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THE CONVENT PORTER.

BY CARROLL RYAN.

He was an ancient, bearded man
Beneath the archway seated,
Who through the summer, lone and long,
His Rosary repeated.
He rang the bell for matin pray'rs;—
At noontide for the reapers,
And, when the evening shadows fell,
He rang it for the keepers,
And, sometimes, too, he tolled a knell
For everlasting sleepers.

From day to day he said his beads,
Beneath the archway staying;
The sun, arising, found him there,
And, setting, left him praying.
On him would little hands attend,
And little footfalls pattered
Around him; where the fig-trees bend
Were purple treasures scattered;
The whispering cypress was his friend,
For him the ivy chattered.

But seldom at that convent gate
A traveller dismounted;
The outer world of love and hate
Passed by it unaccounted.
Monotonous, and quaint, and calm,
The pray'ful seasons glided,
The vesper hymn and morning psalm
These days alone divided,
That by the dial, near the Palm,
Were left but undecided.

So years went by until one day
The night cloud, westward rolling,
Came round the Friar's old retreat
Without the vesper tolling.
The birds still sang on ivy sprays,
The children still were playing,
The Porter, as in former days,
Seemed Rosaries still saying;
But Death had found his quiet ways
And took the old man praying.

NAVAL OPERATIONS

OF THE

WAR OF 1812-14.

CHAPTER XVII.

On the 25th February, 1815, the British schooner *St. Lawrence* mounting 13 carronades 12-pounders and one long 9-pounder, while proceeding with despatches from Rear Admiral Cockburn relating to the peace, fell in with the American privateer brig *Chasseur* mounting 6 long 9-pounders and 8 carronades 18-pounders; the brig attacked the schooner and an engagement of some duration ensued when the latter was carried by boarding; out of a crew of 42 men and 9 boys, 6 men were killed and 18 wounded; the Americans had 5 men killed and 8 wounded.

The British squadron cruising off Boston in December, 1814, consisted of 50-gun ship *Newcastle* 18-pounder, 40-gun frigate *Acasta*

and 18-gun brig-sloop *Arab*; on the 11th while cruising off St. George's shoals the *Newcastle* parted company to reconnoitre the road of Boston, and discovered lying there the United States frigate *Constitution* of 44 guns in apparent readiness for sea, and the *Independence* 74 with her lower yards and topmasts struck—the *Newcastle* steered for Cape Cod bay where after having grounded on a shoal she came to anchor and was joined by the *Acasta* on the 16th. This enabled the *Constitution* to put to sea, and standing across the Atlantic she cruised for some time off the Bank of Lisbon; in the beginning of February she stretched over to the Western Isles. On the 30th February at 1 p.m. the island of Maderia bearing West-South-West distant about 60 leagues, the *Constitution* steering South West with a light breeze from the Eastward, discovered about two points on her larboard bow and immediately hauled up for the British 22-gun ship *Cyane* standing close hauled on the starboard tack and about 10 miles to windward of her consort the 20-gun ship *Levant* mounting 18 carronades 33-pounders and 2 long nines. At 4 p.m. the *Cyane* having ascertained the character of the stranger bore up for her consort with the signal flying for an enemy. The *Constitution* immediately made all sail in chase, and at 5 p.m. commenced firing her larboard bow guns, but ceased as she found the shot fell short. At 5h. 30m. the *Cyane* having arrived within hail of the *Levant* it was agreed they should engage the enemy known to be the *Constitution* notwithstanding her superior force, hoping by disabling her to save the valuable convoys that had sailed from Gibraltar a few days previously. At 5h. 45m. p.m. the *Levant* and *Cyane* made all sail on a wind to try for the weather-gauge, but finding this object could not be attained they bore up with a view of delaying the engagement until night when they might hope to engage with more advantage; the superior sailing of the *Constitution* defeating that plan also the British ships at 6 p.m. hauled to the wind on the starboard tack formed head and stern line at a distance of 300 yds. apart. At 6h. 5m. the *Constitution*, all three ships having previously hoisted their colors,

opened her larboard broadside upon the *Cyane* at a distance of about three quarters of a mile on the latter's weather beam. The *Cyane* promptly returned the fire, but her shot all being fired from carronades fell short while the frigate's long 34-pounders produced their full effect. In 15 minutes the *Constitution* ranged ahead and became in same manner engaged with the *Levant*—the *Cyane* now luffed up for the larboard quarter of the *Constitution* whereupon the latter backing astern was enabled to pour into the *Cyane* her whole broadside. Meanwhile the *Levant* had bore up to wear round and assist her consort—the *Constitution* thereupon filled shot ahead and gave the *Levant* two raking broadsides—seeing this the *Cyane* although without a brace or bowline except the larboard fore brace wore and gallantly stood between the *Levant* and *Constitution*—the latter then promptly wore and raked the *Cyane* astern—the *Cyane* immediately luffed up as well as she could and fired her larboard broadside at the bow of the *Constitution*—the latter soon afterwards ranged up on the larboard quarter of the *Cyane* within hail and was about to pour in her starboard broadside when at 6h. 30m. p.m. having had most of her standing and running rigging cut to pieces, her main and mizen masts left in a tottering state and other principal spars wounded, several shot in the hull, nine or ten between wind and water, five carronades disabled chiefly by the drawing of the bolts and starting of the chocks and the *Levant* being two miles to leeward and still bearing away to repair her heavy damages, the *Cyane* fired a lee gun and hoisted a light as a signal of submission.

It was not till 8 p.m. that the *Constitution*, having manned her prize and refitted some slight damages in her own rigging, was ready to bear up after the *Levant*, then in sight to the leeward. At 8h. 15m., which was as soon as the *Levant* had rove new braces she again hauled her wind for the purpose of renewing the action, and ascertaining the fate of her companion. At 8h. 30m. she ranged close alongside; the *Constitution*, while passing her on the opposite tack to leeward exchanged broadsides, The *Constitution* immediately wore under the