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NUMBER III.

OLD IRONSIDES AND OLD ADAMS.

STRAY LEAVES FROM THE LOG BOOK

OF A

MAN-OF-WAR'S MAN.

EDITED BY

REV. CHARLES W. DENISON, Seamen's Chaplain.



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CHAPTER I.

MY FIRST CRUISE IN THE CONSTITUTION.

I SHIPPED on board the noble "Old Ironsides," in the year 1811. Captain ISAAC HULL was then in command of the frigate. He was not then made a Commodore. That was done after he took the Guerriere.

I went on the decks of the Constitution in Boston. There were 350 men of us when we dropped down the Bay. Our business was to bear despatches to France. We had a short passage. On entering the French harbor we were fired on, by mistake. One shot struck our stern boat, and entered the hammock nettings. The Frenchmen soon came to apologize, however, and said they thought we were English. The affair was soon settled.

We then sailed for Cowes, and Captain Hull proceeded directly to Portsmouth. War was not then declared between England and the United States, but the feeling between the two countries was none of the pleasantest. At Portsmouth two men belonging to our gig ran away. We concluded they were not American born. But it stirred up bad blood among us; and when the Captain came off he found seven or eight of the crew in irons. They had been drunk, and threatened to desert. It was evident that Captain Hull was excited, for several efforts had been made to induce men on board to leave. I shall long remember the appearance and words of Captain Hull on that occasion. As soon as he touched the deck, he turned to the first Lieutenant, and said, so that all who pleased might hear:

"The insults of the English are more than flesh and blood can bear." — Turning to the men, he cried out:

"Boys! are you willing to fight? I don't know but the British will send a frigate out to meet us. Are you ready?"

This short speech was answered by as hearty a cheer as ever rang over the waters.

1811

The Captain went immediately to the men in charge of the sentry. He soon settled matters with them, and found they were ready to defend the ship and her flag. The cabin was soon torn away, and the ship prepared for action. But no frigate came. Pretty soon a man of war brig hove in sight, and fired on us. We were called to quarters instantly, and ran down for her. The Captain hailed;

“What brig is that?”

No answer.

“How dare you fire on us?” shouted Hull.

“O! we beg pardon,” replied a voice from the brig. “We thought you were French!”

“French!” retorted Hull. “I’ve seen you all night—and yet you can’t tell who I am! I have a good mind to sink ye!”

This characteristic Yankee reply produced some sensation aboard the brig. She soon squared her yards, and set all sail from us. We let her go.

In a few days we passed from the French coast to Holland. In Texel we had to pay \$28,000, for powder and guns furnished our country by the Dutch during the Revolution. This money the English tried hard to get hold of. They meant to prevent us from carrying it ashore—thinking, probably, that as war was about being declared with us, they could easily take the Constitution, money and all. But we had the start of them, and we kept it.

The way we landed the money was this. We lashed our water boats alongside the boats that carried the dollars, and sent them ashore together. This prevented any collision, because the laws of nations allow an enemy to obtain water and provisions, without molestation. As they didn’t fire on our water boats, of course they didn’t touch our money. It was landed safely.

We left Texel soon after; but before we got under way, an English braggart charged us with misrepresenting our draft of water! His object was, if possible, to make a difficulty between us and the Dutch. But he didn’t succeed. We came off with receipts in full for our cash, and the unabated confidence of the Hollanders.

On our passage to America we met the Royal Oak—an English 74. She had come across a French privateer, and sunk her. The captain felt quite big on the occasion. He said he meant to serve all the Frenchmen in the same way. He had run down the privateer, and sent her, with all on board, to the bottom of the ocean!

We had a visit from this brave Englishman. He found our guns double-shotted, and every man at his quarters. His looks, as he turned from side to side, were "very peculiar;" but he said not a word on that subject. Perhaps it was as well for him to keep quiet. After a few mutual salutations, he returned to his ship, and we parted company.

When I shipped in Boston, there was a man booked by the name of Brown. He was from the country, and decidedly green. He had shipped as the "Captain's gardener!" He was, unfortunately, very intemperate. As he came aboard, his first question was:

"Where is the captain's garden?"

This was followed by a general shout. Some one whispered to him to wait a little while, and when the captain came off he would show him his garden. The captain soon arrived, and learning the state of the case, ordered the Boatswain's mate to give the man half a dozen lashes to sober him before he commenced his gardening operations. Brown grumbled at this; whereupon, the captain gave him another dose of the same sort. He was never flogged again during the cruise. He went into the carpenter's gang, and proved to be a good hand.

Tom McCumber, our quarter-master, made us some difficulty. He had shipped eighteen months; and as he thought his time was out, and wanted to be discharged, he took the liberty to write to Washington. For this specimen of sailor freedom Tom was put in irons. He was in the limbo when I went on board the frigate. The first thing I noticed was the ease with which he took off his hand-cuffs—his hands being small, and the cuffs large at the wrist. He kept off these ruffle ornaments as much as possible. Whenever he saw an officer coming, he would slip them on, and turn quietly into his hammock.

Tom was afterwards broke; and put on the forecastle. Here he was always skylarking with the men. He used to fix a noose in a bowline, and throw it over the necks of some of the crew, as if he were catching wild horses. This sport came near bringing him into trouble, several times.

A gunner, by the name of Anderson, fell out with Tom, and reported him to one of the Lieutenants. He was seized up to the rigging, and stripped for a flogging. Tom was very much excited, and broke out with a speech,

"I thought this was a free country! But I see I was mistaken. My father and mother were American born,—I am an American myself!"

The only reply of the Lieutenant was—

“Take him down, and put him in irons. If it laid in my power, I would have him shot.”

The officers court-martialed Tom. Every day, for three days, we could tell by the sound of the gun when the court assembled. But he was discharged instead of being executed, and went on to Washington. This was the last we ever heard of poor Tom.

We learnt while in port of a singular instance of patriotism, as an offset to this. A colored sailor, who had been pressed into the English service, endeavored to get on board the *John Adams*. Finding this effort to be in vain, and determined to be of as little use as possible to the enemies of his country, this gallant fellow cut the fingers of his right hand off!

“Now,” said he, as he held up the bloody boarding axe with his left hand, “now let the English take me, if they want me.” This little incident shows the feeling that pervaded all classes of society among those who were willing to defend the American flag.

During our passage to France, with the ambassador, Mr. Barlow, we experienced very severe weather; and in the midst of it, the plague broke out among the crew. It was an appalling scene. Death was busy among the four hundred occupants of that great ship—away on the ocean as she was, almost solitary and alone. Some of the men did not live twenty-four hours. They were often taken down without a moment's warning. Up on the heights of the masts, on the points of the yards, down in the recesses of the holds, the messenger of the grave sought them out, and hurried them to his caverns in the deep blue sea. The stoutest hearts were more or less appalled by the ravages of the destroyer. The thought that a deadly plague was among us—that every day told of its onward march into our ranks—that, perhaps, the ship might be depopulated before we reached port, and the dead lie unburied in heaps on board, was enough to appal any one for a time. But the surgeons did their duty nobly; and although deaths kept occurring frequently for three weeks, yet we went on our way, growing braver and braver as we looked at Death closer and closer in the face.

A family incident of a peculiar character took place off Dover. An old woman and her daughter came along side, claiming to be the mother and sister of one of our men, a promising young sailor we were loath to part with. To our surprise, he denied the relationship. The girl said she had a scar on her hand where he wounded her accidentally with a knife when they were both children. But the tar knew nothing about it. He denied to the

last that they were any relation to him—except through old father Adam—and they left the frigate. The crew, however, were against him, to a man. They felt that the women had told the truth. How far the melancholy result in his case proved this, the reader must judge. The sailor was not long after taken sick. His spirit sank within him. The bloom faded from his cheek—the light went out from his eye. His appearance was most pitiful! He soon died a miserable death.

While we were lying in the Downs one of our men ran off, and went on board an English vessel. He was an Irishman. We sent aboard for him, but the British would not give him up. This excited Captain Hull. He informed the English officer that the man had shipped as an American, and, as such, we had a right to claim him. But it was of no avail. The desertion, however, was soon followed by one from the British. He swam to us, under the guns of his frigate. We reported him to the English at once, and they demanded him.

“No,” said Hull. “If you will give up our man, we will give up yours. Not without.”

The deserter to us had his papers with him as he swam from the English. On drying them, it appeared he was from New York. His character was good. He loved his country; and we were resolved to retain him.

To show the generous feeling of Hull, I will relate an occurrence that took place at Annapolis, while the frigate was lying there. The Captain called all hands aft, and said that he was satisfied that two men on board were English. One of them was sick. He was willing that both of them should leave the service; as, in case of a war with Great Britain, he did not wish to compel men to fight against the flag of their native land. This sentiment was received with cheers by the crew, who immediately made up a purse of \$140, and divided it between the two men. They went with it to Baltimore, and soon spent it, man-o'-war fashion. The last I heard of them they had shipped as Americans in the Congress—ready as they said, to defend the stars and stripes.

A flogging scene came off on our first cruise. A reckless, daring fellow by the name of Dan Blish refused to do his part, from some cause or other, in taking in sail. The Lieutenant of the deck was disposed to punish him, but, on account of the obstinacy of some of his messmates, he could not be fully identified. To avoid this dilemma, and to make sure of punishing the offender, the Lieutenant resolved to flog the whole watch! There were about thirty of us, in all. Our grog had been stopped for a week.

The day of the flogging I shall never forget. Dan was aloft at



CHAPTER II.

ESCAPE OF THE CONSTITUTION.

WHILE the Constitution was lying in Washington, undergoing repairs, the Declaration of War arrived. It was a stirring time with us that day. We thought of what the over-bearing English had done to American sailors—of what insults we had experienced in “Old Ironsides” on the English coast—and we determined to do our best for the motto of the nation:

“Free Trade and Sailors’ Rights.”

Orders came immediately from Washington that a rendezvous should be opened, and as many men shipped as the frigate would want. The work commenced at once. Not a man ran away after that! Captain Hull came down frequently among us. He said he wanted all his own men:—they knew him, and he knew them. Hull had great confidence in his countrymen. He regarded them as his equals in birthright, if not in station. It was this feeling of mutual confidence between the officers and men which gave such success to our naval arms during the last war. The men went into the struggle as brethren—not as serfs. They stood, and fought, and fell by their guns as citizens of the Republic they defended, not as the hired minions of a tyrant throne. Every true American felt that his own honor was identified with the honor of his country; and as such he was resolved to preserve it untarnished, or die in the attempt.

In a few days after war was declared we dropped down to Annapolis. We laid there three weeks, exercising every day to attain perfect discipline. Among other plans, we placed a hoghead on a pole in the water, a mile off, and fired at it as a target. The hoghead looked less than a barrel at that distance. After we had practised sufficiently, Hull gave one of his shrewd looks at us one day—

“I’ll risk ye now, my boys!” said he. “If that were a boat, you’d cut it all to pieces.”

Our preparations for war were much hastened by the return of the John Adams with despatches from our English and French ministers. We immediately sailed from Annapolis to join the squadron at New York. The President, United States, and other vessels of war were lying there. We spoke but a few vessels on our passage. One day, at about 4 P. M., a large sail hove in sight. We immediately gave chase, and gained on her handsomely. At eight o'clock in the evening, Captain Hull came forward on the fore-castle. Some of the officers and crew clustered respectfully around him. Old Adams, the boatswain, was standing by:

"Adams," said Hull, "what do you think of that vessel?"

"Don't know, sir," replied the veteran tar, with his deep voice. "I can't make her out, sir. But I think she's an Englishman."

"So do I," added Hull. "How long will it take to flog her, Adams?"

"Don't know, sir!" replied the Boatswain. "We can do it, but they're hard fellows on salt water."

"I know that," continued the Captain; "they are rather a hard set of fellows, sure enough. But don't you think we can flog them in two hours and a half, Adams?"

"Yes, sir!" said the Boatswain, with all the coolness imaginable. "Yes, sir! we can do it in that time, if we can do it at all."

The Captain turned away with a smile, and almost instantly had all sail set, and the ship drawing towards the stranger, with a smacking breeze to jog her along.

Hull came forward again, and took a close survey of the ocean, and the distant sail.

"Dog her by and large 'till morning," said he to the Lieutenant, "and then we shall see what she's made of."

That night every man on board the Constitution was wide awake. There was no sneaking from duty in any part of the brave old ship. I laid in my quarters on the bare deck, by the side of my gun. The sponge and ramrod were all the time lying by me, ready for use at a moment's notice. Several pistols belonging to a midshipman, Mr. German, were given in my charge for him. Other watches were in similar situations. The officers were all at their posts. Hull kept walking about, watching the minutest thing worthy of attention, and giving his orders in a quiet, calm, determined tone. It was a stirring hour. We felt that we were about to strike the first blow for our country and her flag. There had never been a time, since

our nation existed, when a fair trial of American naval prowess had occurred; our ships, our commanders, our men, during the war of the Revolution, had always fought to great disadvantage on the ocean; the honors won for us by the Chevalier Paul Jones were claimed as legitimately belonging to a British subject—a native of Scotland; our privateers, fitted out and manned in great haste, could not be expected to give fair specimens of American valor: here, then, on board the well-known and honored frigate *Constitution* was the theatre for a naval action that should cover the Republic either with living disgrace or glory.

There was not an American sailor in that ship but felt something of this. However he might express it, in the rough words of the deep, or the bold look of his eye, this was the sentiment of his patriotic bosom.

At four o'clock in the morning, we heard the cry:—"Up, men! up! here's the whole American squadron upon us!"

"Pretty American squadron!" said some of the old salts, as they looked out the port-holes. "American squadron! Don't you see that English seventy-four?"

All hands were called to quarters. New arrangements were made for meeting the enemy; port-holes were cut in the stern, on the spar deck, and guns run out immediately. The English were now within three miles of us. There were seven men of war, in all: the *Olis*, *African*, *Shannon*, *Guerriere*, *Belvidere*, *Nautilus*, and one other. It was a spirit-stirring sight, to see them steering towards us, with all sail set.

Our guns were now all up, and the breechings rove. Captain Hull came forward, coolly surveyed the scene, took a match in his hand, and ordered the quarter master to hoist the American flag. I stood within a few feet of Hull at the time. He clapped the fire to the powder, and such a barking as sounded over the sea! It was worth hearing. No sooner had our iron dog opened his mouth in this manner, than the enemy opened the whole of theirs. Every one of the ships fired directly towards us. Those nearest kept up their firing for some time; but of course not a shot reached us then, at the distance we were off.

Captain Hull gave up the match to the captain of the gun, and we kept blazing away with our stern chasers. The shots we fired helped to send us ahead, out of the reach of the enemy. There was little or no wind; but we resolved to save ourselves from capture, or sink in the conflict. We soon found, however,

that we made but slow work in getting ahead. Hull called Lieutenant Morris to him, and said, calmly,—

“Let's lay broadside to them, Mr. Morris, and fight the whole! If we sink her, we'll go down like men!”

We were off Little Egg Harbor, on the New Jersey shore, at the time, stretching in toward the Delaware Bay. The enemy had drawn in between us and the land, so that the prospect was they might cut us off from the Capes.

Mr. Morris now spoke to Captain Hull: “There is one thing, sir, I think we'd better try.”

“What's that?” replied Hull.

“Try to kedge her off,” said the lieutenant.

“Well, try it,” responded the captain. “But I imagine you'll fail. The water's too deep here; we've at least forty fathoms.”

The kedges were soon under way. Every man worked as an American always should. We gained a little on the enemy by this manœuvre. We brought all the spare rigging out of the boatswain's store room, and bent on so much line that when one short peak came out of the ground, we let go the other kedge; this kept the frigate surging ahead all the while, at the rate of about three knots an hour, with the help of the boats. It was almost a dead calm, and the enemy soon saw that we were gaining on them. There was considerable of a stir on board the nearest ships. They had an American coast captain in one of them, who told us afterwards that he saw and understood our “Yankee trick.” The British imitated us, but they couldn't do much. They set the boats from three ships at work towing the one nearest us; but she made very little headway; we gained on them constantly, although slowly.

At that time not an American vessel, of any kind, was in sight; we were pursued alone, by the shores of our native country, and a more resolute set of men never smelt salt water. There hung on the mast, drooping silently in the calm sky, the ensign that we all loved so well; and as we looked toward it from the boats and tops, we were determined to a man that it should never go down but with the ship. Captain Hull saw and felt this patriotic feeling, and cherished it to the utmost. He was found in every part of the frigate, surveying the state of affairs with the strictest scrutiny. Our stern chasers were fired at the ship closest aboard us; but the shot went over her. They fired their bow guns in return; but nothing hit us. We were anxious to cut away the rigging or masts, and bring down their sails by the run.

The boats were all armed. I remember a remark made by Midshipman Bourie at the time. As he looked toward the enemy, and thought of the possibility of an engagement, he exclaimed, "O, that I had my pistols here, that I might defend my boat to the last." Such was the spirit that animated every bosom. Is it any wonder that such seamen, when self-possessed, are almost always victorious on the ocean?

Towards dark a breeze sprang up, which helped us along very well. Next morning it had increased to a pretty fresh blow, and we cracked on all the sail we could carry. One of the enemy's ships kept middling close to us; but we were ready for her. She ran down towards us, and then bore away for a short time. Again she hauled her wind, and put on after us. But it was no use. We walked away from her as if she had been lying at anchor. We then had no land in sight, and the wind kept freshening every hour. A squall broke on us; but we were ready for it, and had in the studding-sails in less than no time. Everything was set again, aloft and aloft, as soon as the squall passed over; and we showed the enemy our heels in a way that will long be remembered. We beat the fastest ship they had so badly, that we chased her hull down in a few hours.

"No," said the Captain, as the last strip of sail disappeared on the horizon, "now we'll take a cruise by ourselves; but if I come across one of these chaps alone, depend on it he shall pay for this."

We continued our cruise, as usual, meeting with merchant vessels occasionally. One of them was bound to New York: and we saved him by giving notice of the blockade there. The Captain presented us with a puncheon of rum for our information; and we presented him our prayers for his safe arrival in return. Rum was more thought of on board our men of war then than it is now.

In a few days we arrived in Boston, where we met the news that we had been captured by the enemy! It was said we had not ammunition enough. But if those who thought so had remained at our quarters until our ammunition was all gone, they would probably have altered their opinion. We had enough, at least, to tire them "some."

At Boston we obtained more men, wood and water; and were soon under way on another cruise. We met a number of merchant-men. Those of them that belonged to the enemy we set on fire, taking the crews with us as prisoners of war.

In this cruise we captured the *Guerriere*. But I reserve my account of that for the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

CAPTURE OF THE GUERRIERE.

On the seventh day out from Boston, on our second cruise, we met with some of the enemy. It was in the month of August, towards night. The ocean was soon shrouded in darkness. As the night came on, I think I never saw it darker.

At a late hour a vessel hove in sight, close aboard of us. We thought we saw a light in her cabin; but it proved to be a floating beacon which she had thrown overboard for the purpose of putting us on the wrong tack. But we passed this dancing lantern in her wake, and steered directly for the ship. We kept her in view all night; and the next morning she proved to be a sloop of war. Two other vessels now hove in sight. We steered for the one at the windward of us—beating as the near the wind's eye as the noble frigate would make it. It was not long before we were in her wake, and steering straight into her stern. On the way, we passed a large Dutch barque, that put new mettle into our speed. She had been taken under English colors by an American privateer, and retaken by the British, being then in charge of the Ranger sloop of war. The American officers and men had not then been taken out—so close were we upon them. The Ranger had concluded to let go this prize, and make good her own escape; but another large vessel, loaded with hemp and rosin, was set fire to before we could come up, and burnt to the water's edge.

We soon boarded and took possession of the barque. From her we learned that the Ranger had taken another rich prize, then on the way to Halifax. We ran down toward the Ranger, ordering the barque to follow; but she refused to do it. We immediately left her to her fate, and stretched away to leeward for another prize. It took but little time to overhaul her. Captain Hull was on deck at the time.

"Load the long Tom," said he, "and give them some."

No answer.

"Closer!" cried Hull. "Fire closer!"

The next shot did the work. Her colors came down, and she rounded to. It was well she did, for a few more shots such as the last would have made it all day with her.

We took possession in the name of the stars and stripes, and soon had the prisoners all out of her, and on board the frigate. She was then manned, to send in. Midshipman Madison was put on board as Prize Master, with orders to take her to the nearest American port. But she was afterwards taken by the *Acasta* frigate, carried to England, and the captured thrown into that horrible place, Dartmoor prison.

We continued our cruize, taking an occasional vessel from the enemy, and setting her on fire. Many a fine, large ship was thus destroyed by the *Constitution*. But we felt that we were doing right, for we were acting in self-defence. We always saved the crews, and living animals. I do not remember that a goat, dog, fowl or cat was thus burnt up.

At 11 o'clock on the night of the 18th of August, 1812, a brig hove in sight. It was very foggy, and we were unable to make out what she was. As we came up, Captain Hull hailed her himself:

"What brig's that?"

"The *John*, of St. John's."

"Where are you bound?"

"Halifax."

"Come under our lee. We'll send a boat aboard."

Lieutenant Morris boarded her. A boy who had seen us on the coast of France was heard to cry out:

"The old *Constitution*!"

"Away with your nonsense, lad," said one of the men, in reply.

"You'll find out it is," added the boy. "Don't you see the eagle buttons?"

Lieutenant Morris had now reached the deck of the "*John*." Her captain had ordered his state room shut, and thrown his guns and cutlasses overboard. But the room was soon opened again, and our men had what they pleased. This vessel laid by us all night, and proved to be a Baltimore privateer. She had been chased all that day by the *Guerriere*; and was afraid of us, on account of the fog.

The weather had now cleared up; and as we had learned by this adventure something of the whereabouts of the *Guerriere*, we were anxious to be off. But our Baltimore-Halifax neighbor had sprung his maintopmast in trying to get away from us,—we

supplied him with a new one, and a quantity of muskets, cutlasses, and ruffles for the enemy's wrists.

Having learned which way the *Guerriere* was steering when last seen, we crowded all sail in that direction. We steered a north-east course for several hours, until the morning of the 19th of August, 1812. This was the day of the battle.

We now changed our course, and steered south east, with a good breeze. At 10 A. M., the mast head cried:

"Sail ho!"

"Where away?" inquired the Lieutenant in command.

"Two points off the larboard bow, sir!" was the reply.

Hull had now come on deck. His first order was to a Midshipman:

"Mr. German! take the glass and go aloft. See if you can make out what she is."

German was soon above us, looking intently in the direction named.

"What do you think?" asked Hull, with animation.

"She's a great vessel, sir! Tremendous sails."

"Never mind," coolly added Hull. "You can come down, sir. Mr. Adams," addressing another officer, "call all hands. - Make sail for her!"

But before all hands could be called, there was a general rush on deck. The word had passed like lightning from man to man; and all who could be spared, came flocking up like pigeons from a net bed. From the spar deck to the gun deck, from that to the berth deck, every man was roused, and on his feet. All eyes were turned in the direction of the strange sail. Many had sprung into the rigging, without waiting for orders, and as quick as thought studding-sails were out, fore and aft. The noble frigate fairly bounded over the billows, as we gave her a rap full, and spread her broad and tall wings to the gale.

The stranger hauled his wind, and laid to for us. It was evident that he was an English man of war, of a large class, and all ready for action. In one of her topsails we read these words:

"Not the *Little Belt*."

We understood this to mean that the ship we were now approaching was not the "*Little Belt*" we had previously captured. But we knew that very well; and subsequent events proved that they might have saved themselves the trouble of telling us of it. We saw it was the vessel we wanted to meet, not the "*Little Belt*," but the big *Guerriere*.

As we came up she began to fire. She was evidently trying

to rake us. But we continued on our course, tacking and half tacking, taking good care to avoid being raked. We came so near on one tack, that a 14 lb. shot came through us under the larboard knight-head, striking just abaft the breech of the gun to which I belonged. The splinters flew in all directions; but no one was hurt. We immediately dragged a spare gun to the opening that was made by the shot, and converted it into an extra porthole! The shot itself was picked up, and put on the spar deck, ready to be used, as occasion required. We afterwards put it in the mouth of long Tom, a large gun loose on deck—and sent it home again, with our respects.

Another stray shot hit our foremast, cutting one of the hoops in two. But the mast was not otherwise injured, and the slight damage was soon repaired.

Hull was now all animation. He saw that the decisive moment had come. With great energy, yet calmness of manner, he passed around among the officers and men, addressing to them words of confidence and encouragement.

“Men!” said he, “now do your duty. Your officers cannot have entire command over you now. Each man must do all in his power for his country.”

At this moment a man was killed on our spar deck. He had run away from us, and was only returned about a fortnight. He fell by the side of long Tom, and never rose again.

Hull now determined on closing with the enemy.

“Never mind, my boys!” said he to the men. “You shall have her as close as you please. Sailing master! lay her along side!”

We came up into the wind in gallant style. As we fell off a little the Guerriere ranged by us her whole length.

The stars and stripes never floated more proudly than they did at that moment. All was silent beneath them, save the occasional order from an officer, or the low sound of the movement of our implements of war. Every man stood firm at his post.

Hull's orders were that we should not fire a gun until he himself gave the word of command.

“No firing at random!” cried he in a subdued tone of voice. “Let every man look well to his aim.”

This was the pride of American seamen. Correctness in taking aim did more than anything else in securing the naval victories of the last war.

The question was now repeatedly asked of Hull:

“Why not fire?”

“Wait!” was his calm reply.

"But they are cutting us all to pieces, and we can't get our guns to bear at this distance."

"Wait!" again responded the Captain.

"Shall we lay her alongside, sir?" inquired a Lieutenant.

"Wait!" Hull replied, once more.

A shot from the enemy now struck the spar-deck, and word was passed that a man was killed.

"Now close with them!" cried Hull, raising his voice to its sternest note of command, so that it could be heard on the enemy's decks.

"Along side with her, Sailing Master!"

A whole broadside from our guns followed this command. The Constitution shook from stem to stern. Every spar and yard in her was on a tremble. But no one was hurt by the recoil of the guns. We instantly followed the thunder of our cannon with three loud cheers, which rang along the ship like the roar of waters, and floated away rapidly to the ears of the enemy.

This was a Yankee style which the British had not adopted. The English officers often spoke of it to ours, after the war was over. They said they were astonished at the spirit of our men in the toil and heat of the battle. Amid the dying and the dead, the crash of timbers, the flying of splinters and falling of spars, the American heart poured out its patriotism with long and loud cheers. The effect was always electrical, throughout all the struggle for our rights.

When the smoke cleared away after the first broadside, we saw that we had cut off the mizzen mast of the *Guèrriere* not far from the deck, and that her main-yard had been shot from the slings. Her mast and rigging were hanging in great confusion over her sides, and dashing against her on the waves.

This discovery was followed by three more cheers from the Constitution, and the cry:

"Huzza, boys! We've made a brig of her! Next time we'll make her a sloop!"

The *Guèrriere* returned our fire with spirit—but it passed too high, and spent its force among our light spars, rigging and sails. Our fore-royal truck was shot away, with two pair of halyards; the flag was hanging down tangled on the shivered mast in the presence of the enemy. This sight inspired one of our men, familiarly called Dan Hogan, to the daring feat of nailing the standard to the mast. He was a little Irish chap, but brim-full of courage. Without a word from any one, he sprang into the rigging and was aloft in a moment. He had hastily snatched a hammer and nails from the carpenter, and leaped up in the air with them in his teeth. We soon saw him, under the fire of the

enemy, who saw him too, at the topmast height, clinging on with one hand, and with the other driving home the nails, so that the flag could never come down unless the mast came with it. The smoke curled around him as he swung his hammer on high; but we could see him, and kept cheering him through the sulphury clouds. He was soon down again, and at his station in the fight.

Several shot now entered our hull. One of the largest the enemy could command struck us, but the plank was so hard it fell out and sank in the waters. This was noticed by the men, and the cry arose:

"Huzza! Her sides are made of iron! See the shot fall out!"

From that moment the name of the Constitution was garnished with the familiar title:

"OLD IRONSIDES."

By this title she is known around the world.

The braces of both ships were now shot off. The Guerriere swung round into our mizzen rigging, so that a part of her laid right over our taffrail rail. We could see the whites of the eyes, and count the teeth of the enemy. Our stern guns were pouring in upon them, so that we raked the ship fore and aft. Every shot told well. In a few moments the foremast was gone, and our prediction was fulfilled. The great Guerriere had become a sloop. Soon after the mainmast followed, rendering her a complete wreck. In the fall of the masts some of our boats were swept off, but the Constitution herself was hardly touched, except in some of the yards and sails. Both ships kept firing constantly, our guns continuing to do the most fearful execution.

One of the Lieutenants now asked the Captain if he should call the boarders.

"No!" replied Hull. "No! We can take her without losing so many lives."

The enemy seemed to have been expecting us to board him. He had placed two carronades on the bowsprit, in such a manner as to sweep off our men as they should attempt to board. These were loaded to the muzzle with musket balls in canvass bags, and would have cut us down like a flock of sheep.

We were preparing for an attack in another quarter, when the Guerriere suddenly dropped to the leeward, and fired a gun for assistance. They tried to haul their colors down; but every man who could be seen attempting it, was shot dead from the top of the Constitution. We were determined to give them an opportunity to be convinced that we would defend our country's

rights to the last; and, beside, we thought these repeated attempts to haul down the flag were intended to deceive us—for we saw the men as busy as ever in continuing the action. I heard the powder boy nearest me on board the *Guerriere* call out to another:

“Work away, there! She'll soon be ours!”

The women they had with them were engaged in passing powder, and other munitions of war. Amid such activity on the decks of the enemy, courage and prudence demanded that we should be active on our own.

As an intended insult, the English had hoisted a puncheon of molasses on their main stay, and sent out word:

“Do give the Yankees some switchel. They will need it, when they are our prisoners.”

But we made a very different use of this molasses from what they intended. Our shooting at hogsheads in the Chesapeake Bay, was now turned to good account. We soon tapped their sweet stuff for them, in a way which they little thought of. The Yankee shot tasted the English molasses, and not the Yankee lips. We made the decks of the *Guerriere* so slippery, that her men could hardly stand! They had more switchel prepared for them than they knew what to do with.

On board the *Guerriere* was an American, by the name of Ben Hodges. As the battle commenced he appealed to the Captain. “That is an American frigate,” said he; “and I cannot fight against my country.”

How different this from the course of many an Englishman during the war! It was a feeling which the Commander of the *Guerriere* respected.

“Go below, my man,” said he. “Go into the cockpit. You may be of assistance there.”

Hodges obeyed the order. As he stood by one of the surgeons, a voice said:

“I don't see that we've much to do, after all.”

“Hold on a bit sir,” responded Hodges. “The Yankees haven't begun it. I'm thinking, sir, you'll have plenty to do.”

This was just as the action was commencing. In a moment a red glare followed.

“There!” cried Ben. “They've begun. Now, look out.” He had hardly spoken before fifteen or twenty wounded men were tumbled into the cockpit.

“Your words were true enough, Ben,” said one of the surgeons as he took up a knife. “Here's work for us—and plenty of it, too.”

The action was now nearly at its close. The firing had be-

come less frequent on both sides. All felt the necessity of proceeding at once to repair damages. But we dare not trust the enemy. Notwithstanding his disabled condition, it was evident he would attack us again, the first opportunity. His men were still numerous—his ammunition was but partly spent, and his guns had been cleared away from the lower decks, so as to work to the best advantage.

We sent a boat on board, but could get no satisfaction. His colors were down—but still there was danger of his attacking us unawares. This inspired a determined spirit on board the Constitution.

"Let's sink them!" was the cry that ran along our decks—for we felt that we were deceived.

At this moment Captain Dacres appeared in one of our boats, and immediately surrendered himself as a prisoner of war. We did not have any swivel prepared for him as he came on board, because we thought he had had enough already.

The delivery of his sword to Hull by Dacres was a scene never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

As he placed the hilt in the hand of Hull, his first remark was:

"Captain Hull! what have you got for men?"

"O," replied Hull, with a sly smile, "only a parcel of green bush-whackers, Captain Dacres!"

"Bush-whackers! They are more like tigers than men. I never saw men fight so. They fairly drove us from our quarters."

Very soon after the battle commenced, Lieutenant Bush fell, mortally wounded. Lieutenant Morris received a wound in his chest; but he bore himself bravely through until we won the day. Lieutenant Wardsworth came nobly forward, and filled the place made vacant by death with great honor to himself and advantage to the ship.

We remained by the Guerriere all that night. The prisoners were taken out, and humanely disposed of. We immediately set ourselves at work, repairing damages. Two anchor stocks welded on the foremast, that had been injured by the stray shot, made that as good as new. In one hour's time, we had the gallant frigate as trim as she was when the fight began. But it was not so with the Guerriere. The Yankee wounds made in her sides were incurable. She was kept afloat near us, but with six feet of water in her hold. Lieutenant Reed had command. The prisoners were set at the pumps, but they could not all keep her free. She was soon reported to be in a sinking condition, and we hastened to get all the men out of her.

Some of the captives came on board of us very badly wounded.

Their sufferings were greater than can be described, or even imagined. One poor fellow had his under jaw shot off; and while we were watching him, he bled to death. Others, deprived of arms and legs, lingered in the greatest torture, until death put an end to their pains.

There was one man—Dick Dunn—who bore the amputation of his leg with a fortitude I shall always bear in mind. "You are a hard set of butchers," was all he said to the surgeon, as his torn and bleeding limb was severed from his body. Others, whom I could name, bore their amputations equally well. Some of these brave defenders of the nation are among my friends; and I sometimes meet them stumping it through life. In the midst of all this suffering, Captain Hull was frequently found tendering the consolations needed in such an hour, and showing his humanity to the best advantage. He even looked more truly noble, bending over the hammock of a wounded tar, than when invading and conquering the enemy.

In spite of all the efforts to keep her afloat, we now saw that the *Guerriere* was rapidly sinking. A council of war was held on board the *Constitution*, and the decision was that she should be blown up. It was a moment of the deepest interest. After removing every thing thought necessary to be saved, we put a slow match to the magazine, and left her.

There was something melancholy and grand in the sight. Although the frigate was a wreck, floating about a mastless hulk at the sport of the waves, she bore marks of her former greatness. Much of her ornamental work had been untouched; and her long, high, black sides rose in solitary majesty before us, as we bade her farewell. For years she had been the house of thousands of human beings; for years she had withstood the shocks of the winds, the billows and the battle; for years she had borne the insignia of English valor to different and distant climes. But her years were now ended; her course was run; she was about to sink into the deep ocean forever.

Captain Dacres stood by our taffail as we squared away from the *Guerriere*. I thought I saw him brush away a tear from his dark eye, as he took the last look of the vessel he had so lately commanded. But whatever may have been his feelings, it must be admitted that he had done his own duty well,—and his men had defended their vessel to the last.

At the distance of about three miles we hove to, and awaited the result. Hundreds of eyes were stretched in that one direction, where the ill-fated *Guerriere* moved heavily on the deep. It was like waiting for the uncapping of a volcano—or the bursting

up of a crater. Scarcely a word was spoken on board the Constitution, so breathless was the interest felt in the scene.

The first intimation we had that the fire was at work was the discharge of the guns. Slowly at first, one after another, as the flame advanced, and then more rapidly, they came booming towards us. Now on one side, now on the other, roar followed roar, flash followed flash, until, for a time, the whole mass was enveloped in clouds of smoke. We could see but little of the direct progress of the work, and therefore we looked the more earnestly for the explosion—not knowing how soon it might occur. Presently there was a dead silence, as if every gun had been discharged; then followed a vibratory, shuddering motion, and streams of light, like streaks of lightning running along the sides; and the grand crash came! The quarter deck, which was immediately over the magazine, lifted in a mass, broke into fragments, and flew in every direction. The hull, parted in the centre by the shock, and loaded with such masses of iron and spars, reeled, staggered, plunged forward a few feet, and sank out of sight.

It was a grand and awful scene. Nearly every floating thing around her went down with the *Guerriere*. Scarcely a vestige remained when we passed the spot, to tell the world that such a frigate had even swept the seas. We immediately squared away, and were again under a crowd of sail for our native land.

Thus ended the capture of the *Guerriere*...

CHAPTER IV.

RETURN OF THE CONSTITUTION.

ON our passage home we met with but few vessels. Soon after the capture of the *Guerriere* we fell in with two sail. We run down to within a short distance. Our English friends were somewhat elated.

"They are British men of war!" cried one. "Now we shall be set at liberty, and you will be the prisoners."

"No, no!" said the Boatswain. "Not exactly. You've forgotten the escape off the Delaware Bay, haven't you? The *Old Constitution* will show them the way, by and by."

We tacked ship, cracked on all sail, and walked away from the enemy with all ease. The English were astonished at our sailing; and well they might have been.

On the following night the prisoners undertook to rise, and gain possession of the ship. Lieutenant Morris discovered the plot. He saw the first Lieutenant of the *Guerriere* in the cabin hunting after his surrendered sword. Intelligence of that and other proceedings was instantly communicated to Captain Hull, who passed at once to the berth deck. There he found nearly thirty of the English prisoners had managed to remove the iron fetterlocks from their hands, and to substitute leather ones for them. One man who claimed to belong to New York, made a confession of the affair. All of them were in a state of intoxication. They made their boasts to Captain Hull, that they should have taken the ship before morning. But they would have found that thing much easier said than done. The man who confessed was liberated. The remainder were placed in irons again, and continued so during the remainder of the cruise.

We proceeded without interruption, and arrived below Boston light in fine order. While we laid there, the "*Old Waggon*"—the *United States*—came in sight. We immediately cut our cables, and pushed in before her. We thought, at first, she was an English vessel—not understanding each other's signals, on account of our having been out cruising so long.

On arriving in Boston harbor, we anchored off Long wharf. The people crowded in thousands on the docks, and sent an earnest invitation for Captain Hull to come ashore. But he felt it to be his duty to remain aboard for two days. When he landed, the piers were crowded with people—so that he had barely room to plant his feet on the stone, as he left his boat. At that moment the roar of cannon from the shore and the frigate saluted him, mingled with the cheers of the thousands congregated to do homage to his valor. In all the adjacent buildings ladies were clustered, waving their handkerchiefs, and casting wreaths of flowers on the gallant Captain as he passed along. Boston was one scene of intense excitement. The thunder of the artillery, the shouting of the people, and the strains of music woke up the patriotism of the town to rejoice over one of the most brilliant naval victories ever achieved.

After recovering our anchors, we proceeded to land our prisoners. There were one hundred and fifty in all. They confessed freely that they had been treated with the greatest humanity. Very different indeed, was their treatment from that experienced by American prisoners on board English prison ships and in English jails.

Commodore Rogers was then in Boston. He proposed to keep twelve picked men as hostages for that number of Americans taken in the Nautilus. Several English vessels appeared below the light, while we were in the harbor; whereupon Americans volunteered to go out and attack them; but there was then a cessation of arms, which prevented us.

The bomb-boats of that day used to come alongside of us with liquor in bladders. They were a hard set of customers.—They were manned by the worst kind of landsharks ever encountered by a sailor. We were then more imposed upon than we can be now. The officers tried every way to prevent us from getting the liquor; but it was generally in vain. Sometimes they watched the boats, as they came along side, with their spy-glasses, to discover how and where the men secreted their grog. Many a time have I seen an officer glass in hand, watching us from the mizzen chains. But temperance had not then taught sailors, as it is teaching them now, to take care of themselves by letting rum alone. We didn't understand then, as we can now, that a Yankee tar can work better, fare better, defend his country better, without the poisonous draft than with it.

So strong was the appetite of the great mass of seamen for rum in those days, that we resorted to all expedients to obtain it. These bladders were hidden away in our boats, on every possible occasion. Sometimes we secreted them in our clothing, at the

bottom of the boat; and the officers would search for them with out finding.

Thus floggings, risks, and disgraces followed on board our ship—traced directly to rum.

CHAPTER V.

OLD IRONSIDES IN A GALE.

WE had been out from Boston about a week. We were bound to the coast of France, having on board Mr. Barlow, the American minister, and his family. They went out with us in great state, and made us plenty of music from the band. The frigate was in fine trim, and Captain Hull was in fine spirits. He was then a single gentleman, and his gallantry to the ladies of the company was equal to his bravery in defending his ship. The Captain was a favorite with the ladies, as he well deserved to be—for he had protected them in battle, and saved their native soil from dishonor. So it always is with a truly brave man. He is never happier than when shielding the weak, and ministering to the welfare of the virtuous.

On board a ship like the Constitution a wide field for rational enjoyment was opened. An intelligent female will soon find herself at home in such a place. Reposing confidence in her guardians, she will look abroad on the ocean scene around her, with a pleasure never obtained on the land. It is surprising to notice how soon woman will become accustomed to the sea. The roar of the winds, the rock of the billows, the plunging and rearing of the ship, will be matters of course to her in a little while, and, if she had been intending to do it, there are many cases in which she could navigate the largest class of vessels with skill and safety.

The crew were much honored by the refined conversation of Mr. Barlow's family. They exerted themselves to make us happy, seeing how hard we toiled to speed them on their watery way. Every man on board was more or less interested in them, so that we were ready to do all we could to make the voyage agreeable.

It was under these circumstances that a terrific gale of wind arose. Captain Hull was soon among us on deck, determined to show his gallant craft to the best advantage. The wind had chopped around very suddenly, at near midnight. It was one of the darkest nights ever seen. The huge, black clouds swept close over our heads, throwing a dense shadow all around on the waters. We could hardly see our hands before our faces, and every upper mast and piece of rigging was entirely out of sight. Notwithstanding it was in the month of February, the thunder broke on us in tremendous crashes, and the lightning blazed as if the sky was turned into one grand furnace of fire.

We were then not far off from the Western Islands, where squalls are very abundant. Puff after puff came the wind, heavier and heavier, the night clouds shutting down closer and closer, and the lightning dancing around among our spars and yards as if it were in sport. The tempest had fairly lifted up the waves with its might, and tossed them at us in all manner of shapes. It was not like the deep, heavy, regular roll of the ocean, when the ship seems to know exactly how to take it, and rises and falls like a plough going over a furrough, but a short, snappish, solid mass of waves, tumbled upon us without order and without mercy. Old Neptune appeared to show us what he could do, by blowing in almost every direction at once, and rearing his children into all the contrary motions imaginable. Never shall we forget his obstreperous conduct on that occasion.

The Constitution, prepared and brave as she was, laid down before this sudden blast. She rolled harder, and with a more jerking, trembling motion than I ever knew her to before, or have known her to since. Every effort was instantly required to keep the guns from breaking loose. Had any done so, and dashed down that steep, planky hill, which her decks presented, they must have well nigh gone straight through her—iron-sided as we knew her to be. The officers and men were tossed about, like so many playthings of the winds and waves. Some of the officers found their arms filled with rough, old salts, in a way they didn't much relish. But, at such a time, the hardest must fend off the best way they can.

A gale of wind, on board a man of war, with the ship on her beam ends, is no place for passing cards of compliments. At such a time, he who has the best sea-legs on him is the best fellow. A few who had greased their shoes to keep their feet

dry, found themselves very often on the wet deck, for their comfort, as flat as a pan fish. It was a busy work, for a while, to help pick them up. But, in the midst of all this excitement and danger, the most perfect subordination prevailed. Not a word was spoken, except by some officer in command. I felt the necessity of strict discipline, as I looked around me, and was proud of the American Navy, as I saw how orderly everything was. The momentary confusion of the squall showed off Old Ironsides to the best advantage. Long may she float to wear her well-earned honors!

Lieutenant (now Commodore) Reed took command of the deck. The darkness was at its deepest pitch, and the gale piping its loudest tune. Mr. Reed was completely self-possessed. It was a treat to see him pass around, and to hear him issue his orders. A ludicrous scene occurred between this gallant officer and a sailor, while I was standing close beside them.

Mr. Reed had ordered this man to haul on a rope near by, when he seized the Lieutenant hard and fast by the nose! He pulled away lustily for a moment, and then discovering his mistake, stammered out:

"I—I—ask your pardon, sir. It's so dark, I can't see."

"Granted, my boy," replied the Lieutenant with a laugh. "Here's the rope," handing him the piece of rigging himself.

"Here! here!" cried he, as the sailor plunged toward him again. "Here is the rope! I've got hold of it. Now pull away!" And right lustily they pulled together.

There were at least a hundred men under Reed's command at that moment. Each one had been directed to his place, and stood waiting the most minute order. Now came the cry:

"House top-gallant-masts!"

"Dark as it was, the men sprung into the rigging. In a moment they were aloft in the gloom; and when an occasional flash of lightning flashed across the waves, you might see them up there, bending over their work with all the composure of men in a harvest field. The rigging was soon swayed up, the fids taken out, the masts lowered down, and stowed alongside the long boat on the spar deck. The ship felt relieved by this operation, and rolled less heavily. It was quick work to relieve her. Not ten minutes passed, before the whole thing was done, and the masts made snug.

The gale kept increasing every moment. We had only one sail up—a storm stay sail. But that did its duty nobly. We expected to see it slit into ribbons, every squall that struck us;

but it held on, like buckram in a coat, so that we lay to under it several hours.

As the morning broke the gale grew worse, instead of subsiding. We were obliged to take in the storm stay sail, and scud under bare poles. The fine old ship rode off on the billows, like a swan in a lake, shaking the spray from her sides as she dashed along. The decks were well washed by the flying foam, so that we had no occasion to use buckets for that purpose. But it was rich to notice how steady she was, and how little noise the ship made. Her hull was like her commander—still, but sure. There was no creaking of the masts and timbers, such as is too often heard of at these times, on board of what are called our first class ships. We were satisfied then, if we had not been before, that a vessel that could walk over the water so quiet in such weather was well named the Ironsides. We all felt that she was put together to stay put.

You could hear nothing but the loud roaring of the winds, and the wild dash of the waves. It was only occasionally, however, that the latter could be heard, so violent was the rush of the gale through the rigging. Just at this moment, as the daylight streamed across the raging waters, Captain Hull came among us. He was as calm as a midsummer day, and looked around as if nothing had happened. Mr. Wardsworth was now in command of the deck.

"She labors hard, Mr. Wadsworth; labors hard, sir."

"Yes, sir; but she makes good weather of it."

"Ay, ay, that she does. She'll give us a good relish for our dinners at this rate."

"She has come up like a top, sir, and keeps just as steady."

"Exactly. What vessel is that to leeward, Mr. Wardsworth?"

"A square rigger, laying to, sir."

"Has she anything on her?"

"Not a stitch, sir. Nothing but her masts would stand in such a blow as this."

"Keep the frigate so, Mr. Wardsworth. This is going to stay by us some time, I'm thinking."

And it was just as the Captain thought. The gale continued, with fury, for two days. The only change in it was that as we drove further out to sea, the waves became longer, deeper and heavier, so that we did not pitch so violently as we had done. Every thing was in the snuggest possible trim, and a sharp look-out was kept on all hands. Nothing, scarcely, hove in sight; and when a vessel did appear, it was only for a few moments at a time that we could see her.

Toward the close of the second day we were driven into the currents of the gulf, where the extreme violence of the gale somewhat abated. We began to carry sail again, as she would bear it. Lieutenant Morris was the officer of the deck. Hull came up once more. And now occurred a scene which showed the indispensable necessity of implicit obedience.

An order came from Mr. Morris:

"Lay aloft there, men! Take in two reefs."

Another squall was coming, and with it came another busy time. But we were aloft instantly, and the work as quickly done.

I was a fore-top-man, at the time, and close by the men on the larboard fore yard arm. One awkward fellow made such a bad piece of work of it, as to leave his part of the sail loose, and attracted the attention of Mr. Reed.

"Who is that lubber?" he called out from below.

No answer.

"Larboard fore yard there! What fellow is that?"

All silent.

The man next to him was then ordered to pass his name.

Still there was no answer.

"Down here, every one of you!" cried the Lieutenant.

"Who was next to you, on the larboard side?" asked he of one of the men.

"Don't know, sir!" muttered the man.

This would not do. Here was a direct effort to shield the guilty. Such an act of insubordination, must not go unpunished. The safety of all on board depended on every man's doing his duty.

A flogging was ordered, and each one of that watch had to receive half a dozen of the cat. The effect was good. No such case of stubborn disobedience ever occurred again.

CHAPTER VI.

CRUISE OF THE ADAMS.

BOSTON, 1812. Not long after Captain Hull took the *Guerriere* he was removed to New York. Captain Bainbridge came aboard at Boston, to take command of *Old Ironsides*. Many of our crew were not at all pleased with this arrangement. We had become personally attached to Captain Hull, and hated to have him leave us. Such was the state of feeling, that it almost amounted to a mutiny.

There were many of us who felt badly for Captain Bainbridge. We knew he had been called a gallant officer, and it was hard to judge him before the time. He came forward one day and said :

“ My men, what do you know about me ? ”

This question called out several of the crew. One after another said, in reply :

“ We were with you, sir, at the taking of the *Philadelphia*, at Tripoli.”

“ Well,” continued the Captain, “ go with me now, and I will do by you all that the service allows.”

What more could the men ask ? But, although they became more quiet, there were several cases of lurking discontent. Eighteen sentries were placed that night all over the ship. In the course of the night, two men stole the second cutter, and resolved to run off. But, after they were in her, they found it was impossible to row without making so much noise as to be discovered. They waited in the dark, under the shadow of the ship, as long as they dared, when they floated quietly alongside one of the gun-boats, in hopes of being able to push unobserved from her to the shore. But they were discovered. One of the gun-boat sentries put out his gun, and drew the boat close under her quarter, where the deserters were both easily captured. They were very soon reported to Captain Bainbridge, who called all hands aft in the morning.

"Now," said he, "I will not punish these men as they deserve, if you will consent to go in the ship."

This was appealing to our best feelings. It was an argument in favor of our new commander at the very commencement of our acquaintance on the decks of the Constitution. The result was that nearly every man consented, to save his brother sailors from punishment.

But, after all, there were some of us who could not feel satisfied. We loved Captain Hull so well that we knew we must leave the frigate and we did.

"Never," burst from my lips, almost before I was aware of it, "Never will I fire one of these guns again." As I said this, I laid my hands on a gun which had been with me in battle. My words have proved true. I left the Constitution then, and I have never shipped in the fine old frigate since.

As soon as my time was out, and my wages were paid, I went to the Navy Yard at Charlestown. I was honorably discharged, and immediately determined to continue in the service of my country. One of our men had pursued a course that disgusted every patriotic bosom. He had gone ashore on liberty, and ran away to enlist in the army. No one could justify him. When discovered, and returned to the ship, he was severely punished in the presence of all the crew.

There was a circumstance connected with my discharge which may interest some. I was discharged on the day that Furley was hung as a pirate. He, and a man named Elter, had scuttled a vessel, killed one of the crew, and run away with the money they found on board. It was a dreadful murder, and will be remembered by those who read the account at that day.

Immediately on receiving my discharge, I went to witness this execution, with a shipmate. Whatever may be said to the contrary, by people now, I am satisfied that what I saw that day did me good, and will be the means of making me think more correctly as long as I live.

In my company was Daniel Sanders, who was cast away on the Arabian coast, and suffered so much in the deserts of that country. We met the procession on the way to the scaffold. The two prisoners were seated on their coffins, with their caps on their heads. Their appearance struck awe to my heart—and I doubt not, to the hearts of multitudes who beheld them. "The murderer!" was stamped on the brow of each of the criminals; and loudly and solemnly did that cavalcade speak.

to the people. Only one of them was hung. The other was cleared by turning state's evidence, having been reprieved by the Governor.

I was then a young man. A horror of crime seized on me, which I hope is not effaced, at this day. But I could not remain idle. In a short time I shipped to go in the Adams. She was then lying at Washington, under the command of Lieutenant Morris. The Adams was pierced for twenty-eight guns, having been made a razeed. Her appearance was somewhat singular. I remember a remark made by a countryman who came on board:

"Why," said he, with a wonderful stare, "she would do very well, if she was twenty feet wider!" But the Adams did good service in her day.

A week's liberty was granted me. I am sorry to say that such was very liable to be abused in those times. The first night of my shipping, before going to report myself on board, I was persuaded, sailor fashion, into a sailor row. We soon had no less than twelve watchmen upon us. It was then the law for each "Charlie" to carry a long pole. One of these I seized, and laid about me with so much man-o'-war spirit, as to keep the remaining eleven at bay! It was a difficult operation, however.

"Let him alone!" was the language of my landlord to the standers-by. "Better let him alone, if you know when your legs and arms are well off."

We were then seduced away with the story that a French crown was waiting me at the boarding house. The ruse took; the hope of a spree surmounted every other, in the bosom of thoughtless sailors.

Instead, however, of taking me to his home, my very worthy and truly amiable host led me to a grog shop, and called for half a gallon of liquor! This the company drank up, and a few hours found them sleeping off its dreadful effects on the floor.

The next morning, such was the thirst that followed, a case bottle full of spirits was in demand. From this we drank our fill and passed toward the ship. On our way, a half peck of apples attracted my attention, and have them we would. So, out I sprang from our carriage, and bought the whole lot of the apple woman—taking her entire stock at once. But the officer having us in charge was not so well pleased with this operation as we were. He followed me to the stand, and thinking it best to intimidate me, drew his dirk.

My breast was instantly bared, as I turned respectfully toward him :

"There, sir," said I, "is a breast that never knew fear.— You can put your dirk in it, if you like !"

That officer always showed me respect, after that, to his dying day.

"My man," he added, "I will give you the apples, if you will take them. But suppose I had been in a passion, and run you through ?"

The look with which this speech was answered was enough. Ever after that, the officer and I were friends.

We went to Washington all the way by land, in the stages. It was a curiosity to travel that route, in those days. From Boston to New-York, by land, would be a novel affair now—especially in a stage coach.

In Philadelphia we had the misfortune—for it was really one—to be presented with a barrel of beer. This encouraged us to all manner of sailor pranks. But the country was then rallying to carry on the war, and every man felt bound, according to the fashion of those times, to contribute something. Beyond Philadelphia, we had no money among our officers to pay our ferriage. One of us lent the gentleman in command the sum of three dollars, which carried us over the river.

When we arrived in Baltimore we learned the Adams was waiting for us, and orders came to hurry us forward. Here a landlord tried hard to enlist us in what he called a Patriot vessel. But we were shy of her. He offered us high wages, and plenty of prize money.

"What flag does she sail under ?" inquired I.

"O, sometimes one—sometimes another," was the response.

"Does she every carry a black flag, sir ?"

"Why—yes—perhaps she does—once in a while!" he added.

"Indeed!" was our quick rejoinder. "Then, sir, you can't have us. We go for nothing darker, sir, than the red, the white and the blue."

"We never desert our colors!" shouted one old tar, and with three cheers for the stars and stripes, we ended our Baltimore privateering.

In as short a time as our lumbering wheels would take us, we arrived in Washington. We were immediately set at work in the rigging loft, fitting the Adams for sea. Here we soon found that we were likely to be short of provisions. Three stewards had been broken, in consequence of neglecting

the men. On going to the store-room, we found enough of every thing we needed; and it was not long before all our wants were supplied. The temptation was too much for us. We were all soon intoxicated—as was allowed to us then—as if men could defend their country as well drunk as they would when sober! I rejoice, as a man-of-war's man who has been in the service many years, that we are getting our eyes open to the truth of this matter. But our drunkenness, even then, was discovered, and when it interfered with our duty, was justly considered a disgrace to the service.

Mr. Stickney, the officer of the deck, not long after overhauled me. He took me with him on board the old York, and pushed me violently with his foot down to the gun deck. I brought up all standing; but the shock well nigh sobered me.

"Why, my, boy!" said the officer, "what made you get drunk?"

My reply was a respectful apology for being caught in the company of the old, hard drinkers, and this excuse followed.

"It's well, my boy, that your'e the Captain's favorite. If it were not for that, you would be flogged till you could hardly stand."

The next day I was reported to the Captain.

"Ah!" said he, "it's bad, bad. But, then, it's not worth while to mind it now."

Thus, unfortunately, is the habit of intemperance schooled into the lads of the Navy.

In a few days the Adams dropped down the Potomac, near to Alexandria. Here we came among the gun boats—the small vessels built by order of Mr. Jefferson, to protect the Southern harbors and rivers. I had no great fancy for them, and I never knew a sailor who had.

Lieutenant Reed, who was in the Constitution when I was, had command of one of these naval beauties. He very soon paid his kind regards to me, with the question:

"Will you go with me, my lad?"

Now I didn't want to go in such a craft as that—and Mr. Reed knew it. But the young sailors of the Constitution stood well, and he wanted me with him.

"I had rather be excused, sir: not that I've the least objections to you, Mr. Reed; but, then," and my lurking glance at the gun boat, by which we were standing, told the rest of the story.

"Come, my boy, come along," he rejoined. "To-morrow we shall be ready for sea. You shall have good wages, and act as quarter-master."

I yielded; but I didn't like it at all. There was so much

clearing away, and dressing up, and walking about, and making signals, that I sighed for the unrestrained station I had just left. All was done, however, that could be, to make my situation as pleasant as could be expected in such a lubberly craft as a gun-boat. Our gunner, who was a Turk taken in the Algerine war, tried his best to render me contented. But it was of no use. I loved one inch of the broad sweep of the decks, or tops, or yards of a frigate, more than all the hull of these lumbering, black crafts.

The Lieutenant was mortified at my dislike to promotion, and even went so far as to threaten to stop my grog, and then to flog me if I asked for it! In revenge for this, my plan was to intoxicate myself that I might be broken, on purpose. But they overlooked this folly in me, and I returned to my duty again.

It was not long before we dropped down the Potomac to the mouth of the Wecomico. Here lay the two gun-boats, the Scorpion and Asp. We saw two large ships off the nearest point, and made instant preparations for a chase. The Asp could not get out the harbor, on account of the wind, and Lieutenant Reed made signals for her to go further up. But it was too late. The enemy sent their boats to her, four barges, filled with men, who captured her, after a gallant defence. Lieutenant Stickney was wounded, and laid helpless on the quarter deck. He had just strength enough to cry out:

“Men! don't let them come aboard! Never give up to them!” This order was heard by the English, who blew his brains out as soon as they reached the decks. Six of the crew immediately swam ashore. They were fired on repeatedly, but not a shot hit them. The British officers stood in their boats cheering their crews as they fired.

On possessing themselves of the vessel, the English resolved to burn her. For this purpose they thrust a match into a bucket of tar. But it was a very foolish way to do it. If they had emptied the tar on the deck, and set fire to it there, the work would have been quickly and surely done. As it was, the bucket was a long time burning before the fire reached the vessel, and then it only blazed up against the foremast and one of the sails. The inhabitants saw the fire, and as the enemy had gone, they came on board and extinguished it.

That night, a part of the crew of the Adams went down the Potomac to return the Asp. We found both the Scorpion and Asp stem and stern, out of harm's way. Our spirits rose with the discovery; and having rowed and toiled all night to reach the spot, we gave up to the temptation to recreate a little. For this, one of the sailors was lashed to the rigging, which incensed

him very much. He said he had rather take a thousand floggings, than be tied up so, like a slave. So thoroughly was the spirit of this tar roused within him, that he actually gnawed off the ropes that bound him! An attempt to re-bind his limbs, was followed by a threat that he would drown himself in the river, rather than submit! Seizing an eighteen pound shot in both hands, he sprang over the sides of the vessel, and was rapidly sinking, when an expert swimmer dived for him, and brought him up by the hair of his head.

But an interview with the Captain soon settled the matter. The sailor was a favorite; and as the Commander saw him enter the cabin, wet and dripping, his generous nature returned the offender with a short rebuke. This, however, might not have been the end. Such are the Naval rules—so dearly does the national law prize the life of our humblest sailor—that if that man had drowned, the officers concerned must have been tried for their lives.

Our gun-boats kept cruising up and down the Potomac, in quest of the vessels of the enemy. But we met with nothing worthy our attention. A couple of privateers from Baltimore met near us, and each supposing the other to be an enemy, both commenced firing. Three broadsides were given, and several men wounded, before the mistake was discovered.

dry, found themselves very often on the wet deck, for their comfort, as flat as a pan fish. It was a busy work, for a while, to help pick them up. But, in the midst of all this excitement and danger, the most perfect subordination prevailed. Not a word was spoken, except by some officer in command. I felt the necessity of strict discipline, as I looked around me, and was proud of the American Navy, as I saw how orderly every thing was. The momentary confusion of the squall showed off Old Ironsides to the best advantage. Long may she float to wear her well-earned honors!

Lieutenant (now Commodore) Reed took command of the deck. The darkness was at its deepest pitch, and the gale piping its loudest tune. Mr. Reed was completely self-possessed. It was a treat to see him pass around, and to hear him issue his orders. A ludicrous scene occurred between this gallant officer and a sailor, while I was standing close beside them.

Mr. Reed had ordered this man to haul on a rope near by, when he seized the Lieutenant hard and fast by the nose! He pulled away lustily for a moment, and then discovering his mistake, stammered out:

"I—I—ask your pardon, sir. It's so dark, I can't see."

"Granted, my boy," replied the Lieutenant with a laugh.

"Here's the rope," handing him the piece of rigging himself.

"Here! here!" cried he, as the sailor plunged toward him again. "Here is the rope! I've got hold of it. Now pull away!" And right lustily they pulled together.

There were at least a hundred men under Reed's command at that moment. Each one had been directed to his place, and stood waiting the most minute order. Now came the cry:

"House top-gallant-masts!"

"Dark as it was, the men sprung into the rigging. In a moment they were aloft in the gloom; and when an occasional flash of lightning flashed across the waves, you might see them up there, bending over their work with all the composure of men in a harvest field. The rigging was soon swayed up, the fids taken out, the masts lowered down, and stowed alongside the long boat on the spar deck. The ship felt relieved by this operation, and rolled less heavily. It was quick work to relieve her. Not ten minutes passed, before the whole thing was done, and the masts made snug.

The gale kept increasing every moment. We had only one sail up—a storm stay sail. But that did its duty nobly. We expected to see it slit into ribbons, every squall that struck us;

but it held on, like buckram in a coat, so that we lay to under it several hours.

As the morning broke the gale grew worse, instead of subsiding. We were obliged to take in the storm stay sail, and scur under bare poles. The fine old ship rode off on the billows, like a swan in a lake, shaking the spray from her sides as she dashed along. The decks were well washed by the flying foam, so that we had no occasion to use buckets for that purpose. But it was rich to notice how steady she was, and how little noise the ship made. Her hull was like her commander—still, but sure. There was no creaking of the masts and timbers, such as is too often heard of at these times, on board of what are called our first class ships. We were satisfied then, if we had not been before, that a vessel that could walk over the water so quiet in such weather was well named the Ironsides. We all felt that she was put together to stay put.

You could hear nothing but the loud roaring of the winds, and the wild dash of the waves. It was only occasionally, however, that the latter could be heard, so violent was the rush of the gale through the rigging. Just at this moment, as the daylight streamed across the raging waters, Captain Hull came among us. He was as calm as a midsummer day, and looked around as if nothing had happened. Mr. Wardsworth was now in command of the deck.

"She labors hard, Mr. Wadsworth; labors hard, sir."

"Yes, sir; but she makes good weather of it."

"Ay, ay, that she does. She'll give us a good relish for our dinners at this rate."

"She has come up like a top, sir, and keeps just as steady."

"Exactly. What vessel is that to leeward, Mr. Wardsworth?"

"A square rigger, laying to, sir."

"Has she anything on her?"

"Not a stitch, sir. Nothing but her masts would stand in such a blow as this."

"Keep the frigate so, Mr. Wardsworth. This is going to stay by us some time, I'm thinking."

And it was just as the Captain thought. The gale continued, with fury, for two days. The only change in it was that as we drove further out to sea, the waves became longer, deeper and heavier, so that we did not pitch so violently as we had done. Every thing was in the snuggest possible trim, and a sharp look-out was kept on all hands. Nothing, scarcely, hove in sight; and when a vessel did appear, it was only for a few moments at a time that we could see her.

"Aweel! aweel!" muttered he, as he came over our sides; "but this is muckle bad!"

"Why, skipper?" asked Captain Morris, with a queer look.

"O! an' 'tis bad for mysel, dear mon—muckle bad!"

"Pray tell me why, my friend?" again inquired our commander.

"An' maun I spik it oot, mon?"

"Out?—Yes, to be sure. What's the matter?"

The Scotchman, by this time, had actually begun to cry, and stood before Captain Morris with a wo-begone visage that was absolutely ludicrous. "Oh! oh!" (blubbering out loud) "all my siller is in her—every pound I've kept in this worl'."

Here was a dilemma, and as the Scotchman cried the Captain laughed. But he yielded to him, and made his vessel a cartel, so that she might go unmolested into port.

The man of the thistle fairly jumped for joy at this news, and wiped his eyes before us.

We learned from him that the Plover, a heavy English sloop of war, had just left. She had been razeed from a frigate, and mounted thirty-two guns. We carried but twenty-eight. But we were not afraid of her, especially as she had on board a quantity of gold dust.

Our cruise was immediately resumed. We took a large East Indiaman, when we had been out only a few days. We expected to have a brush with her—and we did, a short one. She was well provided with guns and ammunition. It was in the afternoon when we saw her. She ran down toward us, as though she wanted to speak. We understood the ruse, and slipped away, until we knew more of the strength of her metal. The next day we had to hunt her up on the great ocean park, and at last found her just as she was going up one of the watery hills. For three or four days we kept her in sight. She loomed up before us occasionally, like a light-house seen through a thin mist.

"A great vessel," said one of the midshipmen to me. "And what white sails she has."

"Yes, sir," I replied, "she's an East Indiaman, and well prepared for us, I reckon."

An old tar now broke in upon us:

"Do you think that's an old merchantman, you lubber?—A man-o'-war, I tell ye! Who's afeard?"

The last remark was overheard by Captain Morris.

"If any of you are dissatisfied," said he, "I'll put ye alongside in a hurry. We'll sink her, or defend ourselves like men?"

Three cheers followed from the crew, and we spread more canvass to the breeze. We were very soon up with her. She fired first, and then attempted to run. We overhauled her immediately, and gave her a broadside. This brought down her colors.

As the Captain came on board the Adams, he looked chop-fallen enough.

"You have all made your fortunes," he pettishly exclaimed, "if you can only keep us: but you can't."

"We'll try," briefly responded Captain Morris.

"If you do it, sir, you'll never need to wet your hands again. You and your men are made for life. My cargo is one of the richest that ever floated in salt water."

We held this noble prize about ten minutes. We had hardly begun to call her ours, when at least twenty-five sail of the enemy hove in sight! Never shall I forget how they appeared, as they came sweeping on toward us. There were seven large class men-of-war among them. The Huzzar frigate took the lead. She came on us as furious as a tiger, firing from both sides at once.

The shrill whistle was now heard through the Adams. We were soon called aft, and a general consultation held as to the best way of escaping. Our boats were immediately out, Constitution fashion, and begun a hearty tow. Night soon came on; and as the dense darkness of that climate shut in around us, we escaped. The next morning we were six miles dead to windward of all our pursuers. They kept up the chase all day; but it was of no use. We ran them down every moment, so that at sunset there was nothing of them to be seen!

We met with several English vessels on the cruise. These we generally took, and burnt. Many of them were valuable, and must have caused no small loss to the enemy of our country.

From this cruise on the African coast we returned to America, and entered the port of Savannah. On our way seventy prizes were added to our list. Some of them were worth the handling. Some were loaded with smoked salmon, for the enemy's troops, some with raisins for their ports, some with munitions of war.

The Peacock came in while we were at Savannah, and landed her prisoners. She had, like us, made a successful cruise. At this port we laid in a large stock of provisions and water. Captain Morris had been obliged to put us on short allowance—and it went against the grain of a man of his noble nature. He was determined, now, to be prepared. A wild boar that undertook to swim the river, where we were procuring water, up the wild country north of Savannah, was killed by a boat's crew. He was a furious creature, with long tusks, and at least three years old. But the Yankee man-o'-war's men were too much for him. We carried too many guns. We soon despatched him, and made a feast of his remains. Money brought us the Southern "fixins;" and what with ham, cheese, and other eatables, we were ready to put to sea in good spirits.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAST CRUISE OF THE OLD ADAMS.

Our next cruise in the Adams was toward the English coast. We calculated to pick up something along there worth having. Our route lay close by a part of the British shore. Sometimes we came near enough to distinguish the inhabitants, as they stood looking at us. An English razeed gave us chase from this quarter. But we showed her our heels very quick, and were clear of her in a short time. But it cost us something to do it. We parted company, on the occasion, with some of our old friends, the guns and anchors. One of the former, I remember, was so large that I could put my head in the muzzle, and move it quite easily around. The water was let off pretty freely, also, in the chase, until we were fairly out of sight.

We steered due North for several days, spreading all the sail we could carry, until the atmosphere at night was almost as light as it was by day. The wind blew so fresh, that we carried away our main top gallant yard. But we spliced it immediately, and pushed on. The ship sailed remarkably well; but she trembled very much when we carried sail heavy. One peculiarity of the Adams was that she seldom rose much with the waves, she generally ploughed directly through them, cutting her watery path in a lather of foam. I never saw the like before nor since.

We now tacked, and stood towards Quebec. Here we fell in with several merchantmen, some of which became our prizes. We destroyed them—probably as many as fifty in all. One we met was deeply loaded with fur and lumber, bound to London for the merchants there. We changed her destination very materially. It was singular that the first mate of this vessel was the second mate of the East Indiaman we took on the coast of Africa.

We were all the time hearing, as we heard from this Londoner, that our vessels were escaping from the enemy, by

means of their superior sailing. This is what gave us such advantage during the last war; and it is that gives American merchantmen, and especially American packet ships, the advantage in commerce now. As a general thing, say what you will, the Yankee vessels are the swiftest sailers in the world.

While pursuing an English schooner on this coast, we came very near getting on the Isle of Holt, a dangerous place, in any climate, but especially so on the Canada shore, and in the dead of winter. We ran so close to the rocks that we could see them within a few feet of us, and quite too soon for our pleasure heard the noise of the Roaring Bull—a tremendous pile of ledges, where the tide and waves make a deep, sullen, roaring noise, like that of an angry bull. We thought it was just the place for Englishmen. We could here jump off our bowsprit on the shore, but concluded not to try it. In tacking ship, to go around the island, we struck hard, and the cry arose, "We're all lost!" But we soon backed her off; and a piece of tarred canvass, drawn tight under the bottom, repaired all damages.

Our next place of destination was Portland, Maine; but, in consequence of some mistake, we arrived at Castine, in that State. We soon found the enemy were in hot pursuit of us, and took a pilot up the Penobscot river. We were resolved to place ourselves as far out of the reach of a superior force as possible, and then fight our way through to the last moment.

In passing up the river, several of us were left in ambush on an island toward the mouth. Here we had it in our power to watch, unobserved, the motions of the British, while we could easily communicate with our own forces. The ship's cook was left with us, and we had plenty of provisions; but after all, it was a dreary place. One of our men was suddenly taken sick, and died. He met his end with great fortitude; but it was melancholy to see him die there in that desolate spot. We sat in silence around him, as he lay pillowed in the arms of one of his shipmates. The only sound that mingled with his dying groans was the dull wash of the waves as they rolled in at our feet. No sheltering roof was over the head of the departing sailor. No mother, no father, no friend of all his kindred, was nigh to wipe his clammy temples, or listen to or bear back to his home the last words that fell from his quivering lips. But we did all we could for him; and when he was dead, falling back stiffly and heavily on the ground, we took him gently up, and laid him in the boat for his bier. There he was, a noble, manly fellow, a pale corpse, on a thought in

the little bark he had helped to row through the waves for many a day. His face was turned toward the sky that he had watched so often from the bosom of the mighty deep, and his stalwart limbs were stretched out cold and stiff by the oars he had gallantly handled.

There was not earth enough, on that rocky little island, to bury our shipmate, and, besides, we thought it would be more becoming to lay him down in the sea. We sewed him up in a piece of canvass, with a large boulder at his feet, and rowed out with him into the open ocean. Here was our burial scene. We had no hearse, no funeral procession, no tolling bell, no mitred priest. The sky was the dome of our sanctuary, and the surrounding waves sent up through their watery aisles a solemn chant to the memory of our comrade. We had but one officer with us on the island—a surgeon's mate. He accompanied us in the boat to the burial; and when we placed the wet thought over the stern, with the body of the sailor laid out upon it, a word from him gave us the only service that consigned his remains to the deep. It was a gentle plunge that he made; and each shipmate bent over the boat to watch him as he sank down to his appropriate grave.

By command of Captain Morris, we held intercourse with the mainland, and ascertained the best location for the ship. It was the opinion of the inhabitants that the safest spot would be opposite Camden, several miles up the river. Castine was then very much exposed to the enemy, and it was more difficult to obtain provisions there than at Camden. As soon as possible, the Adams was moored at the latter place, and armed for the best defence that could be made. This was on Wednesday night. On Thursday morning the English sent us this insulting message:

“ We will come and help you heave your ship out. for we are going to Bangor to breakfast.”

CHAPTER IX.

BURNING OF THE ADAMS.

On the morning of the Saturday previous to the burning of the Adams, several companies of troops came in from the surrounding country. They wanted guns, and ammunition, to aid us in defending the vessel; but it was the opinion of the officers that the English were afraid to come up. Thursday had passed, and they had not yet taken their breakfast in Bangor.

But we were mistaken. Scarcely had Captain Morris spoken on the subject than a large fleet of the enemy's boats hove in sight. The spy glass of Captain Morris was instantly at his eye. They came rounding the point nearest us, firing with all their force. We returned the compliment as soon as we could reach them with our guns, dashing two of their boats to pieces.

The people now gathered in great numbers on the banks; but it was in vain to attempt to save the ship, unless we could get off the boats before they reached her. They were bent on reaching Bangor; and our only hope was in repelling them by brave single combat, before they could crowd all their forces on the decks of the Adams.

An officer inquired:

"Who will go into an ambush near the enemy?"

A large number of us volunteered immediately. As soon as we reached a spot near them on the shore, we opened a brisk fire on the boats, that took effect. The adjoining hills were now crowded with spectators. All was intense excitement. An old man who had been in the Revolution, shouldered his rusty musket, and crept beside me to the bank of the river, where we helped to keep the British nearest us at bay for a while. The old man prided himself on having been "a Continentaller," and handled his weapon with the skill and efficiency of a man in the prime of life. His name was Benjamin Runnels.

Soon after we reached the ground I missed him, and discovered he had taken a position by a fence. He was lying in wait.

"Uncle Ben," said I, "what are you doing?"

"Doing!" he answered: "Just come here. See what they're about!"

His ambush commanded a full view of both forces—American and English.

clearing away, and dressing up, and walking about, and making signals, that I sighed for the unrestrained station I had just left. All was done, however, that could be, to make my situation as pleasant as could be expected in such a lubberly craft as a gun-boat. Our gunner, who was a Turk taken in the Algerine war, tried his best to render me contented. But it was of no use. I loved one inch of the broad sweep of the decks, or tops, or yards of a frigate, more than all the hull of these lumbering, black crafts.

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It was not long before we dropped down the Potomac to the mouth of the Wecomico. Here lay the two gun-boats, the Scorpion and Asp. We saw two large ships off the nearest point, and made instant preparations for a chase. The Asp could not get out the harbor, on account of the wind, and Lieutenant Reed made signals for her to go further up. But it was too late. The enemy sent their boats to her, four barges, filled with men, who captured her, after a gallant defence. Lieutenant Stickney was wounded, and laid helpless on the quarter deck. He had just strength enough to cry out:

“Men! don't let them come aboard! Never give up to them!” This order was heard by the English, who blew his brains out as soon as they reached the decks. Six of the crew immediately swam ashore. They were fired on repeatedly, but not a shot hit them. The British officers stood in their boats cheering their crews as they fired.

On possessing themselves of the vessel, the English resolved to burn her. For this purpose they thrust a match into a bucket of tar. But it was a very foolish way to do it. If they had emptied the tar on the deck, and set fire to it there, the work would have been quickly and surely done. As it was, the bucket was a long time burning before the fire reached the vessel, and then it only blazed up against the foremast and one of the sails. The inhabitants saw the fire, and as the enemy had gone, they came on board and extinguished it.

That night, a part of the crew of the Adams went down the Potomac to return the Asp. We found both the Scorpion and Asp stem and stern, out of harm's way. Our spirits rose with the discovery; and having rowed and toiled all night to reach the spot, we gave up to the temptation to recreate a little. For this, one of the sailors was lashed to the rigging, which incensed

him very much. He said he had rather take a thousand floggings, than be tied up so, like a slave. So thoroughly was the spirit of this tar roused within him, that he actually gnawed off the ropes that bound him! An attempt to re-bind his limbs, was followed by a threat that he would drown himself in the river, rather than submit! Seizing an eighteen pound shot in both hands, he sprang over the sides of the vessel, and was rapidly sinking, when an expert swimmer dived for him, and brought him up by the hair of his head.

But an interview with the Captain soon settled the matter. The sailor was a favorite; and as the Commander saw him enter the cabin, wet and dripping, his generous nature returned the offender with a short rebuke. This, however, might not have been the end. Such are the Naval rules—so dearly does the national law prize the life of our humblest sailor—that if that man had drowned, the officers concerned must have been tried for their lives.

Our gun-boats kept cruising up and down the Potomac, in quest of the vessels of the enemy. But we met with nothing worthy our attention. A couple of privateers from Baltimore met near us, and each supposing the other to be an enemy, both commenced firing. Three broadsides were given, and several men wounded, before the mistake was discovered.

opened his eyes with the broadest astonishment, having just come in from the woods.

"How far is it to the main road?" I inquired.

"A mile and a quarter," said he, "to where they ford the stream."

Here was where I supposed the crew of the Adams to be, and I was anxious to join them.

"What will you give for my musket, my man?" said I. My arms were weary with carrying it, and I knew I should need all it would bring. But I could not trade with the gentleman. He was evidently not much acquainted with the article, nor much interested in the demand for it then in the market.

On the banks, I could now see the enemy passing up the river, and hear them firing on the inhabitants. We heard that there were five hundred English troops then on the way to Belfast. Could we have obtained the recruits we expected from Portsmouth, we would have been able to keep the enemy at a much more respectful distance.

All that day another sailor and myself travelled together. We did not reach the remainder of the crew until afterwards. Our rest was but little at the best. Occasionally a farmer invited us in, and gave us milk; but I found the eight dollars for which I sold my gun, were very convenient. Those of the men we overtook were in distress, some from being wounded in defence of the country, others from fatigue. Had it not been for my desire to aid these brave shipmates, I should have carried my trusty friend, the musket, home with me, and left it as a memorial of the war with my old father. Others had thrown theirs away, sailor-like; and even some of the officers had been so thoughtless as thus to expose themselves and their men to the necessities of hunger.

The gentlest caution was necessary. The enemy had landed at different points, and surrounded us on all sides. Hence the necessity of finding a spot where we could concentrate, arm ourselves anew, and prepare to expel the invaders.

I saw several instances of the chances of war. When the British were nearest to the bank of the Penobscot, several people clustered around me for defence. They saw I was armed. Although the English fired freely into our ranks, yet we stood our ground, and not one of us was wounded. But a countryman who was frightened, and run and hid beside an adjoining house, was instantly killed!

But I must close up these "Stray Leaves," with the promise of giving more to the public before long. I have a great variety of authentic facts stowed away in my locker, and they shall be forthcoming in due time and order.

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the little bark he had helped to row through the waves for many a day. His face was turned toward the sky that he had watched so often from the bosom of the mighty deep, and his stalwart limbs were stretched out cold and stiff by the oars he had gallantly handled.

There was not earth enough, on that rocky little island, to bury our shipmate, and, besides, we thought it would be more becoming to lay him down in the sea. We sewed him up in a piece of canvass, with a large bowlder at his feet, and rowed out with him into the open ocean. Here was our burial scene. We had no hearse, no funeral procession, no tolling bell, no mitred priest. The sky was the dome of our sanctuary, and the surrounding waves sent up through their watery aisles a solemn chant to the memory of our comrade. We had but one officer with us on the island—a surgeon's mate. He accompanied us in the boat to the burial; and when we placed the wet thought over the stern, with the body of the sailor laid out upon it, a word from him gave us the only service that consigned his remains to the deep. It was a gentle plunge that he made; and each shipmate bent over the boat to watch him as he sank down to his appropriate grave.

By command of Captain Morris, we held intercourse with the mainland, and ascertained the best location for the ship. It was the opinion of the inhabitants that the safest spot would be opposite Camden, several miles up the river. Castine was then very much exposed to the enemy, and it was more difficult to obtain provisions there than at Camden. As soon as possible, the Adams was moored at the latter place, and armed for the best defence that could be made. This was on Wednesday night. On Thursday morning the English sent us this insulting message:

"We will come and help you heave your ship out. for we are going to Bangor to breakfast."
