

her mission, nor quite free to choose the fields of her action, so, dragging her damaged boilers and dilapidated hull down the Indian Ocean, round the Cape and up the broad Atlantic,\* she sought refuge and repair in a French port. The rest of her story is soon told. Denied the means necessary to restore her to her original efficiency as a ship of war, and with defective ammunition, she was compelled to engage an antagonist, whose challenge she was from her condition neither fit to accept nor able to avoid. In seventy minutes she was sunk. For want of means of repair in the Eastern hemisphere she lies beneath the waters of the English Channel, silently warning us to profit by the lessons she has taught.

There is one other popular view respecting the command of the sea to which it is necessary to refer. It is that the command of the sea can be secured by the blockade of our enemy's coast. The experiences of the American war throw some light upon this argument. In the *Singapore Times* of December 9, 1863, we read: "From our shipping list it will be seen that there are no fewer than seventeen American merchantmen at present in our harbours. Their gross tonnage may be roughly set down at 12,000 tons. Some of them have been lying here now upwards of three months, and all this at a time when there is no dullness in the freight market; but, on the contrary, an active demand for tonnage to all parts of the world. It is indeed to us a home picture—the only one we trust to have for many years to come—of the widespread evils of war in modern days. But it is a picture quite unique in its nature, for the nation to which these seventeen fine ships belong has a navy perhaps second only to Great Britain, and the enemy with which she has to cope is but a schism from herself, possessed of no port that is not blockaded, and owning not more than five or six vessels on the high seas. The tactics with which the Federals have to combat are without precedent, and the means to enable them successfully to do so have not yet been devised."

It is as well to remark, that at the time this was written the naval force of the Federals consisted of about 700 ships and some 40,000 men! Yet it was not equal to preventing the interruption of American commerce in distant seas, although it maintained a

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\* "On May 2, we recrossed the Equator into the northern hemisphere and ran up to our old tollgate, where, as the reader will recollect, we halted on our outward passage and *revised* the passports of so many travellers. The poor old Alabama was not now what she had been then. She was like the wearied fox-hound, limping back after a long chase, footsore and longing for quiet and repose."—*Vide* "My Adventures Afloat," by Admiral Semmes.