

we shall now show. The English had in their possession, the late French corvette "*Bonne Citoyenne*,"—a very fine vessel. After placing the force of the *Bonne Citoyenne* in juxtaposition with that of the *Frolic*, the reader will be able to judge how far the action of Government was judicious: *Bonne Citoyenne*—length of main deck, one hundred and twenty feet; breadth, thirty-one feet; tons, five hundred and eleven; guns, twenty; men, one hundred and thirty-five. *Frolic*, length, one hundred and twenty feet; breadth, thirty-two feet; tons, five hundred and forty; guns, twenty-two; men, one hundred and seventy-five. Now, surely the easiest mode of encountering the Americans, would appear to have been, to have built vessels of some twenty-five tons burthen larger than the *Bonne Citoyenne*, and to have added thirty men, at least, to her complement. The Lords of the Admiralty thought otherwise, so, as the surest means of producing the effect they desired to bring about, the vessels, built from the lines of the *Bonne Citoyenne*, were shortened five feet, and instead of increasing, the burthen was decreased fifty-five tons,—two extra guns were put on board a smaller vessel, and to work the extra guns no extra men were considered necessary—the complement of one hundred and thirty-five being considered sufficient. Sir Jos. Yorke had the merit of sending his improved vessels to sea—the improvement consisting in diminishing a vessel's capacity to carry, and at the same time increasing her armament. Let us take Mr. James' testimony: "Scarcely were the twenty thirty-pounder carronades, and two long nines brought on board, than two of the carronades were sent on shore again, as having no proper ports fitted to receive them—already the remaining twenty guns were too close together, to render the quarters sufficiently roomy. With these, however, the ships went to sea; and they were soon found neither to sail well nor to work well. The utility of their stern chase ports, may be judged of when it is stated, that, owing to the narrowness of the ships at the stern, there was no room to work the tiller while the guns were pointed through the ports."

Of this last discreditable oversight and its attendant consequences, we shall have to give hereafter a practical illustration. Fortunately for the credit of the British navy, and for the

individual honor of the captains and crews of the new twenty-gun vessels, the press gave rather an exaggerated account of their force and size, and held them up to view as much more formidable than they really were. The consequence was that the *Wasp*, *Frolic*, *Peacock*, and *Hornet* avoided every three-masted man-of-war they saw. Relative to the boasting that took place in the case of the *Hornet* and *Bonne Citoyenne*, we shall now speak, and shall establish, with Mr. James' help, the fact that the behavior of the Americans on the occasion was nothing but braggadocio of the most despicable character.*

* While in the early part of December, 1812, the United States' frigate *Constitution*, Commodore Bainbridge, and ship-sloop *Hornet*, of eighteen 32-pounder carronades and two long 24-pounders, Captain James Lawrence, were waiting at St. Salvador, to be joined by the *Essex*, an occurrence happened, which the characteristic cunning of Americans turned greatly to their advantage. In the middle of November the British 20-gun ship *Bonne-Citoyenne*, of eighteen 32-pounder carronades and two long 9-pounders, Captain Pitt Barnaby Greene, having, while coming from Rio-de-la-plata, with half a million sterling on board, damaged herself greatly by running on shore, entered the port of St. Salvador, to land her cargo and be hove down.

When the ship was keel-out, the two American ships arrived in the port. The American Consul and the two American commanders now laid their heads together to contrive something which, without any personal risk to any one of the three, should contribute to the renown of their common country. What so likely as a challenge to Capt. Greene? It could not be accepted; and then the refusal would be as good as a victory to Captain Lawrence. Accordingly, a challenge for the *Hornet* to meet the *Bonne-Citoyenne* was offered by Captain Lawrence, through the American Consul, to the British consul, Mr. Frederick Lundeman; Commodore Bainbridge pledging his honour to be out of the way, or not to interfere.

Without making the unpleasant avowal, that his government upon this occasion, had reduced the vessel he commanded from a king's cruiser to a merchant-ship, Captain Greene transmitted, through the consular channel, an animated reply, refusing a meeting "upon terms so manifestly advantageous as those proposed by Commodore Bainbridge." Indeed, it would appear as if the commodore had purposely inserted the words, "or not interfering," lest Captain Greene, contrary to his expectation, should accept the challenge. For, had the two ships met by agreement, and engaged, the *Constitution* looked on without interfering, and the British ship been the conqueror, the pledge of honor, on the part of both American commanders, would have been fulfilled; and can any one for a moment imagine, that Commodore Bainbridge would have seen the *Bonne-Citoyenne* carry off a United States' ship of war, without attempting her rescue? It was more than