parallel with them; Collingwood in the van line of sixteen ships, Nelson with sixteen, and a reserve behind him

of eight ships. Nelson calculated to have forty ships under his command. The second indicated how that Collingwood might, should circumstances so arise, repeat the manœuvres of the battle of the Nile, and attack the rear on both sides, while Nelson pierced their centre, leaving the reserve to prevent the van from tacking. The actual battle was, through force of circumstances and the arrangements effected by Villeneuve, who was a skilful commander, fought on quite different lines, and the general instructions of an attack in two columns direct forced upon Nelson.

Each captain knew, however, from the above memorandum, that he must, regardless of where he found his vessel, engage close, so the actual mode of commencement made very little difference in the long run, always bearing in mind that the original rear and van, no matter how the enemy wore, remained theoretically during the engagement, so as to prevent confusion, which was successfully avoided by this clear enunciation when the ships did come to grips.

It will also be noted that Nelson reckoned upon having forty ships; in the action he had only twenty-seven and four frigates. The enemy he reckoned upon having forty-six;

they entered the fight with thirty-three of the line and seven large frigates. So the actual battle was fought against far greater odds than he had calculated upon, and the victory far more meritorious.

CHAPTER VI.

INCIDENTS PRIOR TO THE BATTLE.

WHEN our hero set sail, he conveyed with him the orders to send Sir Robert Calder home to stand the court-martial he had craved for, and which had now been decided upon. Captain Calder, it will be recollected, was the man who endeavoured to disparage Nelson's action at Cape St. Vincent, and who had throughout his life been practically an enemy of Nelson. Now was Nelson's chance of getting square with one whom he had good reason to believe was jealous of him and hated him, and had there been but a spark of meanness in our hero's character, it would have now been manifested. Mark the difference.

Sir Robert was in the *Prince of Wales*, of ninety guns, one of the most powerful of the English squadron, and a vessel Nelson could ill spare, considering the disadvantage under which he laboured. He approached Sir Robert courteously, and having handed him the order for the court-martial, suggested to him to retain

his command until the expected battle was fought, presuming that his well-known bravery would vindicate his character, and—rehabilitating it—quash the orders for the court-martial. Such a generous act is nowhere else recorded. Yet such was Sir Robert's enmity to Nelson, that he insisted on going home, despite the fact that Nelson had offered him a second and still greater favour—that of returning in his own ship in place of a small cruiser or frigate, and that his doing so would cripple the admiral right seriously! Nelson bore with him and let him go, writing to the First Lord to say :—

“ I may be thought wrong, as an officer, to disobey the orders of the Admiralty, by not insisting on Sir Robert Calder's quitting the *Prince of Wales* for the *Dreadnought*, and for parting with a ninety-gun ship before the force arrives which their lordships have judged necessary; but I trust that I shall be considered to have done right as a man, and to a brother officer in affliction. My heart could not stand it, and so the thing must rest. I shall submit to the wisdom of the Board to censure me or not, as to them may seem best for the service. I shall bow with all respect to their decision.”

Truly Nelson acted on the grandest advice ever given to man. He heaped coals of fire upon the head of his enemy, and returned good

for the evil he had received from Sir Robert Calder. And let the reader bear in mind that this parting with his best ship on the eve of the battle seriously jeopardised Nelson's chance of success, for, as he himself said four years before, "the loss of one line-of-battle ship might be the loss of a victory."

A few days before the sallying out of the French and Spanish fleets, a vessel was cleared to carry home letters and despatches. Every man was soon busy writing to his family circle and friends, as in all probability it would be the very last chance for sending off a mail for England. The letters were collected, placed on board the vessel, and she, under full sail, was homeward bound.

At that moment Nelson saw a midshipman come up to Lieutenant Pasco, the signal-master, and speak to him; he saw Pasco stamp his foot in evident irritation and vexation, using strong language at the same time, unaware that the admiral was so close to him.

Nelson called out, asking him what was the matter, and the lieutenant replied,

"Nothing that need trouble your lordship."

"You are not the man to lose your temper for nothing," replied Nelson. "What was it?"

"Well, if you must know, my lord, I will tell

you. You see that coxwain," pointing to one of the most active of the petty officers, "we have not a better man on board the *Victory*, and the message which put me out was this: I was told he was so busy receiving and getting off the mail-bags, that he forgot to drop his own letter to his wife into one of them, and he has just discovered it in his pocket."

"Hoist the signal to bring her back," was Nelson's instant command. "Who knows that he may not fall in action to-morrow. His letter shall go with the rest."

The despatch vessel was brought back for the coxwain's letter alone, and it was included in the mail for England.

In telling this story, Pasco used to say, "It was no wonder the common sailors idolised Nelson, since he was always thinking about them, winning their hearts by showing his own."

On the 13th October the old *Agamemnon* joined the fleet, after running the gauntlet of the Rochefort fleet and losing her consort, *L'Amiable*, and when Nelson saw her standing in he was in great glee.

"Here comes Berry," he said. "Now we shall have a battle."

Sir Edward Berry having been in more

battles than any captain in the English fleet, had a proverbial reputation for good luck.

In addition to this auspicious arrival, Nelson had an idea, amounting almost to a certainty, that the twenty-first day of that month would be a memorable one to him. It was the anniversary of a fight of his uncle Suckling's, many years before, against superior force, and, in the family, it was traditionally held to be a lucky day for the Nelsons.

Now that the day of battle was approaching, Nelson sent a memorandum to all his officers to the effect that he desired the name and family of every officer, seaman, or marine who might be killed or wounded in the fight recorded and sent to him, so that he might himself transmit particulars to the chairman of the Patriotic Fund, and each case would then be taken into consideration for the benefit of the sufferer or his family.

This was practically the last order issued before the fatal day which bereft us of our hero.

Captain Blackwood, instigated by the affection he had for his old friend, asked Nelson if he would not transfer his flag to the *Euryalus*, and from thence, in perfect safety, direct the motions of the fleet, his life being too

precious to be exposed in the very thickest of the fray.

Nelson shook his head slightly, and uttered the words "More sail." Where the fire raged hottest, where life was in greatest jeopardy, there Nelson would be.

Foiled in this attempt to shield his commander, and eager to have some active work to do—for frigates were not permitted, in set battles, to interfere, their duties being to telegraph, signal, tow, lead off prizes, turn battle-ships broadside on to the foe, etc., not to fight—Captain Blackwood besought Nelson to let him have the command of one of the two seventy-fours which were vacant at the moment, being, in modern slang, eager to have a share in the "scrap." This would have displaced one of the lieutenants who held the tentative position of captain, and at once the old sea-dog answered (and it must have cost him a pang to disappoint his old comrade):

"No, Blackwood, no! It is those men's birthright, and they shall have it."

How just! Even friendship so dear as Captain Blackwood's must be overlooked rather than that unknown men should have injustice dealt out to them by this great-souled man.

When a man-of-war in those days prepared for battle, it was not the top hamper, as at present, but the divisions, called bulkheads, of the lower decks which had to be removed, so as to make two uninterrupted decks from stem to stern, and allow the master-gunners, or gunners' mates, free play in passing from cannon to cannon; it also allowed the battle smoke to become dissipated sooner than if the divisions had still been standing. At 6.40 the order went to remove every obstacle and convert the lower decks into a fit arena for the fight, and from that moment all privacy ended. The men's hammocks were tightly packed up and bound upon the bulwarks, every wood, every box packed into the lower holds amid the ballast, and the ship was made one long double or treble battery, ready to belch forth fire and death upon the foe.

Probably Nelson's cabin fittings were the last to be removed, but there is reason to believe that a table and stool remained, probably set close to the after-windows, and between the chasers. At any rate, there was a table there between eight and nine o'clock. When the men were demolishing the bulkheads and packing away the belongings of Nelson, he particularly drew their attention to the portrait of

Lady Hamilton, which hung above his usual writing-table, and said:

“Take care of my guardian angel.”

Then he went on deck for a while to be out of the way, and ordered the *Euryalus* to be signalled for—at 8.5, as the reader will see from the log given later on—and the frigate drew up, lying alongside on the larboard quarter. His object in thus calling his signal-frigate was to have Captain Blackwood and Captain Hardy to witness what is called “his will.” He led the two captains to his table, and there, amid the preparations for battle, asked them to witness his signature to his last will and testament.

This is it in full:—

“October 21st, 1805. Then in sight of the combined fleets of France and Spain, distant about ten miles.

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

“First, that she obtained the King of Spain’s letter, in 1796, to his brother, the King of Naples, acquainting him of his intention to declare war against England, from which letter the Ministry sent

out orders to the then Sir John Jervis to strike a



BLACKWOOD AND HARDY WITNESSING NELSON'S WILL.

stroke, if opportunity offered, against either the arsenals of Spain or her fleets. That neither of

these was done is not the fault of Lady Hamilton: the opportunity might have been offered.

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

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

"I also leave to the beneficence of my country my adopted daughter, Horatia Nelson Thompson, and I desire she will use in future the name of Nelson only.

"These are the only favours I ask of my king and country at this moment, when I am going to fight their battle. May God bless my king and country and all those I hold dear. My relations it is needless to mention; they will, of course, be amply provided for."

The two captains stood beside him while he wrote his name—

"NELSON AND BRONTE,"

and appended theirs—

"Witnesses { HENRY BLACKWOOD.
J. M. HARDY."

Horatia, daughter of Lady Hamilton, was then about five years old, and lived with her mother at Merton. Nelson was excessively fond of the child, and, indeed, spent the last few minutes he was at Merton in prayer beside her cot.

The Government took no notice of this codicil or will, and Lady Hamilton lived on the small fortune left by Lord Nelson, aided by a contribution from his brother, until, all being dissipated, she fell into debt, was imprisoned; fled to Calais, along with her daughter "Honorina"; and on 16th January, 1815, in a miserable, obscure lodging, she died almost in starvation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR: LOG-BOOK OF H.M.S. "EURYALUS."

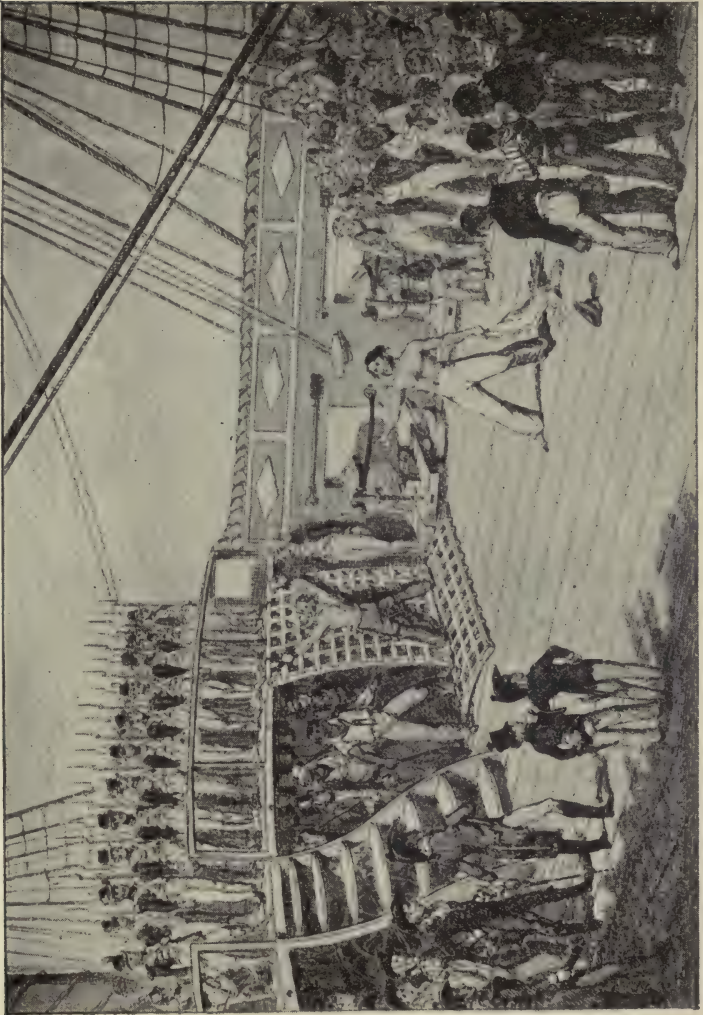
As the original log-book of H.M.S. *Euryalus*, Nelson's signal-frigate (Captain Blackwood), lies before us—old, ragged, stained, and faded, yet how eventful are the events it records!—we give the following extracts directly from it:—

24th September.—Punished George Sanderson with eighteen lashes for uncleanness.

25th September, 4 A.M. [that would be the 26th, as each date begins 12 noon and ends at noon next day].—At daylight, made the signal to the *Victory* "the land." At 5.20, answered our signal. At 7.15, *Victory* N.E., seven leagues from the Rock of Lisbon.

26th September.—Three strange sail in sight. Boarded a Portuguese schooner from Lisbon, bound to Fayal. Rock of Lisbon E. by N., about six leagues; *Victory* N. by E. Noon, punished Wm. Luckworth, eighteen, and I. Eastwith with thirty-six lashes for disobedience of orders.

27th September.—At daylight (28th), Cape St. Vincent S.E. by E. Saw the *Ajax* in chasing another sail. 10 o'clock, saw a strange man-of-war



PUNISHMENT ON BOARD SHIP.

in Leagon Bay. At 11.15, made the signal to the *Victory*, five strange sail, S.S.W.

28th September.—Exchanged ships' numbers with ship *Endymion*, and made her signal to pass within hail. Shortened sail in second reef of topsails. At 6, fresh breeze and clear. At 6.15, made the *Endymion*, signalled again to pass within hail, and spoke her. At 1, saw a light, S.W. by S. At 1.40, hove to on the larboard tack. At 4, W. breezes, put all reefs, st. topgallant sails. At 5, bore up and made sails. At 6, saw four of the in-shore squadron at Cadiz. At 7.20, showed our ship's number to the in-shore squadron. At 7.50, made No. 321. At 8, moderate and clear, Cadiz E.S.E., about ten miles. Hauled more to the southwards for Admiral Collingwood. At 9.40, showed our ship's number to *Dreadnought*. At 9.50, made to the *Dreadnought* No. 307. At 10, joined Admiral Collingwood and the fleet. Cadiz N.E., about ten miles. Captain went on board the admiral at 10.15, and made the general signal.

29th September.—Reported to the *Victory*, and returned to the in-shore squadron. Made the signal to the *Canopus* to speak the admiral. At 5.50, *Canopus* made our signal No. 77. Joined Admiral Bruis and the squadron. At 9.30, took a-back. At 10, took a-back, baffling winds. At 11, announced the admiral's signal, two lights at the mizzen peak. At 2.30, the admiral made a blue light. At 10.30, saw the *Hydra* bring-to a brig, S.S.E. Reported the admiral signal No. 108.

1st October.—Off St. Sebastian. 10 A.M., sold at the mast the clothes belonging to Edward Wiles,

lost overboard on the 22nd ultimo, and sold for £5 rs. 6d.

2nd October.—Spoke an English sloop from Scilly, bound to the English fleet for a market. At 4.50, wore ship, and made sail to the eastward after a brig standing along-shore to the northward. At 6, shortened sail and tacked ship, boarded the chase, and proved her to be a Swedish brig from Barcelona and Villanova, laden with wine, and by her papers bound to London; St. Pedro Fort then bearing S.E. by E., and St. Sebastian Lighthouse N. by E. $\frac{3}{4}$ E., about five miles; detained her. *Hydra* in sight, N.W. by N., moderate and clear. Brig and sloop in company. At 10.30, saw a blue light, N.E. by N. We burnt another at 12. Brig and sloop in company. At 1.30, joined *Hydra*. At 8, *Hydra* had the Swedish brig in tow, and strange sail in sight to the windward. This proved to be H.M. cutter *Eutoponout*,¹ and joined company.

3rd October.—At 1, tacked ship. *Hydra* with brig in tow. Made all sail on the starboard tack in chase some vessels to the southward and W., about six leagues; four strange sails in sight. At 5, tacked ship. At 5.30, sent two boats to board one ship W. and another W.N.W.; hove to. The former ship proved to be an Emperial, bound to Lisbon. Fired two guns for the boats to return. At 6, boats returned with master of Sc. *Swedish*, from Cadiz, bound to Alicant, who reported that the troops were embarked on board the men-of-war lying in Cadiz last Monday, and that it was confidently asserted

¹ Entreprenante.

the fleet intended putting to sea the first strong easterly wind. At 8, made sail on the larboard tack. At 11, up foresail. At 12, tacked. At daylight, saw several sail in the west. Made the private signal, and showed our ship's number to the *Canopus*. At 7.30, communicated the intelligence obtained from the Swedish ship at six last evening by telegraph to Admiral Louis, which was answered.

4th and 5th October.—Carrying intelligence from frigate to frigate to convey to commander-in-chief.

6th October.—2.50, three strange sail west and three W.N.W., apparently men-of-war. At 4.15, annulled No. 3 to *Hydra*. At 4.25, *Hydra* made No. 365. Wore ship and made to eastward. At 7.25, exchanged ship's numbers with H.M.S. *Naiad*. Boarded a vessel, which proved to be a Portugun, laden with oxen, bound for Cadiz. Took five out of her, and sent her to the *Hydra*, and afterwards with the *Naiad* to the fleet. At 10, another line of battleships, and mustered company.

7th October.—2 P.M., made to the *Puker*, No. 128. Killed two oxen, weighed 749 lbs. 9, opened cask of cheese, No. 3 counted 142 lbs. 11 A.M., stood for Cadiz harbour to reconnoitre, and saw thirty-four sail of the line, five frigates, and three brigs. Sailed, *Hydra* and *Puker* in company.

8th October.—5, wore ship, and hove to. Supplied the *Puker* with 130 lbs. fresh beef. 6, fresh gale. In third reef of fore and main topsails. 7.30, wore ship, and spoke *Sirius*. Hove to for the captain of her. 1.30, five strange sail west, four standing southward. 10.30, spoke H.M.S.'s *Phæbe* and *Weazle*. Joined com-

pany, shortened sail, and hove to at noon. Opened one cask wine, No. 1, counted sixty-five gallons.

9th October.—Made way again to Cadiz for information.

10th October.—Captured an American with fish, and gave her in charge of the *Hydra*.

11th October.—Fresh breezes and cloudy. At 1, carried away the jibboom and part of the standing jib. Getting out another boom, and bending another jib. Made the *Sirius* and *Pickle* schooners, tacked and hove to. 6, observed one of the French line-of-battle ships had shifted her berth farther out to the northward.

12th to 16th October.—Tacked and re-tacked near St. Sebastian, to get what news she could glean.

17th October.—The *Euryalus* captures a brig called the *Stella*, and learns that two Spanish seventy-fours, a French seventy-four, and a frigate are about to sail from Vigo.

19th October.—At 9.10, tacked ship. At 10, Cadiz E. $\frac{1}{4}$ N. about four miles. At 11.30, tacked. At 12 (midnight), light breezes and clear, squadron in company, enemy making signals between Rota and Cadiz and about the coast. 3.30 A.M., tacked ship, moderate and clear, out two reef, set fore sail and spanker. 5.30, tacked St. Sebastian N.E. about four miles. At daylight observed the enemy's ships in Cadiz having their topgallant yards across, and eight ships their topsail yards hoisted at the mast-heads. At 7, observed the northernmost ships of the enemy under way. At 7.30, despatched the *Phæbe* to repeat signals between us and the look-out

ships of the fleet. At 8 A.M., nineteen of the enemy's ships under way, all the rest, except the Spanish rear-admiral and another line-of-battle ship, with their top-yards at the mast-head. The *Defence* in sight from the mast-head. *Phœbe* firing three-minute guns. At 8.10, came in hail the *Naiad*, and ordered her to report signals between us and the *Phœbe*. Made a telegraph message to the *Weazle* with three guns. At 9, ordered the *Pickle* to proceed with all possible despatch off Cape Spartal and acquaint all ships that the enemy is out. Cruise there three days and then return to this place. Out first reef and get all ready for making sail. 10, light air, inclinable to calm. At noon, calm, *Phœbe* and *Naiad* between us and the fleet, *Weazle* and *Pickle* S.S.E., *Sirius* in company. Opened a cask of brandy, No. 273, and counted sixty-eight gallons.

There were fifty-three signals made by the *Euryalus* that day!

20th October (Sunday).—Light breezes and clear (wind N.N.W.), made shorting and tacked as the case required. At 4, nine of the enemy's ships out. *Naiad* and *Phœbe* between us and the fleet, repeating signals, another line-of-battle ship W.N.W. At 6, Rota N.E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E., St. Sebastian E. by N. $\frac{1}{2}$ N., about seven miles Cape Trafalgar S.E. by S. $\frac{3}{4}$ S., the enemy's ships E.N.E. about three miles, twelve in number. Bore up and stood towards the enemy to watch her motion, and observed the whole twelve sail standing to the northwards on the larboard tack. *Sirius* and company beat to quarters. At 8, light winds, hauled our wind on the larboard tack. The body of the

enemy's ships N.E. by E. about two miles. St. Sebastian E. $\frac{1}{2}$ S. about four miles. 8.10, hailed the *Sirius*, and ordered her to watch the enemy's motions to the southwards of us. Observed several rockets made by the ships to the westward of us. At 9, wore ship. *Sirius* S.S.W., *Naiad* W. 9.45, hove to. 11.45, observed the ships to the westward of us burn a blue light. At 12, light winds, saw another blue light to windward. At 1.30, sprang up a breeze from the S.W., tacked and made sail to the N.W. At 4, tacked in thirty fathoms. Two ships in sight to windward, *Sirius* and company. At daylight, observed nine of the enemy's ships under sail off Cadiz harbour, and four at anchor. *Naiad* in sight, south. Fresh breezes and cloudy. Observed the enemy's ships in the harbour getting under way. Twenty-two of the English fleet in sight of the mast-head. 7.30, a strange sail N.W. The *Sirius* made sail in chase, boarding the chase, which proved to be an American ship. At 8, fresh breezes and cloudy, twenty-nine sail of the enemy out. At 8.20, perceiving a line-of-battle ship, with a brig in tow, steering with all sail direct for the enemy, within a very near distance, made the private signal to her and proved to be H.M.S. *Agamemnon*. Made the signal to the *Agamemnon* for enemy N.E., repeated it with many guns before it was noticed. She then hauled to the wind on the starboard tack, having a heavy brig in tow, which she did not cast off. 8.35, the *Sirius* got her boat back again from the American ship, and she made all sail on the larboard tack. Observed the van ships of the enemy endeavouring to

get up with the *Sirius*, and a line-of-battle ship firing at the *Sirius*, then bearing from us N.E. by E. two or three miles. 8.50, thirty-four ships of the enemy out. 9.10, pointed out proper signal to *Agamemnon*, the bearings of the commander-in-chief, and made telegraph signal to her that thirty-four sail of the enemy were out, and to make all sail and repeat signals between me and the admiral, and that the enemy's ships were much scattered, and directed Sir Edwin Berry to fire a gun every ten minutes with the presiding signal, but she still stood on the S.E., with the brig in tow, till we lost sight of her. At 9.30, strong breezes, in second reef of topsails. 9.45, observed a number of the enemy's ships bearing and standing towards Cadiz. 10, strong breezes and thick, with rain. Lost sight of all the ships. At 11, main-sail down till noon, the wind more moderate, but very heavy rain and thick weather.

21st October.—The weather clearing up a little, saw the enemy to leeward under low sail on the larboard tack, being close. Wore ship, reefed topsails, and made all possible sail to look for the English fleet in the S.S.W., still keeping sight of the enemy. At 1, more moderate, out reefs, set topgallant sails, saw the *Sirius* to leeward of us, and recalled her. 2 P.M., saw the English fleet in the S.S.W., standing to the westward. At 2.10, made a telegraph message to the *Sirius*: "I am going to the admiral, but will return before night." 3 P.M., exchanged numbers with the fleet. 3.20, made the telegraph message: "The enemy appears determined to push to the westward," with numeral pendant thirty N.B.E., which the

admiral answered. Saw an English line-of-battle ship to leeward of the fleet, with her main topmast down. 4, wore ship and stood to the northward. 4.40, English fleet wore. Enemy's fleet on the larboard tack to the northward. Up mainsail, crossed the royal yards. 5.20, observed some of the enemy's look-out ships reconnoitring us, tacked ship. 5.40, answered the admiral's telegraph message, "I rely upon you keeping sight of the enemy." 6, *Victory* and fleet to the southwards. Enemy's fleet and *Sirius* N. by E. Made several lights and burned false fires to show the enemy's position to Lord Nelson and the fleet. 8.30, wore ship. 9.50, wore ship, up foresail and kept upon the enemy's weather beam about two or three miles distant. Made and shortened sail. Answered, fired gun and burned false fires as necessary. 12, moderate breezes, the body of the enemy's fleet S.E. by S. about three miles, and the lights of the English fleet to the southward and westward five or six miles. 12.30, set foresail, out reef of topsails. At 4, out one reef of topsails. Light breezes and hazy. At daylight, the body of the enemy's fleet E.S.E. five or six miles. English fleet W.S.W. 8 A.M., observed the English fleet forming their line, the headmost ships from the enemy's centre eight or nine miles. The enemy's force consists of thirty-three sail of the line, five frigates, and two brigs. Light winds and hazy, with a great swirl from the westward. English fleet all sail set, standing towards the enemy, then on the starboard tack. 8.5, answered Lord Nelson's signals for Captain Blackwood, and went immediately on

board the *Victory*. Took our station on the *Victory's* larboard quarter, and repeated the admiral's signals.

Villeneuve was an exceedingly skilful admiral, one of the best France ever had, and one worthy of a better master. He planned his dispositions so excellently that he excited the admiration of Nelson, and perhaps it was this very wise arrangement of his battle-line, together with the weather conditions, which influenced Nelson to adopt one of his alternative plans.

Villeneuve's ships sailed from south to north, wind being nearly N.E., in two parallel columns, divided by a cable's length between them, but with each alternate ship filling up the gap so as to present a continuous line of batteries. These lines were of a crescent form, tending to the wind's eye to gain the weather gauge, and from the leading vessel the names were:—*Neptuno* (Sp.), *Scipion* (Fr.), *Intrepide* (Fr.), *Rayo* (Sp.), *Formidable* (Fr.), *Duguay Trouin* (Fr.), *Mont Blanc* (Fr.), *S. Augustino* (Sp.), *S. Francisco de Asis* (Sp.), *Heros* (Fr.), *Hortense* (Fr.), *Furet* (Fr.), *Cornelie* (Fr.), *Santisima Trinidad* (Sp.), *Bucentaure* (Fr.), *Redoutable* (Fr.), *Neptune* (Fr.), *S. Lèandro* (Sp.), *San Juste* (Sp.), *S. Anna* (Sp.), *Indomptable* (Fr.), *Fougueux* (Fr.), *Monarca* (Sp.), *Pluton* (Fr.), *Algesiras* (Fr.),

Aigle (Fr.), *Bahama* (Sp.), *Swiftsure* (Fr.), *Argonaute* (Fr.), *Montanes* (Sp.), *S. Juan Nepomuceno* (Sp.), *Berwick* (Fr.), *Hermione* (Fr.), *Themis* (Fr.), *S. Ildefonso* (Sp.), *Argonauta* (Sp.), *Achille* (Fr.), *Principe de Asturias* (Sp.), *Argus* (Fr.); *Rhine* (Fr.), *Flora* (Sp.), and *Mercurio* (Sp.)—forty-two all told, including frigates and a brig.

To break up this magnificent line the English line of battle was as follows:—

WINDWARD.

Victory,
Téméraire,
Neptune,
Conqueror,
Leviathan,
Ajax,
Orion,
Agamemnon,
Minotaur,
Spartiate,
Britannia,
Africa.

LEEWARD.

Royal Sovereign,
Bellisle,
Mars,
Tonnant,
Bellerophon,
Colossus,
Achilles,
Polyphemus,
Revenge,
Swiftsure,
Defiance,
Thunderer,
Defence,
Prince,
Dreadnought,

while attached were the frigates and schooners *Euryalus*, *Sirius*, *Phœbe*, *Naiad*, *Pickle*, and *Entreprenante* (cutter); their duties being to



NELSON PROCEEDING TO THE QUARTER-DECK.

hover about, tow line-of-battle ships, carry messages, signal, secure prizes, etc.

Nelson's line kept a point or two northwards, so that the lee division became engaged first. Both lines made all sail possible, even studding sails being run out to assist their way. The wind was light, and a moderate swell on, so that everything bade fair for a famous and uninterrupted encounter of strength.

When Blackwood failed in his well-meant plan to shield his commander-in-chief as much as possible, he reminded him of the plan to let two first-raters precede the *Victory*, and, by bearing the first terrible impact, lighten it for Nelson, proposing that the *Téméraire* and *Neptune* be allowed to outsail the *Victory*. "Certainly," said Nelson—and there must have been a merry twinkle in his eye when he said so—"Certainly; if they can." The *Téméraire* was accordingly hailed to take precedence of the *Victory*; but Nelson noticing one of the lower studding sails down, roundly rated the lieutenant of the forecastle for his neglect, and had it clapped on instantly, rendering the *Téméraire's* efforts quite ineffectual. At the same time he remarked to Blackwood, "I'll give them such a dressing as they never had before." Seeing that if something was not done quickly, the

Victory was certain to be first into the enemy's line, Blackwood, now intensely anxious for Nelson's life, appealed to Hardy, suggesting that if the *Victory* kept on such a press of sail the following ships would not arrive at their allotted posts in time. Hardy could not see it in that light—he was captain, and wanted to be in first; and while they argued, Nelson settled the matter by hailing the *Téméraire* himself, just as her bows were level with the *Victory's* quarter. "I'll thank you, Captain Hardy," he shouted, "to keep your proper station, which is astern of the *Victory*."

Both ruses to protect Nelson from unnecessary exposure having miscarried, there was but one remaining, and that was to prevail upon him *not* to adopt his usual custom of wearing his stars and orders during this battle. He used to say he had won them in fair battle, and they had a right to be on him whenever he fought. The officers had gone so far as to delegate Mr. Scott, the surgeon, to approach him upon the delicate matter; but, as if prescient of their plans and confabulations, Nelson suddenly gave orders to clear the quarter-deck and retire to quarters; so that plan, too, proved abortive.

At eleven o'clock Nelson left the quarter-deck and retired below. All his furniture had

been removed meanwhile, but a tentative screen was erected to give him a semi-privacy until the guns were wanted. The signal-lieutenant followed him to proffer a request that he, being acting-lieutenant, might be permitted to take his place as first during the action, one senior in rank having made a claim for the position by right of superiority; but the petition was never proffered, for, on entering, the lieutenant saw his chief kneeling before his table and writing in his private diary.

These words—the last he ever penned in his book—ran as follows:—

“ At seven the enemy, wearing in succession. May the great God, whom I worship, grant to my country, and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory; and may no misconduct in any one tarnish it; and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British fleet. For myself, individually, I commit my life to Him who made me, and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my country faithfully. To Him I resign myself, and the just cause which is entrusted to me to defend. Amen, amen, amen.”

It was probably then that Nelson penned the last letter he ever wrote—one to Lady Hamilton—of which part is given here in facsimile.

Lieutenant Pasco, the officer in question,

Battle, may heaven bless you pray
your Nelsons favorite, Oct. 20th in the
morning we were out to the mouth of the
Strait but the Wind Lad not come far
enough to the Westward below the (combined
feet) Weather the shores of Dr. Pagan's land
they were visited as James Fort, Sail of ships
of War which I suppose to be 34 of the Line
and six frigates, a group of them was
seen off the Light house of Medig this morning
but it blows so very fresh I think better
that I rather believe they will go into
the Harbour before night, May God
Almighty give us success over these fellows

and shall us to get a Peace

This letter was found open and
it is Cook's & brought to
- Lt. Hamilton's

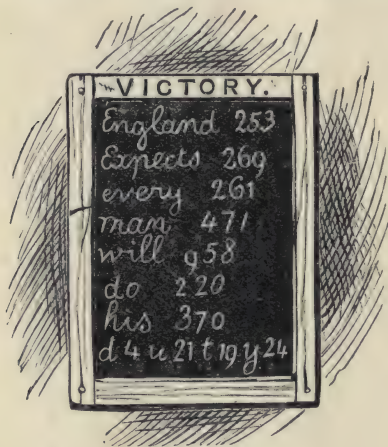
Copy - H. Co. D. J.

It is misread & marked
C. 2222

It is from Lt. Col. J. Nelson.

waited silently until he was finished, and then presented his official report; his personal one he deemed to be now out of place. Then he re-ascended to the upper deck, where Captain Blackwood awaited his final orders before going on board the *Euryalus*.

“I will now amuse the fleet with a signal,”



NELSON'S SIGNAL.

said Nelson to Blackwood, when he arrived on deck. Adding, “Suppose we telegraph: ‘Nelson confides that every man will do his duty.’”

“Why not say ‘England’ in place of Nelson?” said Blackwood.

“Capital!” replied Nelson; “‘England’ is better. Mr. Pascoe,” addressing the signal-

lieutenant, “I wish to say to the fleet, ‘England confides that every man will do his duty.’ You must be quick, for I have one more, which is for ‘Close action.’”

“If your lordship will permit me to substitute ‘expects’ for ‘confides,’” replied Pasco, “it will be sooner completed, because ‘expects’ is in the vocabulary, but ‘confides’ must be spelt.”

“That will do, Pasco,” replied Nelson, hastily, yet apparently satisfied. “Make it directly.”

So the memorable signal was made, “England expects that every man will do his duty.”

And a minute or two later there floated the last and permanent one, “Close action!”

Nelson was watching the progress of the *Royal Sovereign*, which, by reason of her being fresh out of dock and clean-bottomed, was rapidly leaving her line and closing upon the enemy, with a long gap between her and the ship following.

“Ah!” said he, “see how that noble fellow Collingwood carries his ship into action.”

Then he turned to Captain Blackwood and said:

“I can do no more. We must trust to the Great Disposer of all events and to the justice of our cause. I thank God for this great opportunity for doing my duty.”

Shortly afterwards, being still a mile and a half from the enemy, though making every press to get at him, Nelson directed Blackwood and Captain Prouse, of the *Sirius*, to return to their ships, and as they passed along the columns tell the captains he depended upon each to get into action as quickly as possible. He then bade them both "Good day."

"I trust, my lord," said Blackwood, "that on my return to the *Victory*, which shall be as soon as possible, I shall find your lordship well and in possession of twenty prizes." This he said, alluding to a remark by Nelson just before that nothing short of twenty would satisfy him.

"God bless you, Blackwood," replied Nelson. "I shall never speak to you again."

While this conversation had been progressing, the *Victory* was drawing steadily into range. One shot had been fired; it struck short; a second dropped alongside; and as the captains were leaving, a third passed through the main topgallant sail, and they knew that no time must be lost in rejoining their respective frigates.

As Cuthbert Collingwood opened the battle, we will follow his fortunes first.

Admiral Collingwood's servant relates:—

“I entered the admiral’s cabin about daylight, and found him already up and dressing. He asked me if I had seen the French fleet, and on my replying that I had not, he told me to look out at them, adding that in a very short time we should see a very great deal of them. I then observed a crowd of ships to leeward, but I could not help looking with still greater interest at the admiral, who, during all this time, was shaving himself with a composure that quite astonished me.”

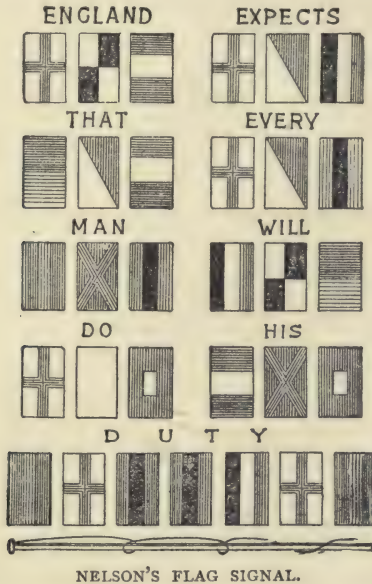
He dressed himself with peculiar care, and meeting Lieutenant Clavell, advised him to pull off his boots. “You had better,” he said, “put on silk stockings, as I have done; for if one should get a shot in the leg, they would be so much more manageable to the surgeon.” He then proceeded to visit the decks, encouraged the men to the discharge of their duty, and addressing the officers, said to them: “Now, gentlemen, let us do something to-day which the world may talk of hereafter.”

He had changed his flag about ten days before the action from the *Dreadnought*, the crew of which had been so constantly practised in the exercise of the great guns, under his daily superintendence, that few ships’ companies could equal them in rapidity and precision of firing. He was accustomed to tell them that if they could fire three well-directed

broad-sides in five minutes, no vessel could resist them; and from constant practice they were enabled to do so in three minutes and a half. But though he had left a crew which had been disciplined under his own eye, there was an advantage in the change, for the *Royal Sovereign*, into which he went, had lately returned from England; and as her copper was quite clean, she much outsailed the other ships of the lee division. Lord Nelson had made the *Royal Sovereign's* signal to pass through the enemy's line at the twelfth ship from the rear; but Admiral Collingwood, observing him to be a two-decker, and that the one ahead of her was a first-rate, deviated so far from the order as to proceed to the attack of this latter, which carried Admiral Alva's flag. While yet running down, the signal was made, "England expects that every man will do his duty," and Collingwood said he wished Nelson would make no more signals, for they all knew what they were to do; but when the purport of it was communicated to him, he expressed great delight and admiration, and made it known to the officers and ship's company.

The *Royal Sovereign* was far in advance when Lieutenant Clavell observed that the *Victory* was setting her studding sails (this was

to outsail the *Téméraire*), and with that spirit of honourable emulation which prevailed in the squadrons, and particularly between these two ships, he pointed it out to Admiral Collingwood, and requested permission to follow suit.



“No,” replied the admiral. “The ships of our line are not yet sufficiently up for us to do so now, but you may be getting ready.” Accordingly Clavell issued the necessary orders, and when everything was prepared, and each man stood at or held to his place, he stood

regarding his commander anxiously. Collingwood saw his anxious look, and—nodded. Instantly Clavell hurried to Captain Rotherham, and told him it was the admiral's wish that all sail should be set. Almost before the command of the captain was out of his mouth studding sails were run out, and the *Royal Sovereign* bent to the light breezes and forged still farther ahead of her following ships.

Regarding Captain Rotherham, an incident may be here narrated. The commander-in-chief had summoned Collingwood on board the *Victory* some little time before, and when he arrived alone, remarked upon the absence of his captain, Rotherham, asking why he had not accompanied him. For some days there had been a difference between these two able seamen, and Collingwood, with his usual blunt truth and honesty, openly said they were not on good terms with one another.

"Terms!" said Nelson. "Not on good terms with each other? Despatch a boat instantly for Captain Rotherham of the *Royal Sovereign*," he commanded. When Rotherham arrived on board, he took him by the hand and led him up to Collingwood.

"Look," said he, turning to the fleets in the distance; "yonder are the enemy. Shake

hands like brave men and Englishmen, and have no more differences.”

Delighted to be brought together, they grasped hands, their hearts went out freely to one another, and the slight breach, which might have widened into a quarrel, was healed. They were friends again as of yore.

This spirit of emulation exhibited by Clavell and Rotherham, although praiseworthy, was not wise, for the *Royal Sovereign*, being far and away the best sailer in the line, soon distanced those vessels which ought to have struck at the enemy simultaneously, and she reached the line, alone, too soon, and had to sustain terrible odds before her supporters arrived.

Collingwood's next order was that every man lie down at his post, as he saw the *Fougueux*—next to the *Santa Anna*, which vessel he was aiming at—had closed up to prevent his running between, and he determined to ram her first and dismast her. At the same time (now he had accurate directions) he ordered several cannons to be discharged, to surround the *Royal Sovereign* with a cloak of smoke, and particularly hide her from the enemy's gunners. The *Fougueux* backed her main topsails to check her way, and saved herself, firing into

the *Royal Sovereign* as she brushed past. The *Royal Sovereign* passed the *Santa Anna*, giving her a full broadside into her stern, raking her so as to kill or disable nearly 400 of her crew. Then, with helm hard-a-starboard, she swung round so closely that the lower yard-arms of the two vessels became interlocked, and a deadly duel between these two terrible vessels began by one terrific double broadside from the *Santa Anna*. This tremendous broadside made the *Royal Sovereign* heel fully two streaks of her timbers out of the water with its impact.

It was at this moment Collingwood, in the wild exultation of battle, shouted to Rotherham:

“What would Nelson give to be here?”

It is reported that the French Admiral Villeneuve, in the *Bucentaure*, in the centre, struck with the daring manner in which the terrible Englishmen were bearing down, and the general manœuvres of Nelson, said that victory must, under the circumstances, go against him, and while he fought bravely, as became a brave man, he despaired of success.

The fierce broadside of the *Santa Anna* had shot away the *Royal Sovereign's* studding sails and halliards. Collingwood noted a topgallant studding sail had fallen upon, and was hanging over, the gangway, and calling Clavell, the two



BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.

gathered it in, rolled it up, and stowed it in one of the boats, remarking they might need it afterwards.

It may be here mentioned that, when in action, the boats were slung on to the lower cross-yards, to be out of the way of the fighting men on deck, and at the same time were easily lowered into the water to save life if necessary.

For a quarter of an hour the terrible fight lasted, and then the fire of the *Santa Anna* slackened. Captain Rotherham came up to Collingwood, and, shaking him warmly by the hand, said: "I congratulate you, sir; she is slackening her fire, and must soon strike."

To Collingwood's great regret, the honour of capturing one of the flag-ships before the arrival of the fleet was not granted him, for, though shattered and reeling at every discharge, the Spaniard continued to fire at intervals, while the *Fougueux* ranged herself on his lee quarter, and a second two-decker, assisted by two others, was on her bows, pouring in tons of metal continuously, endeavouring, by sheer weight, to sink the daring Englishman. So terrible was the fire, that Collingwood ordered Captain Vallack, of the *Marines*, to remove his men from the poop, while he remained on it alone. After a few minutes Collingwood, himself, left

the poop, and descending to the quarter-deck, went from gun to gun, encouraging his men, charging them not to waste a single shot, and even laying a gun now and then himself. The *Fougueux* was now actually touching the quarter of the *Royal Sovereign*, and had there been Englishmen on board of her instead of Frenchmen, it would have been all up with Collingwood, for boarders could have swept the upper deck's crew away in a few moments. But the quarter-deck cannonades were double-shotted and brought to bear upon her forecastle with such good effect that she reeled back again, and contented herself with firing at a safer distance, until the *Tonnant* swept up to her and drove her ignominiously away.

At 2.30 the *Santa Anna* struck, and at this time almost all the leading English ships were fighting "hammer and tongs" with the enemy. Masts were shot away, sails in ribbons or tatters, a dense cloud of smoke enveloping the contending vessels, and scarcely one knew which vessel it was with which they were engaged, save that it was an enemy. The roar of the thousands of cannon reverberated like a terrible thunderstorm, and death and wounds were dealt at every shock. Rent and torn, the hulls of the combatants ran out water as they

reeled and swayed, and the angel of the incarnate furies of war must have gloated at the slaughter. The *Royal Sovereign* was so shattered that she could not get away from the ship that hung upon her, and Collingwood was obliged to signal for the *Euryalus* to take possession of the *Santa Anna*, and bring her admiral on board. Captain Blackwood found that brave man was almost at the point of death, and brought his captain instead, who, when he was taken on board the *Royal Sovereign* to deliver up the swords, asked, in broken English, for the name of the vessel. When told it was *Royal Sovereign*, he patted one of the guns with his hands and said, "Royal Sovereign! I think she should be called the Royal Devil."

A boat arrived from the *Victory* with the startling intelligence that Nelson had been wounded, and Captain Blackwood, of the *Euryalus*, proceeded to the *Victory* for more news.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONTINUATION OF THE LOG OF THE "EURYALUS."
THE "VICTORY" BREAKS THE LINE.

HAVING followed Collingwood into the battle, and witnessed his fortunes, we will now return to Nelson. But meanwhile, to give a general view of the fight, will resume the log of the *Euryalus* from the point where we left off:—

10, observed the enemy veering and coming to the wind on the larboard tack. 11.40, repeated Lord Nelson's telegraph message, "I intend to push or go through the end of the enemy's line, to prevent them getting into Cadiz." Saw the land bearing E. by N. five or six leagues. 11.56, repeated Lord Nelson's telegraph message, "England expects that every man will do his duty." Noon, light winds and a great swirl from the westward. Observed the *Royal Sovereign* (Admiral Collingwood), leading the lee line, bearing down on the enemy's rear line, being then nearly within gun-shot of them. Lord Nelson, leading the weather line, bore down upon the enemy's centre. Captain Blackwood returned from the *Victory*. Cape Trafalgar S.E. by E. about five leagues.

Remarks, etc., *Euryalus*, on Tuesday, 22nd October, 1805.—Light winds and hazy, British fleet bearing down in two lines on the enemy's, which was formed in one line N.N.E. to S.S.E. Their strongest force from the van to the centre. 12.13, the British fleet bearing down on the enemy, Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson leading the weather line in the *Victory*, and Vice-Admiral Collingwood the lee line. 12.15, the enemy opened a heavy fire upon the *Royal Sovereign*. 12.16, the English admirals hoisted their respective flags, and the fleet the British ensign (white). 12.17, Admiral Collingwood returned the enemy's fire in a brave and steady manner. 12.20, we repeated Lord Nelson's signal for the British fleet to engage close, which was answered by the whole fleet. 12.21, the van and centre of the enemy's line opened a heavy fire upon the *Victory* and the ships she was leading into action. 12.22, Admiral Collingwood and the headmost ships of his line broke into the rear of the enemy's, when the action commenced in a most severe and determined manner. 12.23, Lord Nelson returned the enemy's fire in the centre and van in a determined, cool, and steady manner. 12.24, Lord Nelson and the headmost ships of the line he led broke into the van and centre of the enemy's line, and commenced the action in that quarter in a steady and gallant manner. Observed the *Africa* coming into the line, she being to leeward, with all sail set, on the starboard tack (free). We kept Lord Nelson's signal flying at the main-royal mast-head for the British fleet to engage the enemy close. 12.26, observed one of the French



BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.

ships totally dismasted, about the centre of the line, by some of the ships of our lee line, and another of them with the foreyard and mizzenmast shot away. 1.15, observed the *Tonnant's* foretopmast shot away. 1.20, a Spanish three-deck ship with her mizzenmast shot away. 1.25, observed an English ship with her fore and mizzen masts shot away. 1.30, a Spanish two-decker ship with her mizzenmast shot away. 1.32, her mainyard shot away. The centre and rear of the enemy's line hard pressed in action. 2 P.M., the *Africa* engaged very close a French two-deck ship, and in about five minutes time shot away her main and mizzen masts. 2.10, observed the *Mars* hard pressed in action. The remainder of the British fleet, which were come into action, kept up a well-directed fire on the enemy. 2.15, the *Neptune*, supported by the *Colossus*, opened a heavy fire upon the *Santisima Trinidad* and two other of the enemy's line which were next her. 2.20, the *Santisima Trinidad* main and mizzen masts shot away. 2.30, the *Africa* shot away the fore-mast of the two-deck ship she was engaged with, and left her a complete wreck. She then bore up under the *Santisima Trinidad's* stern, and reached her. *Colossus* and *Neptune* still engaged with her and the other two ships, which appeared by their colours to be French. 2.34, the *Santisima Trinidad's* fore-mast shot away, and at 2.36, one of the French ships' main and mizzen masts. Observed nine of the enemy's van wear and standing towards the centre. Observed the *Royal Sovereign* with her main and mizzen mast gone. 2.36, observed, and answered Lord Nelson's

signal to pass within hail. Made all possible sail and made the signal to the *Sirius*, *Phæbe*, and *Naiad* to take the ships in tow which were disabled, E.N.E., which they answered. Sounded in fifty fathoms. 2.40, observed a French two-deck ship on fire and dismasted in the S.S.E. quarter. Passed the *Spartiate* and another two-deck ship standing towards the enemy's van and opening a heavy fire, when the action commenced in that quarter very severe. 2.50, passed by the *Mars*, who hailed us to take them in tow. Captain Blackwood answered that he would do it with pleasure, but that he was going to take the second in command in tow—the *Royal Sovereign*. The officer who hailed us from the *Mars* said Captain Duff was no more. 3, came alongside the *Royal Sovereign*, and took her in tow. Captain Blackwood was hailed by Admiral Collingwood, and ordered to go on board the *Santa Anna* (Spanish three-deck ship) and bring the admiral to him, which Captain Blackwood obeyed. 3.30, the enemy's van approached as far as the centre, and opened a very heavy fire on the *Victory*, *Neptune*, *Spartiate*, *Colossus*, *Mars*, *Africa*, *Agamemnon*, and the *Royal Sovereign*, which we had in tow, and was most nobly returned. We had several of our main and foretopmast backstays and rigging cut away by the enemy's shot, and there being no time to haul down the studding sails, as the enemy's van ships hauled up for us, we cut them away, and let them go overboard. At which time one of the enemy's ships which was nearest to us was totally dismasted. 4, light variable winds. Not possible to

manage the *Royal Sovereign* so as to bring her broad-side to bear upon the enemy's ship. 4.10, we had the cable, by which the *Royal Sovereign* was towed, shot away, and a cutter from the quarter-deck. Wore ship, and stood for the *Victory*. Observed the *Sirius*, *Phæbe*, and *Naiad* come into the centre, and take some of the disabled ships in tow. At this time the firing ceased a little. 4.30, observed a Spanish two-deck ship dismasted, and struck to one of our ships. Observed several of the enemy's ships still hard engaged. 5 P.M. . . ¹ of the enemy's van and . . ¹ of their rear bore up, and made all sail to the northward. Were closely followed by the English, which opened a heavy fire upon them, and dismasted a French two-deck ship and a Spanish two-deck ship. 5.20, the *Achille* (French two-deck ship), which was on fire, blew up with a great explosion. 5.25, made sail for the *Royal Sovereign*. Observed the *Victory's* mizzen-mast go overboard. About which time the firing ceased, leaving the English fleet conquerors, with . . ¹ sail of the combined enemy's fleet in our possession (one blown up), two of which were first-raters, and all dismasted. 5.55, Admiral Collingwood came on board, and hoisted his flag (blue at the fore). 6.15, sent a spare shroud-hawser on board the *Royal Sovereign*, and took her in tow, and at the same time sent all our boats with orders from Admiral Collingwood to all the English ships to take the captured ships in tow, and follow the admiral. At this, sent a boat on board the *St. Anna* (Spanish three-deck ship), which had struck

¹ Hiatus.

with one main topgallant sail, standing pile, and main topgallant topsails. 7.36, took a-back, and the *Royal Sovereign* fell on board of our starboard beam, and there being a great swell, she damaged the main channels, took away the lanyards of the main and mizzen rigging, jolly boat from the quarter and davits, most of the quarter-deck, and waist hammock cloths, boards, realing, with a number of hammocks and bedding, took away main and mizzen topgallant masts, lost the royals and yards, tore the fore and main sails very much, and took away a great part of the running rigging. 7.40, got her clear. Made sail on the starboard tack, with a light wind from the W.S.W. and a great swell. Employed repairing the damages sustained by the *Royal Sovereign* falling on board of us.

Light was the breeze, though the rolling swell of the water hurried her on somewhat, as the *Victory*, under all press of canvas, made her way towards the *Bucentaure*, upon which Admiral Villeneuve stood ready to give her a warm reception. Scarcely had Captain Blackwood left, when some seven or eight of the vessels clustered around the *Bucentaure*, opened fire upon the beautiful *Victory* sailing so grandly and stately towards them, and for nearly three-quarters of an hour the hail of iron pelted upon her, riddling her sails, and, in some cases, bringing them down with a run. Every

studding sail was shot away, close to her yard-arms, and fell into the sea.

Mr. Scott, Nelson's secretary, while talking to Captain Hardy, was struck by a round-shot and killed. They tried to remove his body before Nelson saw it, but, quick to see all that transpired, he had already noticed the sad event.

"Is that poor Scott who is gone?" he asked. But only a few minutes more had elapsed when his assistant-clerk, who took his place, met with the same fate, a cannon-ball passing him so closely as to kill him without touching him, and he, too, was carried down.

The *Victory* was now but a quarter-mile away from the *Bucentaure*, and her mizzen-mast had been shot away, her wheel hit and shattered, so that she had to be steered from below (these great vessels had several tillers, one below the other, on their respective decks to meet such an emergency). Eight marines had been carried away by a single shot, and Nelson had ordered the rest to seek shelter about the deck. A round-shot pierced her upper timbers, and ricochetting along her quarter-deck, struck the fore-brace bits, shattering them, and driving a shower of splinters upon Nelson and Hardy while they walked

there, one of which bruised Hardy's foot. The two stopped, and looked at one another. As no harm had been done, Nelson smiled, and said, “This is too warm work, Hardy, to last long.”

Twenty men had now been killed, and thirty carried below wounded, yet not one single shot had the *Victory* fired. Nelson moved about among the men, as had done Collingwood. He praised their coolness, and commended their endurance, but the suspense was terrible to bear as she steadily made her way, like a demon, desperately determined to devour. Her silent sailing terrified the enemy far more than if she had been firing as she approached.

At last the horrible time drew to a close, and Hardy tried to find out how he could lay his vessel alongside the *Bucentaure*. In vain he scanned the closely-packed vessels: there was no room to get around her stern, nor even pass through, without going “on board” one or the other of them. He reported his fix to Nelson. “I cannot help it,” said Nelson. “It does not signify which we run on board of; go on board which you please—take your choice.”

As the ship's bell struck for one o'clock, the bows of the *Victory* crossed the wake of the

Bucentaure, and as each line of double-shotted guns came level, their roar sounded, and their missiles tore through her woodwork, while the smoke, driving backwards, filled the ship, and covering the *Victory*, including Nelson, with the showers of dust from the wreckage. From stem to stern that terrible hail penetrated, and great was the slaughter upon the *Bucentaure*. Twenty guns were dismantled, and the French reckoned that 400 men were killed and wounded by that one awful discharge. Like demons—now the period of suspense was over—worked the men, loading and reloading, and as the *Victory* swung around and fell on board the *Redoubtable*, again and again that hail of iron swept into her as the two antagonists fell slowly off before the wind to the south-eastward.

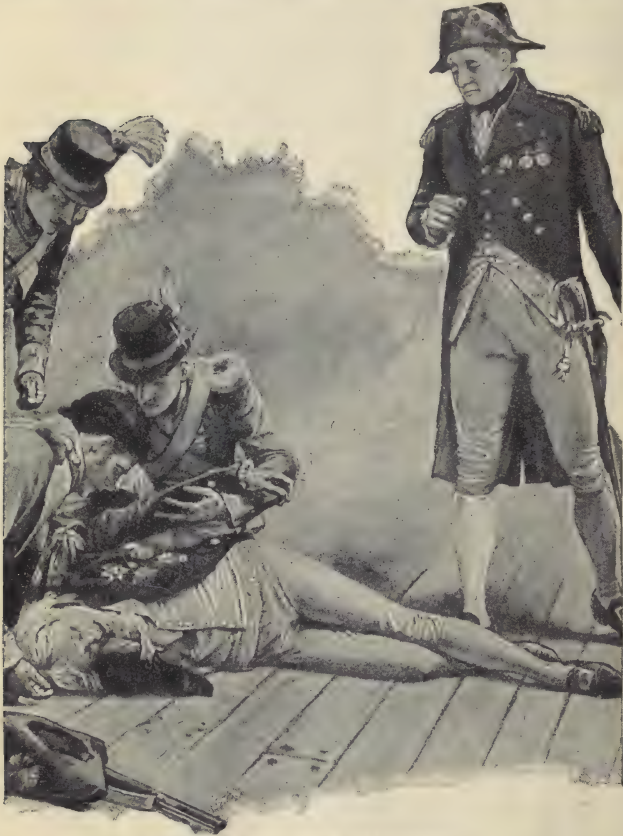
This great coward, which had courage enough to fire upon a vessel which would not answer her fire, now discharged her guns *once*, and, letting down her ports, secured them so as to prevent being boarded, simply terrified of the English, and contented herself with potting off the single men and officers by means of sharpshooters placed in her tops. It was to this murderous mode of warfare—a mode which Nelson, true warrior, would never agree to; for,

while it might lead to the assassination of individual sailors and officers, it had no effect upon the results of the actual engagement—that poor Nelson owed his death-wound. Never would Nelson allow a life to be needlessly sacrificed, and in this case, when he deemed sufficient damage had been done to the *Redoubtable* to justify her striking honourably, he twice ceased his broadsides upon her, rendering his own vessel's decks clear enough of smoke to present a target to those detestable sharpshooters he so much condemned.

The *Téméraire* had attached herself to the *Redoubtable* on the other side, and she added her broadsides to the *Victory's*, depressing her guns, as did the *Victory*, and using half-charges to prevent the balls carrying right through her, and thus injure friend as well as foe. At the same time, men were stationed with buckets of water to extinguish conflagrations, for the muzzles of the guns almost grazed her sides; and if she had caught fire, all three vessels would have perished. The *Victory's* larboard guns were in full play upon the *Santisima Trinidad*, her old opponent, while the *Neptune* and *Colossus* pounded away at her at the other side.

At the moment when, in response to the

orders of Nelson, the starboard batteries had ceased to fire upon the unresponding *Redout-*



NELSON WOUNDED (TRAFALGAR).

able, and the cannon smoke became thin enough to allow the sharpshooters to distinguish and

single out the occupants of the *Victory's* decks, one of them, placed in the mizzen-top, not more than fifteen yards off, saw Nelson, and recognising him by his orders, took deliberate aim, and shot him through the shoulder, the bullet shattering his spine. He fell upon his face on the identical spot where poor Scott had fallen, which was still wet with his blood.

Enraged at the act, the *Victory's* men at once retaliated, and not one of all those placed on the tops but fell before the bullets of the Englishmen. The man who had shot Nelson (he wore a glazed hat, and had on a white frock) was marked by a quartermaster; and as the latter and two midshipmen (Mr. Collingwood and Mr. Pollard) were the only three remaining on the poop, they devoted their efforts to bringing him down. The quartermaster supplied the midshipmen with cartridges, while they kept up the fire at the men, particularly at the real culprit. At last only two remained; one tried to scramble down the rigging, whom Mr. Pollard shot, and he fell upon the poop. The second then advanced, and the quartermaster shouted out, "That's he! that's he!" and he fell, shot by the miscreant; but a moment later both middies fired together, and the

assailant threw up his hands and dropped, one ball through his head, another through his chest.

Hardy, who stood near Nelson, turned round, but three men had sprung forward, and the hero was in their arms already. As they raised him up, looking at Hardy, he exclaimed:

“They have done for me at last, Hardy.”

“I hope not,” cried Hardy.

“Yes! my backbone is shot through,” was his sad response.

The men, assisted by others who had gathered, raised him and prepared to carry him to the surgeons. As they were going down the ladder, he saw that the tiller-ropes had been shot away, and ordered new ones to be rove immediately.

An eye-witness tells the story differently (see *Times*, 7th November 1805):—

“When Nelson was shot, and was yet in the arms of the men who were supporting him, his eye caught the tiller-rope, which was unusually slack. He exclaimed with much emphasis, ‘Tighten that rope there!’ an eminent proof that his professional arduour still survived the brilliancy of the flame of life.”

The second account is the more likely, as the tiller-ropes were not in a position to be shot

away, unless that part of the vessel had been destroyed by a broadside.



“THE RIFLEMAN WHO HAD KILLED NELSON FLUNG UP HIS ARMS
SHOT” (TRAFALGAR).

That his crew might be ignorant of his identity when being carried down the ladder,

he covered his face and breast with his handkerchief, so as to hide his features and decorations.

Arrived at the cockpit, the bearers found it full of wounded and dying men, and it was with great difficulty they could make their way to the midshipmen's berth, where they laid their valued burden down reverently.

It is said that a midshipman called Price, only seventeen years of age, who had just been brought in with the lower part of his leg cut away by a chain shot, knowing who the new sufferer was, sent away the surgeon attending him. "Never mind me," he said; "I can stay; let me doctor myself;" and drawing his own knife, cut off a large piece of the flesh and the splinter of the bone with great composure. Such were the Nelson men in those days!

A short examination showed the surgeon that the wound was mortal, but, save to Hardy and the chaplain, this was not communicated to any one. As for Nelson, he required no official intimation: the deadness of his back and the gushing of blood within his chest told him the truth too well, and he insisted upon the doctors leaving him and attending to others who might benefit by their care.

"For you can do nothing for me," he said.

He remained in great pain while those



Holland

THE COCKPIT WHERE LORD NELSON DIED.

especially attendant upon him fanned him with sheets of paper and moistened his lips with

lemonade to alleviate his intense thirst; but, above his personal sufferings, his anxiety as to the fortunes of the day were terrible. True, every now and then the wild hurrahs above told him that one after another of the enemy's ships was striking, and at every hurrah an expression of joy was visible in his eye. Captain Hardy had had to leave him, and with a dying man's impatience Nelson longed to have him back beside him.

"Oh, will no one bring Hardy to me?" he moaned. "He must be killed! He is surely dead!"

For an hour and a half he had to endure Hardy's absence. The only change from the groans of the wounded and dying were the occasional cheers as victory declared itself from time to time, or the cries of horror which reached them as the French flung Greek fire to enflame the ships' shrouds and rigging—efforts frustrated by the coolness of the men, who, planted here and there, suppressed the flames as quickly as they burst forth.

Meantime the *Redoubtable* had struck, but owing to the inward sheer of her upper works, and the lower ports being closed, she could not be boarded. Some, indeed, proposed to Captain Hardy to swim to her and climb on board, but

he would not sanction it. The *Santisima Trinidad* had also struck, and many of her men had thrown themselves into the sea and swum to the *Victory* for succour. The *Argonauta* and *Bahama* had each lost 400 men, the *San Juan Nepomuceno* 350. Five English ships had engaged five French, and these latter shut their ports in terror and deserted their guns; but, not misled by this coward's pretence, our men continued to fire until they were every one crippled and captured.

The French admiral signalled to the wings to close in upon the English, and the rear vessels of the English fleet turned their attention to them.

It is related (in fact, officially published, although there remains a doubt as to the actual occurrence) that the *Téméraire*, locked together with a Spanish ship on one side and a French ship on the other, battling on both quarters, was boarded by each enemy, and the two flags were actually hoisted, but by desperate valour the British drove the boarders overboard, replaced her honoured flag, and finally captured both her assailants. It may be true, it is true to British tradition, and the fact remains that it was embodied in Collingwood's official report of the battle.

At last the terrible hour and a half was over, and Hardy dared to leave the deck, and, with anxious heart, make his way to the cockpit. The two friends pressed one another's hands in silence. Neither could speak for a while. At last Nelson managed to ask :

“How goes the day with us, Hardy?”

“Very well,” he answered. “Ten ships have struck, but five in the van have tacked and show an intention to bear down upon the *Victory*. I have called two or three of our ships round, and have no doubt of giving them a drubbing.”

“I hope none of our ships have struck?” was Nelson's next question.

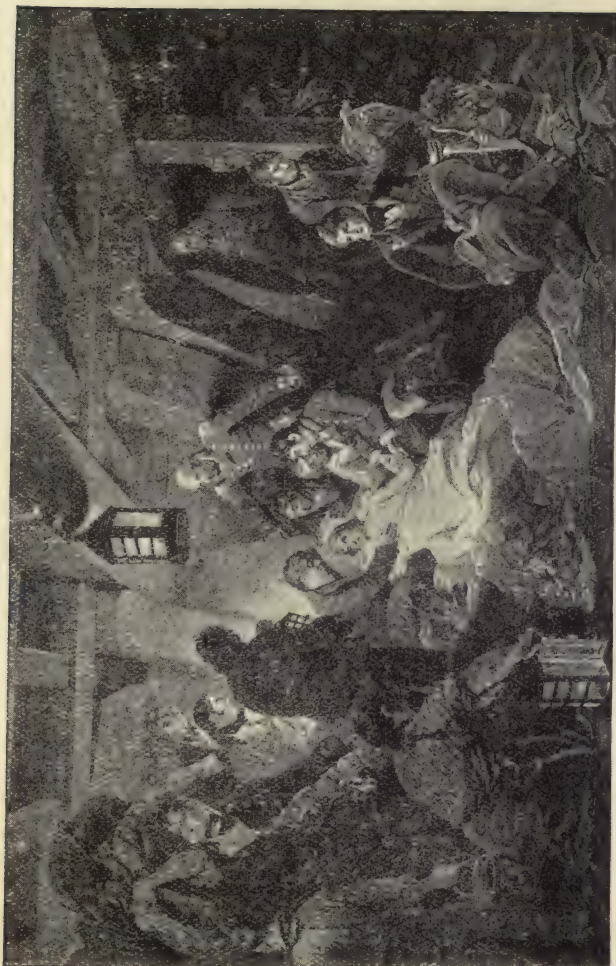
“There was no fear of that,” responded Hardy.

After a moment Nelson began again :

“I am a dead man, Hardy,” he said. “I am going fast, it will be all over with me soon. Come nearer to me, Hardy,” and he whispered, “Let my dear Lady Hamilton have my hair, and all other things belonging to me.”

To cheer his chief up a little Hardy ventured the remark that he knew Dr. Beatty was not so despairing, but still held out hopes.

“Oh, no!” responded Nelson; “it is impossible. My back is shot through. Beatty will tell you so.”



NELSON IN THE COCKPIT OF THE "VICTORY."
From a Painting by A. W. Davis.

Here the alarms on deck warned Hardy that he must leave his friend, and with bursting heart he pressed his hand and hurried on deck.

The surgeon knelt beside the dying man, and Nelson told him that all feeling below the breast was gone, adding :

“And *you know* I can live but a short time. Yet,” he murmured, “one would like to live a little longer. What would become of poor Lady Hamilton, if she knew my situation !”

Another pause, and as if to make doubly sure, he said :

“Beatty, *you know* I am gone.”

“My lord,” replied Beatty, with a noble and courteous simplicity, “unhappily for our country, nothing can be done for you.” Then, in response to his patient’s remark that he felt something rising in his breast, he asked if the pain was great.

“So great that I wish I was dead;—and yet,” in lower tones still, “one would like to live a little longer, too.”

He put his hand to his left side.

“I know it,” he said. “I feel something rising in my breast which tells me I am gone. God be praised, I have done my duty !”

It was about three o’clock when the five ships of the enemy’s van spoken of by Hardy,

passing the *Victory*, opened fire upon her, and, as her guns thundered out in response, the sufferer exclaimed :

“Oh, *Victory!* oh, *Victory!* how you distract my poor brain.” Then again he returned to the old thought, “How dear life is to all men.”

It was during this time that the boat was despatched to Collingwood, telling him of Nelson’s condition ; but until his flag was hauled down, Hardy was compelled to act for him, for until his death Nelson would not relinquish his position.

It was an hour after that last sad pressure of the hand, when, yet again, Hardy dared leave the deck and descend below. He saw a great change in the patient : his strength was fast ebbing, and the end was very near. Once more he clasped his old comrade’s hand, and, to cheer him up, told him of the fortunes of the day, and congratulated him upon the greatness of his victory. “A complete victory,” he called it. The dying man asked anxiously how many of the enemy had been captured. Hardy said he was not certain as yet, but from what he heard there were certainly fourteen or fifteen ships captured.

“That is well,” said Nelson, “but I bargained for twenty.” He paused to gain

strength, and then in stronger tones said, "Anchor, Hardy, anchor!"

Hardy hinted that, as vice-admiral, Collingwood would take upon himself the directions for the fleet; but, at the suggestion, the old spirit flared up within the dying hero's breast, and trying to raise himself, but ineffectually, Nelson, in the strongest voice he could muster, said:

"Not while I live, Hardy. Do you anchor!"

As Hardy was leaving to issue this order, he called him back, and when he was beside him he said, plaintively:

"Don't throw me overboard."

A very few hours ago he had seen his clerk, who was shot near him, thrown overboard, and the memory preyed upon him. Of course, Captain Hardy assured him that nothing of that sort of thing could happen to him; and then his thoughts again turned to Lady Hamilton.

"Take care of my dear Lady Hamilton, Hardy; take care of poor Lady Hamilton——"

Then:

"Kiss me, Hardy."

Hardy knelt down and kissed him on the cheek.

"Now I am satisfied," murmured Nelson. "Thank God, I have done my duty."

Hardy stood over him a while, then knelt down and kissed him on the forehead.

“Who is that?” asked Nelson.

“It is Hardy.”

“God bless you, Hardy!”

Hardy turned slowly and left him—left him for ever.

Nelson now desired to be turned upon his right side.

“I wish I had not left the deck,” he murmured, “for I shall soon be gone.” Then to Dr. Scott, the chaplain, he said, “Doctor, I have *not* been a *great* sinner.” Adding, as the great cord of his life again vibrated, “Remember, I leave Lady Hamilton and my daughter Horatia as a legacy to my country.”

From this moment he sank rapidly. His breathing became weak and fitful, his articulation difficult; but he was distinctly heard to say these words—and they are the last ones spoken by this great and glorious hero,—“Thank God, I have done my duty!”

At half-past four, just before the final guns were fired—and three hours and a quarter since he received his wound—he expired.

The battle was virtually over; an hour later it was finished. The *Achille* (French, seventy-four) had surrendered to the English; but—it

is gravely stated—*after* her having struck, she was set on fire (a most dishonourable proceeding), and at half-past five she blew up with a terrific explosion, hurling over two hundred of her crew and all her wounded into destruction, and scattering her burning fragments around.

Four of the enemy—all French, under Admiral Dumanoir—were in full flight, pursued by the English rear ships. As they passed the captured Spanish ships, they backed their sails to steady their aim, and actually fired broadsides into their old allies! This atrocious proceeding so roused the ire of the Spaniards, who, whatever may be their faults, are not dishonourable, that two days later, when seven French ships which had escaped destruction sailed out of Cadiz, the Spanish crew of the *Argonauta*—one of those treated so despicably by the flying Frenchmen—volunteered to man the guns for the British prize-master in resentment for the murderous usage they had suffered at their hands. Such was their earnestness, and such the belief in their honour, that they were actually entrusted with stations at the lower-deck guns!

However, this treachery of Admiral Dumanoir availed him little, for the four vessels fell

in with Sir Richard Strachan, cruising for the Rochefort Squadron, and all were captured.

In October 1872, an old marine of the *Bellerophon*—or as she was known among them as the “Bully Ruffian”—being then alive at Charlesbury Tring, was asked by the incumbent of his parish how soon the fleet knew of Nelson’s death, and he replied as follows:—

“We were lying pretty close to the *Victory*, and about four or five o’clock, I think, in the evening, we saw the admiral’s flag half-mast high, and then we knew, too well, what had happened. Besides, soon after the action we had a batch of French prisoners sent aboard of us, and as they passed along the deck they mocked and jeered, and, pointing with the thumb over the shoulder at the admiral’s flag, cried, ‘Ah! where’s your Nelson? Where’s your Nelson, now?’”

The loss of the English in this terrible battle—the last set battle we ever fought on sea—was 1,587 of all ranks; of the French and Spaniards combined, over 16,000 men.

Of the forty ships of the combined fleets, twenty capitulated; and Sir Richard Strachan afterwards captured four. Only seven escaped, and sheltered in Cadiz Harbour; joined later by three more—viz., the *Santa Anna*, the *Algesiras*, and *Neptune* (afterwards sunk), which

the succeeding gales drove off, but receiving assistance from shore, they made the same shelter.¹

The wounded Spaniards were sent ashore, and, with a generosity that is rarely met with, the Spanish authorities offered the use of their hospitals for the English wounded, pledging the honour of Spain that they should be well treated, and restored home when convalescent; an offer worthy of being chronicled to the credit of so chivalrous a nation.

CONTINUATION OF THE "EURYALUS" LOG.

9 P.M., sounded in twenty-three fathoms. Made the signal with a gun: Prepare to anchor; fleet and prizes in company. Light airs, and a great swell from the westward. 9.15, sounded in fifteen fathoms. 9.20, fourteen fathoms. 9.35, the water deepened. 11, sounded in thirty-six fathoms. 11.20, the water shoaled to twenty-six fathoms. 12.15, made signal with three guns to wear, and wore ship. Came to the wind on the larboard tack, head to the westward. *Royal Sovereign* in tow. Fleet and prizes in company. Moderate breezes and cloudy. Made and shortened sail as necessary. 4, at daylight, four sail in sight in S.W., and forty sail from E. to N.E. 8, cast off *Royal Sovereign*, and the *Neptune* took her in tow. Received from the *Pickle* schooner eighteen

¹ Captain Mahan, in his *Life of Nelson*, says eleven, including the captured three who escaped in the storms.

French prisoners, which was part of the men she saved out of the *Achille* (French ship), which was blown up in the action. Strong gales and rain. Fleet and prizes much scattered. Made the general signal for them to close. 9, wore ship and hove to. 11.20, filled, and made sail on the starboard tack. Noon, strong gales and cloudy, with heavy rain. Most of the fleet and prizes in company.

23rd October.—Set storm sails, down topgallant yards, and struck the masts. 4, strong gales and rain, heavy squalls and rain. 11.30, took aback, stood on starboard tack. Burned blue lights every hour. Midnight (d.w.), heavy squalls. Fore topmast staysail split and blown away by a heavy squall from the westward. At 7, Cape Trafalgar east, about thirteen or fourteen miles.

24th October.—Tacked occasionally to collect prizes. 3, observed ten of the enemy's ships E.N.E. Made signal to prepare for battle, and formed a line of ten sail between the prizes and the enemy. 5.30, lost sight of the enemy, and hauled on larboard tack. 6 (d.w.) and at 8, strong gales and rain. Some of the fleet in sight. Daylight, forty-five of the fleet and prizes in sight, and much scattered. 9, observed five of the enemy's ships close in shore off Cadiz. 11, received from the *Neptune* the French commander-in-chief, Admiral Villeneuve.

25th October.—4, moderate and appeared for fine weather. Bore up for the ships *employed destroying the prizes* between Cadiz and St. Lucar. 5.30, shortened sail and hove to. Sent Lieutenant Quash and Lieutenant Williams, the carpenter and his

crew, with thirty men, on board the *Santisima Trinidad* (Spanish four-decker) to *destroy her*. 9.15, Boats returned. Hoisted them up, and made sail on the starboard tack. 9.30, observed one of the prizes blow up with a great explosion. Wore ship, and hauled up on the larboard tack. 10.30, in topsails, down jib. Strong breezes and squalls. At 1 A.M., in third reef. 1.30, took aback; wore ship. 3.30, wore ship, and close-reefed topsails. 4, strong squalls and heavy rain from the southward and westward. Down topgallant yards and struck the masts. 8, gale. Seventeen sail in sight. 8.20, set mizzen topsail and storm staysails. 9.45, in fore topsail. Heavy gales and thick weather. 10, in mizzen topsail. Noon, strong gales, with heavy swell.

26th October.—P.M., heavy gales and thick, with rain and a heavy swell from the south. 12.15, the spritsail-yard carried away by a heavy sea, with all the rigging belonging to it, as also the head rails and boards; found the spanker boom sprung close outside the taffel [*sic*]. Got it in. 4, strong gale. 5, wore ship on starboard tack under storm staysails; close reefed main topsails and staysail. 8, more moderate; and 9, set fore and mizzen topsails. 12, fresh gales and a great swell. 2.30, set main topmast staysail; sounded occasionally, but no bottom. 7.50, bore up; seven sail of the fleet in sight, the *Pickle* schooner in co.; got another spritsail-yard out and rigged it; employed repairing damages about the rigging. Noon, fresh gales and squalls; fourteen sail in sight; despatched the *Pickle* for England.

27th October.—Same struggling with the terrible

weather as on 26th. At 7 P.M., telegraph message to the *Prince*: "Take *Tonnant* under orders to Gibraltar, and repair, and collect all disabled ships you meet and take them with you; made the signal to her that the *Victory* bore west. 10, telegraph message: "Admiral desires you keep to windward and not come down without sight." Noon, made signal by telegraph to the *Minotaur*: "I don't think there are any ships in Cadiz from my observations."

28th October.—9.30, supplied the *Royal Sovereign* with a main and foretop sail-yard, completely rigged; thirty-seven sail in sight.

29th October.—10 A.M., Admiral Collingwood struck his flag on board the *Euryalus*, and hoisted it on board H.M.S. *Queen*; discharged into the *Queen* fifteen supernumeraries belonging to the *Bellerophon*.

30th October (last extract).—12, punished John Phillips (s.) with twenty-four lashes for neglect of duty; Stephen Halloway with twenty-four, John Roberts with twenty-four, Sandy Tucker with twenty-four, and John Flood with forty-eight lashes, for drunkenness.

CHAPTER IX.

THE "ANCHORING" QUESTION.

WHEN Nelson gave Hardy the memorable order to anchor, the weather was fine and the sea moderate; rolling, it is true, but good enough, perhaps, to anchor. It is well to say "perhaps," for they were in twenty-three fathoms of water, *with* a rolling swell. The ships were all, more or less, leaking and strained—some almost wrecks; few had masts standing, and the pull of the cables at twenty-three fathoms in open sea, and that a rolling one, was dangerous—more dangerous than sailing. However, Collingwood, at 9 P.M. (he being then on board the *Euryalus*), ordered the signal, "Prepare to anchor fleet and prizes in company," there being light airs and a great swell from the westward. It is evident from the log that from 9 to 9.20 he sought for an anchorage; but at 9.35 the water again deepened. At 11, it was thirty-six fathoms; at 11.20, twenty-six fathoms. He was trying if Nelson's idea was feasible, and discovered it was not. The barometer, too, was falling rapidly,

and the weather changing; so Collingwood, who was reckoned one of the best—if not the very best—*seaman* in the fleet, would certainly act for the best, and the cry that has been raised against him is, to say the least, injudicious. In fact, had Nelson lived, and seen the weather changes, he would have acted precisely as did Collingwood under the circumstances.

A distinguished admiral (see James's *Naval History*, vol. iv.) wrote:—

“No one can regard with higher admiration than I do the great qualities of Lord Nelson (and who can sufficiently extol them?), but, on a question of mere seamanship, it is no injustice to his fame to say that he was inferior to Lord Collingwood, who was considered by all the navy to be a seaman of very uncommon experience and knowledge; and when we remember that at the time when the order to anchor was given, Lord Nelson had been lying for several hours wounded below, without any opportunity of knowing the state of the fleet, it is impossible to put the judgment of the two men at that moment in competition.”

Admiral Villeneuve was taken to England, and sent to France. On his journey thither he died. Napoleon said he committed suicide; rumour said he was assassinated by order of the Emperor. Napoleon in his proclamations affirmed *as* facts many things which were not

facts in reality, and the reader may draw his inferences.

“REQUIESCAT IN PACE.”

At one o'clock in the morning of Wednesday, the 6th of November 1805, the First Lord of the Admiralty received from the captain of the schooner *Pickle* the momentous news of the glorious victory off Trafalgar, together with the sad tidings that the people's hero was no more.

The despatches were written by Lord Collingwood, in a most masterly manner worthy of all encomiums. In them he bears testimony to the wonderful skill of the ever-to-be-lamented Lord Nelson, in his arrangements for battle; and the valour displayed by officers and men of the various ships; gives a full account of the battle such as already narrated; but, like the modest man he was, says not one single word about his own share in the victory.

Commenting on the victory, the *Times* of November 7th, 1805, said—

“The victory created none of those enthusiastic emotions in the public mind, which the success of our naval arms have in every former instance produced. There was not a man who did not think

that the life of the Hero of the Nile was too great a price for the capture and destruction of twenty sail of French and Spanish men-of-war. No ebullitions of popular transport, no demonstrations of public joy marked this great and important event. The honest and manly feeling of the people appeared as it should have done: they felt an inward satisfaction at the triumph of their favourite arms; they mourned with all the sincerity and poignancy of domestic grief their hero slain.

“If ever there was a man who deserved to be ‘praised, wept, and honoured’ by his country, it is Lord Nelson. His three great naval achievements have eclipsed the brilliancy of the most dazzling victories in the annals of English daring.”

The disastrous tidings damped the jubilation at the great victory, but a partial illumination took place in the Metropolis on the 6th, and a larger and more pretentious one was arranged for the night of the 7th; but even in the gathering of the people the solemn note of death was apparent, checking their cheers, and tempering their enthusiasm with a chastening sorrow.

Now that Nelson was dead, those rewards which, before, had been grudgingly doled out in huckster fashion, were lavishly outpoured. The Government made his brother an Earl! with £6000 per annum; £10,000 was voted to

each sister, £100,000 for an estate; a public funeral was decided upon, and also a public monument to be erected. Looking back, and reading the hero's appealing letters for help to sustain his estate; his mention of not having even a cottage he could call his own—and this after Copenhagen, too—it does appear hard that, when he had no need of favours, they were poured out upon those who were related, while he, himself, had been so cruelly neglected. We are reminded of Homer—

“Seven wealthy cities now contend for Homer
dead,
Through which the living Homer begged his
bread.”

Nelson was buried—subsequently Collingwood was laid by his side—in St. Paul's Cathedral; and when his flag was about to be lowered into the grave with him, his sailors—themselves one of the most interesting sights on that mournful day—who remembered it streaming in the breezes, indicative of victory and triumph, filled with regret that it should be interred with him, and actuated by one uncontrollable impulse, seized it. There, at the open grave, they rent it to shreds, that each might retain a fragment to pass on to his descendants—a memento of the glorious hero

they idolised and followed to the very gates of death.

Nelson's work was done. Raised by the great Protector of nations to perform his share in the advancement of liberty among the nations, he “did his duty.” When the last gun sounded as he lay in that miserable cockpit, he did not know it, but he had achieved for England—that dear England he loved so well—the conquest of the seas. Never since that day has England's flag come down; never since has his beloved country taken second place upon the great highway of nations; and be she as true to her God as was her servant Nelson, so long will she retain that place and power.

Not only did Trafalgar win for England the sovereignty of the sea, but, by terrifying Napoleon off naval exploits, it forced him into that line of land conquest which culminated amid the snows of Russia, and ended in the lonely isle of St. Helena, the island which the French fleet that sailed from Cadiz was designed to capture. The “sailing” did capture it for him, but not in the way he planned.

Since Copenhagen's fight, we have twice invaded Denmark—once to bombard her capital with shot and shell and take away her fleet;

the second time to carry away her fairest daughter and make her Queen of the England Nelson loved.

Once since the Battle of the Nile have we gone to Egypt; but had Nelson's sage advice been taken when he fought for us the fight at Aboukir, it never would have been necessary. We went at last, and are still there.

Nelson has passed away, but his work remains; his memory is to us as green to-day as though his deeds were being recorded day by day—and long may that memory remain green. Long may youth read of him and his adventurous days; long may he be one of the most glorious of our heroes; and long, long may his life's lesson last, and inculcate that most glorious of all truths—to youth as well as to age:—Serve God truly, love one's country devotedly, and do one's duty fearlessly; then no man, nor death itself, need be feared.

NOTE.

ON page 359 is given the facsimile of part of the very last letter our hero wrote. It was never completed: death claimed the valiant soul for its own before many hours had passed. During the last few years, however, the last completed letter of Nelson—one to Lady Hamilton, bearing date 25th September 1805, and written “off Lisbon”—became public property, and being put up to auction on 13th May 1904, no less a sum than £1,030 was paid for it by an enthusiastic admirer of our greatest admiral. As it must interest the reader, we transcribe it as follows:—

“I am anxious to join the fleet, for it would add to my grief if any other man was to give them the Nelson touch, which, we say, is warranted never to fail. I have read, my Emma, with much interest, your letters, which I got at Merton; but I must have many others afloat. I do feel by myself what you must have felt at not hearing from me from Jan. 29 to after May 1805. I fancy that they had been stopt by the Admiralty on the account of Sir John’s orders. I mention all these circumstances that my

dearest Emma should never think that her Nelson neglects or forgets her for one moment. No; I can truly say you are always present, wheresoever I go. I have this letter ready in case I should fall in with anything from Lisbon homewards steering. May God bless you, my best, my only beloved, and with my warmest affections to Horatia, be assured I am for ever your most faithful and affectionate."

While alluding to this remarkable price paid for a single letter of the departed hero, it may not be amiss to record some of the prices paid for a few of his relics at a sale by auction at Christie's:—

A small brooch, £260.

A pair of ice-pails, £400.

A gold knife and fork, £260.

The inkstand presented by Sir William and Lady Hamilton to their "dear friend Nelson," £520.

One of his presentation swords, £1,080.

A number of his medals and orders, £2,500.

Every article was contested for with almost unparalleled eagerness, and so tumultuous was the excitement that it was scarcely possible to record the bids.

19

