

## NOTES ON SCHOOL READERS.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE DEATH OF NELSON. N. B. Reader III, p. 23. N. S. Reader IV, p. 302.

The *Life of Nelson*, from which this extract is taken, is one of the best biographies in the English language. It has been called "an immortal monument raised to valour by genius." The author, Robert Southey, (1774-1843), wrote a great deal both in prose and verse, and was Poet Laureate from 1813 until his death. But his prose far excels his verse. The *Life* is his best known work. In the preface he says that he made it short, as he meant it to be a manual for the young sailor that he might "treasure up the example in his memory and in his heart." It is a book that should be known not only by sailors, but by every English speaking boy and girl, and the teacher should do her best to make the selection serve as an introduction to this story of the hero's life.

An outline of the events leading up to the Battle of Trafalgar, such as may be got from the history text book, should be learned in preparation for the lesson.

Captain Hardy. He was "the closest of all Nelson's friends." Captain of the *Vanguard*, Nelson's flag-ship, in 1798, he was made Captain of the *Victory* in 1803. He lived to be a Vice Admiral and a baronet (Sir Thomas Hardy), and died in 1839.

Admiral Collingwood was second in command at Trafalgar. The British fleet bore down upon the enemy in two lines, Nelson, in the *Victory*, leading one, and Collingwood, in the *Royal Sovereign*, the other. Collingwood's ship was the faster sailer and was first engaged in fight. Nelson said "See how that noble fellow Collingwood carries his ship into action." While Collingwood, perhaps at the same moment, exclaimed to his captain "What would Nelson not give to be here?" He succeeded to the command upon Nelson's death. "It had been part of Nelson's prayer." The prayer that he wrote down and offered just before the battle:

"May the Great God, whom I worship, grant to my country and for the benefit of Europe in general a great and glorious victory; may no misconduct in any one tarnish it; and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British fleet. For myself, I commit my life to Him who made me, and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my country faithfully. To Him I resign myself

and the just cause which is entrusted to me to defend. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Trafalgar means, "the Cape of laurels."

Begin the lesson with a little discussion about the qualities that make us love or admire a man. What makes a hero? Then read with the aim of finding out the qualities shown by Nelson in the hour of his death. Some of them Southey names; as, Nelson's humanity; others, as his unselfishness, are left for the reader to name. The passage in which he tells us why his fellow-countrymen loved Nelson (given in the N. S. reader) should be memorized:

"England has had many heroes, but never one who so entirely possessed the love of his fellow-countrymen as Nelson. All men knew that his heart was as humane as it was fearless; that there was not in his nature the slightest alloy of selfishness or cupidity; but that, with perfect and entire devotion, he served his country with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength; and therefore, they loved him as truly and as fervently as he loved England."

What characteristic is shown in the speech, "Not while I live, Hardy?" (Compare Parkman's account of the death of Wolfe). By his not concealing his "badges of honour" from the enemy? He is said to have answered to those who pointed out the danger of wearing them, "In honour I gained them, in honour I will die with them."

With the words, "Thank God, I have done my duty," compare the dying words of Wolfe, and those of Sir Richard Grenville, "Here die I, Richard Grenville, with a joyful and a quiet mind; for that I have ended my life as a good soldier ought to do, who has fought for his country and his queen, for his honour and religion."

How does a ship show that she has surrendered? "Nelson went into the Battle of the Nile with six colours flying; so that even if five were shot away it should not be imagined he had struck." What different meanings may "The ship struck" convey? What speech of Nelson's shows that he had reckoned on victory?

"He desired that he might be buried beside his parents, unless it should please the King to order otherwise." What King? It did so please the King, and Nelson lies in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, exactly under the centre of the dome. Near him lie the Duke of Wellington and Admiral Collingwood.

Read from Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, the stanza beginning "Mighty seaman, this is he."