

Captain Humphreys hailing, said, "He had despatches from the British Commander-in-Chief." The answer was "Send them on board, I shall heave to." Both vessels love to at about half-past three in the afternoon, and in a few minutes Lieut. Meade went on board the "Chesapeake," bearing in addition to Vice-Admiral Berkley's order, already cited, a letter from Captain Humphreys to Commodore Barron, adverting to the order enclosed, and expressing a hope that every circumstance might be amicably arranged. At 4.15 in the afternoon, the boat not making her appearance, the "Leopard" recalled her by signal, and in a few minutes Lieut. Meade returned with Commodore Barron's reply : "I know of no such men as you describe, the officers who were on the recruiting service for this ship, were particularly instructed not to enter any deserters from His Britannic Majesty's ships, nor do I know of any being here." "The Commodore then states that his instructions are not to permit the crew of his ship to be mustered by any but her own officers, that he wishes to preserve harmony, and that he hopes his answer will prove satisfactory."

"The 'Leopard' then edged down nearer to the 'Chesapeake,' and Captain Humphreys again hailing, said :— 'Commodore Barron, you must be aware of the necessity I am under of complying with the orders of my Commander-in-Chief.' After this hail had been twice repeated, the only reply returned was, 'I do not understand what you say,' yet the words were distinctly heard by the hailing ship, and she was to windward. Captain Humphreys resolved no longer to be trifled with, and observing on board the American frigate indications of intended resistance, the 'Leopard' discharged a shot across the 'Chesapeake's' forefoot. In a minute's time, a second shot was fired ; and in two minutes more, or at 4.30 p.m., nothing but evasive answers being returned to the hails of Captain Humphreys, the 'Leopard' fired her broadside. Commodore Barron then