

opinion of the officer in charge of the English vessel, that more men had been slain. Some time previously to this capture, the enemy had ceased to publish the official accounts of his nautical defeats, but a letter purporting to be the one written on this occasion, has found its way before the world, in which the English loss is stated at only 10 killed and 28 wounded. The Penguin was completely riddled with the Hornet's shot, lost her foremast and bowsprit, and her mainmast was too much injured to be secured. Among her slain was her commander, Captain Dickinson, and the boatswain; and among the wounded a lieutenant, two midshipmen, and the purser.

The Hornet had but 1 man killed, and 10 wounded. Among the latter, in addition to Captain Biddle, was the first lieutenant, Mr. Conner,* a young officer of high promise, whose life was considered in great danger for some time. Not a round shot touched the Hornet's hull, nor did her spars receive any material injury, though she was a good deal cut up in her rigging and sails.

The combat between the Hornet and the Penguin was one of the most creditable to the character of the American marine that occurred in the course of the war. The vessels were very fairly matched, and when it is remembered that an English flag-officer had sent the Penguin on especial service against a ship believed to be materially heavier than the vessel she actually encountered, it is fair to presume she was thought to be, in every respect, an efficient cruiser. Yet, with the advantage of the wind, this ship was taken in 22 minutes, including the time lost while she hung on the Hornet's quarter, and while the latter was waring. The neatness and despatch with which the American sloop did her work, the coolness with which she met the attempt to board, and the accuracy of her fire and handling, are all proofs of her having been a disciplined man-of-war, and of the high condition of that service in which she was one of the favourites. It is by such exploits that the character of a marine is most effectually proved.

A few hours after the action a strange and suspiciously-looking sail heaving in sight, a cable was taken from the Penguin, and the Hornet towed her some distance off the land. After thoroughly examining the prize, and getting out of her all the stores and provisions that were wanted, before daylight, on the morning of the 25th, Captain Biddle scuttled her. The Hornet then stood in towards the island to look for the strange sail, which was found to be the Peacock, having the Tom Bowline in company. An arrangement was now made, by which the latter was converted into a cartel, and was sent into St. Salvador with the prisoners.

As soon as he was released from this incumbrance, and from the great drain on his supplies, Captain Biddle was ready to continue his cruise. This spirited officer did not consider the capture of a vessel of the same class of his own, a reason of itself for returning to port; but, it having been ascertained, by means of the Macedonian, a brig which sailed with the President, that the latter ship was pro-

* Now Commodore Conner.