

dered but lately, when the Spanish war-cloud rose on its horizon; its Government continuing the while, in blind persistence, to follow their suicidal policy, and hugging the delusion, even at this distance of time, that this astonishing maritime decadence is attributable to influences of the Alabama sort, instead of their own illogical legislation.

Was Raphael Semmes then so great a captain? Has he reduced the American marine from nearly six millions of tons to scarcely two and a half millions? Did he wipe out of existence such a gigantic fleet as is represented by a tonnage of over three millions, and by a value which goes beyond two hundred and fifty millions of dollars? Why, the exploits of a Nelson pale in comparison! And how did he perform so stupendous a feat? That brief career of burning or bonding helpless merchantmen, and of studiously avoiding men-of-war, does not explain it; being sent to Davy's locker in forty minutes after meeting a fair match scarcely seems in character—nor do the sixty prize chronometers that did not go down in the Alabama's cabin, afford any adequate index of such unparalleled devastation. The mischief wrought by that infamous cruiser and her congeners was comparatively trivial, and was, immediately, more than offset by the moral effect of her presence in driving American ships where they found a protection—much less important as a refuge from her than as a shelter from the far deadlier legislative war waged against them by their own countrymen—to wit, the flag of England, at least mainly. The claim of “consequential damages” was logically correct. It should have been admitted, and the equally logical claim for “consequential benefits” set up on the part of the English Government. Then the balance would have struck the other way, and that, too, without throwing Canadian fisheries into either scale. Fifteen millions, it is agreed, covers the losses inflicted directly by the English-built and

English-aided rebel cruisers. Reflect how trivial is that sum compared to the huge aggregate value of United States tonnage up to the second year of the war. It is about three and a half per cent. What would that have been to American commerce in its unhampered, flourishing times? Reflect, again, how trivial it still remains when compared to the sum total of the ten years' decay. It is but a fraction above five and a half per cent. A slight compounding, verily. Instead of being fully reimbursed, as he had hoped, the American shipowner was “fubbed off,” as Dame Quickly says, with five and a half per cent. of his losses! Is it any wonder that he lost patience; or that, being impressed by his government, the real culprit, with the idea that the cheating Falstaff was John Bull, he should have raised the cry of consequential damages? Five and a half per cent. ! A pretty composition, truly; Who wouldn't have quarrelled with it? Nor was he at all mistaken, except in the one point of attributing the source of those consequential damages—which are no myths, as equally wrong-headed Englishmen strove to argue, but sad and shameful realities—to the wrong quarter.

The blow struck by the Confederate cruisers upon the American marine was a blow inflicted upon a sick man. Had he been in his wonted vigour he had scarce felt it; but the wound it opened, though slight at first, remains unhealed, bleeding, ulcerous, because his deteriorated constitution renders the *vis medicatrix* inoperative, to say nothing of the political quacks that swarm around him, hurrying his enfeebled march to the grave with medicaments that find not the faintest indication in any of his symptoms. To quit the figure: before the “Sumter” started, before the “Alabama” was thought of, the false legislation of the American Congress had annihilated the recuperative powers of the American commercial marine. Yet rulers and people alike mistook effect for cause; and what is worse, continue to hug