

can easily be accounted for, when, in addition imperfect fittings and slightly constructed vessels, with all the faults of carelessness and inexperience concentrated, the only wonder will be that the British Navy suffered so little. Higher pay and other inducements had attracted a goodly number of the seamen trained under Nelson and Collingwood to the American service, and during the first year of the war they were partly instrumental in turning the tide of victory against their countrymen, but it would seem that towards its close these men had gradually withdrawn from the service. Enough will be shewn to account for the defeat of British vessels without any partisan feeling whatever. Facts of this description commend themselves to every reasonable man, and it is no disgrace to be defeated by the descendants of Englishmen aided by British sailors.

The only quality in which the American officers appear to have been deficient was that of the practical knowledge necessary to manœuvre their vessels with sufficient skill, but this should not be a subject of wonder. The officers who have been in action have a decided advantage over the officers who have not, and that experience the British had in no ordinary degree. All things therefore considered, great credit is due to the American navy for the gallant and honorable part it bore in the contest of 1812-14.

The actions between the smaller class of vessels were generally determined by similar considerations, aggravated, as far as the British vessels were concerned, by the notorious deficiencies apparent in their construction. Without casting the slightest aspersion on the Admiralty, its contracts in the early part of this century were nests of jobbery. All those small vessels engaged in 1812-14 were built between 1805 and 1808; they belonged to the class fairly and graphically described as *coffin brigs*, and it was held an even chance that they would capsize or founder before the end of their first voyage. Crank, overmasted, with their topsides tumbling home, their main deck room was insignificant and would only permit the use of carronades, the shortest gun in the British service. At a later period of the war an attempt was made to mount two long 18-pounders through the stern ports, but so fearfully and wonderfully were those brigs and sloops constructed that the guns could not be fired without shifting helm, causing the after sails to jibe, to the imminent peril of the vessel, as at every repetition it afforded a capital chance for illustrating her capabilities of "turning turtle." As the American Government dealt directly with its contractors, and as their vessels were built under the immediate supervision of the naval officer who was to venture his life, fortune and professional reputation on board her another state of affairs was apparent in roomy and lofty 'tween decks, large ports, guns carried well out of the water, beautifully modelled

hull, large spars capable of spreading every inch of canvas the hull could carry.—their brigs were larger and more powerful vessels than sloops in the British navy, while the latter approached frigates in dimensions. The frigates of the United States were 74-gun (line of battle) ships in disguise.

It was at this point the enterprise and mechanical skill of the Americans was apparent. Untrammelled by the protective routine of British official life, their irresponsible Executive enabled them to take advantage of improvements, which a responsible Imperial Executive dare not attempt, and it was not till three stunning defeats had been inflicted that the "Lion of the Sea" awoke from the slumber of security which Nelson's victory had won.

Then indeed it became quickly apparent where the real resources were to be found—in 1811 only three frigates in the British navy carried 24-pounders on their main decks, and at the close of the war she had six. It was not then her preponderance in that particular description of vessel which ensured success, but the extraordinary rapidity with which she organized squadrons of heavily armed vessels, generally 74-gun ships, and by the aid of smaller vessels, hunted every bay, river and creek of the American coast, compelling the lighter cruisers of her enemy to abandon the high seas and seek safety under the guns of shore batteries.

The lesson to be learned from this war is that the United States is a peculiarly vulnerable country, easily accessible to a naval force on the seaboard and lakes, and capable of being thoroughly subdued by simultaneous movements and tactics. All her great rivers are navigable to within considerable distances of the Great Lakes, all are open to whatever power holds naval supremacy for the time being. The invasion or occupation of Canada is therefore not optional with the United States, but it is optional with the power who holds Canada whether the States would not be successfully assailed. It would be altogether a naval operation, totally independent of the accident of population.

During the progress of this war the naval operations on the Lakes were desultory and ineffective. In any future contest the experience gained would point to the proper armament to be vessels of light draught carrying heavy batteries. Recent improvements, by which the guns are carried on the line of the keel with traversing carriages, fulfils all the requisite conditions as the certainty of aim is greater and the range far more effective than guns mounted in broadsides and fired through ports could possibly be. As the Dominion of Canada will be obliged to provide a permanent naval force on the Lakes the system of twin screw propellers in small vessels mounting the heaviest ordnance is evidently that best adapted to fulfil all the requisite conditions of defence or offence. Such vessels should

not draw more than four or five feet of water. As long as the British flag maintains its supremacy on the high seas so long will Canada be free from insult or invasion,—this much, at least, is taught us by the military and naval operations of the war of 1812-14.

Ottawa, November 11th, 1868.

From the New York Imperialist.  
MILITARY USURPATION.

It has been a favorite theory with Americans that such a thing as military usurpation is impossible in the United States, and, no doubt, this has been true enough hitherto, but the times are changing so rapidly, and we as a people are changing so completely with them, that it is with no vain or idle foreboding that the Imperialist points to the dire possibility of such a calamity.

Our people are not what they once were in point of civic and private virtue, and they are daily becoming more and more restive under the accumulating evils of their condition. The time may come, will come, when they will be ready to welcome almost any relief, and to exchange even the little liberty left them for peace and safety. Nor are they by any means exempt from the weakness which in all ages has led all nations to a more or less blind idolatry of military glory and the heroes of successful war.

As lovers of our country, and being anxious for the restoration instead of the ruin of our liberties, we desire to awaken our fellow citizens to sense of their peril while there is yet time and opportunity to avoid it. We do not believe that the grand and free Empire to which we look fondly forward, can be erected on a firm basis of sound institutions by the hands of a self-appointed and usurping military ruler. In the throes of such a revolution there would be no opportunity for the calm deliberation and wise decision which is required by so noble and far-reaching a design. Such a revolution, with its fright, and grief, and bloodshed, would but ill inaugurate a reign of peace, law, and liberty, and the man whom it placed in power could hardly be adapted to the philosophical development of great principles of government; he would be far more likely to search for the precedents of his action among the records of Caesar and Napoleon, and our last state might become worse than our first.

It is considerations such as these which at times incline us to be almost impatient of the slow and prejudiced intelligence of those who refuse even to discuss the vitally important problems which are propounding. We are impatient with men who admit the failure of our present system; admit that we no longer govern ourselves; admit that we are no longer a Republic and that pure Republicanism is no longer possible in America; but who, while groaning and lamenting over facts which they cannot deny, wilfully shut their eyes to the only logical sequence, and tremblingly refuse to so much as think concerning the only hopeful remedy. And yet, sure of ultimate success, we might well be willing to wait, were it not for this fear that too long a delay will bring us a despotism instead of an Empire.

The Emperor Napoleon proposes that from the 15th of August next, the centennial anniversary of the birth of Napoleon I., every soldier of the Republic and of the First Empire shall receive an annual pension of 250f.