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WE MAY MEET.

We may meet when the years I have passed away,
Far off in the valley of time;
Thy eyes shall be dim and my beard be gray,
And we'll think of the dream we dreamed to-day
As we think of an old world rhyme.

The echo of words that were whispered low,
In the quiet and darkened room,
Shall back, like the rays of the sunset, flow
On the well loved scenes of the long ago
Where flowers of memory bloom.

For us there is nothing in parting tears,
For the angel of dreams has fled,
And years may pass, to be followed by years
With their sorrows, and joys, and hopes, and fears
O'er hearts with their unburied dead,

Long hidden away in a darkened room
Of a lonely and haunted heart
Whence a whisper comes, like a voice of doom
Where the ghostly past broods over a tomb,
'Midst shadows that never depart.

K.

NAVAL OPERATIONS

OF THE
WAR OF 1812-14.

CHAPTER VI.

The spell was broken, the capture of the Chesapeak told at once the tale of the strength and weakness of the United States Navy; the first measured by the greater preponderance of force; the latter by the inefficient means taken to render that available.

There can be no doubt that one of the chief agencies in deciding victory for the United States flag in the cases of the Guerriere, Macedonian and Java, was the very large preponderance in the crews of the United States vessels of seamen trained in the British Navy—many of them participants in Nelson's victories and it is quite as certain that the capture of the Chesapeak was facilitated by the large majority of her crew being native Americans.

It would be absurd at this distance of time to view those transactions with the embittered feelings of the actors therein, a statement of the simple facts and critical examination of the agencies by which victory was secured or defeat rendered certain is much more becoming than personal recrimination about affairs which after all were national. Any

impartial reader of the narratives already submitted must confess that while there was much to wound professional pride in the defeats, there never was occasions in which the honor of the British flag had been more nobly vindicated; the mere professional reader will not see much to admire in a sea fight, but the highest qualities of courage and endurance were brought out in those encounters.

With vessels whose motive power depended on the most fickle of all elements—the wind. The officer who fought his vessel had a multiplicity of duties to perform which are vastly simplified by the application of steam; first there was the weather gauge to be obtained at the cost of much complicated manœuvres in which the snapping of a stay or carrying away a spar would of itself be sufficient to decide the action; next in what position to open fire—when and how—then the manœuvring of the ship—the constant attention to the riggers and sail trimmers, lest a tack, sheet, halliard, stay or shroud should be shot away without a chance of repair. Once the proper position was attained, whether on the quarter or bows, the efforts of one would be to maintain, of the other to alter it—what coolness must be exhibited by the sail trimmers and others whose duty were apart from actual fighting; and finally how severely the physical courage must be taxed where men were cooped up in a space 40 or 50 yards in length by 14 or 15 yards in width with broadside after broadside from heavy guns discharged into their circumscribed batteries. Truly the old salts of the Nelsonic period experienced a baptism of blood from which their successors are and will be exempt. What skill, science and ability the officer who directed the whole must possess. It was easy to win battles on shore because ample space was afforded to manœuvre all arms, but on shipboard guns and men were crowded into a small space, the efficiency of the whole depending on the ability of the commanding officer, the steadiness of the wind and comparative immunity from accidents. A thorough knowledge of his profession with strict attention to its details enabled Capt. Broke, with every dis-

advantage, to capture a vessel superior in force after a brief contest—because there can be no doubt of the fact that the Chesapeak's seamen were fairly beaten from their guns, and the decisive moment had arrived with the men to take advantage of it. That the American seamen made a gallant defence and were honorably led by Capt. Lawrence there can be no doubt, but his skill was inferior to that of his opponent as shown when he allowed the favorable moment to pass for raking the Shannon and engaging her on the port quarter—it may be very fine to say that he chivalrously waived this advantage—it would be doing dishonor to the memory of a brave seaman to suppose he was guilty of any such unpardonable breach of duty—A lawyer who plays with his client's life or property to illustrate a legal problem, a surgeon who plays with his patient's life for the sake of experiment, would be counted the one a fool and the other a murderer—and in both categories those admirers of Captain Lawrence who take up the chivalrous line of defence would place him. He was neither the one nor the other, simply a brave man, who only erred in judgment and paid with his life and loss of ship the penalty—in six minutes after the action commenced all chance of retrieving the error had passed away; honor, then, to the gallant souls who have passed to their account midst pain and suffering doing their duty nobly and leaving an example to those who follow to tread in their footsteps—that race of glory which leaves an imperishable name and *"ends but in the grave."*

The results of the action between the Shannon and Chesapeak were so far salutary as to demonstrate the impossibility of a successful contest with the Naval power of Great Britain, and henceforth throughout the remainder of this miserable squabble the Naval forces of the United States acted on the defensive whenever they were sure to be brought in contact with an equal force of British vessels.

As the assumption of the name *American* on the part of the people of the United States is simply a specimen of that *"gasconading"* spirit of braggart presumption which